Researchers show medical errors may be the third leading cause of death in U.S. hospitals, behind heart disease and cancer.

(Newswire.net -- July 14, 2016) West Palm Beach, FLORIDA -- West Palm Beach, Florida – Patient safety researchers at John Hopkins University have published a paper in the British Medical Journal (BMJ) which names medical errors as the third leading cause of death in the United States.

Martin Makary, Professor of Surgery at John Hopkins School of Medicine and lead researcher on the study, suggests medical errors are deemed to be the cause of death when a patient dies as a result of the care they are receiving rather than from the disease or illness they are being treated for. Sometimes called “human errors”, medical errors often include drug errors, incompetent doctors/health care providers, poor communication between staff, inconsistent processes for care and illegible writing.

Makary’s research investigated data from 4 large independent studies conducted between 2000 and 2008. Through in-depth statistical analysis, Makary concluded 9.5% of all deaths in the United States – 700 per day and 251,000 annually – were the result of medical errors.

The study found heart disease topped the list causing over 614,000 deaths yearly, while cancer was second with nearly 592,000 deaths. Ranking below medical errors were deaths linked to respiratory disease, accidents, stroke, Alzheimer’s, diabetes, flu/pneumonia, kidney disease and suicide.

Medical or human errors are considered to be preventable. In fact, it is rare to find an institution without patient safety committees and policies in place in an effort to prevent such occurrences. Unfortunately, even with strategies developed and rolled out, there has been very little change in the number of annual incidents. To date, the only data showing reduced preventable deaths are in cases of hospital-acquired infections such as Clostridium difficile (C. difficile) and Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA).

Suggested factors for this lack of improvement are the absence of standardized practices and an accepted high degree of variability in practice among practitioners and facilities. In addition, there are limited resources available to investigate whether human error has been a factor when a suspicious death occurs.

Although the study did not look at patient injury caused by human error, it is estimated injuries are almost 40 times higher than the number of deaths. Not surprisingly, institutions are very reluctant to talk about medical errors.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) does not currently require physicians to report when there is an error that has led to a preventable death during vital statistic reporting.

If you, a loved one, friend, neighbor, colleague or client has been injured or died as a result of a preventable medical error, please contact our firm at 561-655-1990 or chat with us at www.ForYourRights.com. We are available to answer your questions 24 hours a day / 7 days a week.

If you are in need of a Medical Malpractice Attorney in West Palm Beach, call now!

About Lytal, Reiter, Smith, Ivey & F

Conveniently located in West Palm Beach for 27 yrs, Lytal, Reiter, Smith, Ivey & Fronrath concentrates in Personal Injury, Wrongful death, Medical Malpractice, Product Liability and Auto accidents.
United States
(561) 655-1990
info@foryourrights.com
http://www.foryourrights.com/