



Annual ECRI Institute PSO Deep Dive Reveals Depth of In-Hospital Opioid Harm

[ECRI Institute PSO's 2017 Deep Dive](#) takes a focused look at opioid-related patient safety events in hospitals and what healthcare leaders are doing to prevent harm. ECRI Institute PSO analysts reviewed more than 7,200 events from the database that were submitted voluntarily over a three-year period; these events represent only a percentage of all opioid-related events within healthcare organizations.

"We continue to see so many opioid-related events, including patient deaths, reported into our PSO database," says Bill Marella, ECRI Institute executive director of PSO Operations and Analytics. "While opioids play a useful role in treating pain, the risks that come with them require that safeguards be put in place to stop misuse or overuse."



Key Points of the Deep Dive

Most frequently, opioid events were categorized as medication administration issues or drug diversion concerns. Prescribing or monitoring events were not as frequent, but they were more likely to be harmful. And, of event reports including a harm score, nearly one in five patients was harmed.

Patients receiving opioids in the hospital are at risk for respiratory depression, which can be fatal if not recognized and treated promptly. The Deep Dive makes specific recommendations for monitoring strategies that can identify patients in the early stages of respiratory depression. There are also opportunities for more advanced clinical decision support to help ensure appropriate patient assessment and reduce the chances of errors in prescribing or administration.

"The good news is that there are many realistic opportunities to improve the safety of opioid use in hospitals," Marella said

Learn More

The executive brief and an interactive slide show about ECRI Institute PSO Deep Dive™: Opioid Use in Acute Care are publicly available with registration at www.ecri.org/opioids. The comprehensive report is [available to ECRI Institute PSO and partner PSO members online](#); non-members will be given the opportunity to purchase the report later in the year.

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base on issues surrounding work burden, workflow, and workarounds in health care systems. Learn more about the [conference and view the agenda.](#)

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