



Epidemic of Medical Errors and Hospital-Acquired Infections: Systemic and Social Causes

William Charney

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Medical error as defined in **Epidemic of Medical Errors and Hospital-Acquired Infections: Systemic and Social Causes** encompasses many categories including, but not limited to, medical error, hospital-acquired infections, medication errors, deaths from misdiagnosis, deaths from infectious diarrhea in nursing homes, surgical and post-operative complications, lethal blood clots in veins, and excessive radiation from CT scans. When the deaths from these categories are counted they become the leading cause of fatality to Americans, outpacing cancer and heart disease. Add the numbers of fatalities (mortality) to the millions each year who are injured (morbidity) and whose quality of life is forever effected, and an epidemic of harm is defined.

The book describes the many systemic and social causes of medical error and iatrogenic events, all of which are cited in the peer-review science, that have a direct effect on the epidemic of patient injury, but are rarely or never considered. These systemic causes include factory medicine (for-profit medicine), staffing ratios in clinical and non-clinical departments, shift work, healthcare working conditions, lack of accountability, legal issues that conflict with patient safety issues, bullying and hierarchical relationships, training of healthcare workers that never rises to the level of risk, and injury to healthcare workers. The premise of the book is that if the systemic or social causes are not considered or changed, then medical error will continue to be an epidemic and no substantial impact in the numbers will be realized.

An expert with 30 years of experience as a health and safety officer in healthcare and as an activist for community health and safety issues, editor and author William Charney explores the issues surrounding medical errors and examines the science behind possible solutions. He presents an efficient dialogue that produces a more systemic exploration and targeting of the causes of medical error and drives an exacting message: we are dealing with an epidemic of harm, and unless systemic issues are solved, little will change to subdue the epidemic.

Information on the June 2012 Conference on the Epidemic of Medical Errors & Hospital Acquired Infections in the US and Canada: the Systemic Causes can be found on the CRC Press Issuu page.

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