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November 6, 2009

VA Secretary Orders Review of Troubled Marion, Illinois VA Hospital

New problems have emerged at the troubled VA Medical Center in [Marion, Illinois](#). This has prompted Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki to order a “top-to-bottom” review of the facility. Senator Durbin and other Illinois lawmakers met with the VA secretary after a report this week found ongoing problems at the facility, where nine patients died in surgery in six months ending in March 2007. This is a mortality level more than four times the expected rate. Durbin blamed the nine deaths on “[medical malpractice](#)” and called the newly disclosed problems “appalling” and “inexcusable.” The Marion VA’s interim director has been replaced and more personnel changes are scheduled. The new report identified problems in four areas: quality management; physician credentialing and privileging; [medication management](#) and environment of care. The final problem area relates to [infection control standards](#) and cleanliness of the hospital. The 30-page report identified that two physicians performed procedures for which they lacked privileges. Additionally there was a failure to screen deaths within 30 days of surgical procedure. To read more about the [failing hospital](#), please click the link.

November 3, 2009

Problems Continue at Illinois Veteran’s Hospital

Serious safety issues continue to plague an Illinois Veterans Affairs hospital. This comes even after major surgeries were suspended two years ago because of a spike in [patient deaths](#). Surgeons at the medical center in [Marion, Illinois](#) performed procedures without proper authorization. Also, patient deaths were not assessed adequately and miscommunication between staff members persist. The medical center’s is not taking the corrective actions to improve patient care. The hospital has been under intense scrutiny since 2007 when a former surgeon resigned after a patient bled to death following gall bladder surgery. The VA found at least nine deaths between October 2006 and March 2007 which were the result of substandard care at the hospital. Additionally, a report found that the hospital did not sufficiently monitor 87 percent of the physician’s employed. There were strong problems with [infection control](#), including MRSA. Illinois Senator Dick Durbin is outraged by the [substandard care](#) that is occurring at the Veteran’s Hospital. To read more about the [medical malpractice](#), please click the link.

August 25, 2009

Navy Hospital Settles Three Medical Malpractice Claims

The government has settled three [medical malpractice claims](#) on behalf of its navy hospital totaling 2.77 million dollars. Four other [medical malpractice](#) claims are in talks to be mediated at a later date. The settlements stem from accusations of [medical negligence](#) in birth, [failure to diagnose](#) a disease, and an amputation after negligent care. According to the article, “the hospital has resolved more that two dozen negligence claims since 2001.”

August 9, 2009

Illinois Veterans Affairs Hospital Settles Medical Malpractice Suit

The government has reportedly settled a [medical malpractice](#) suit with a widow of a veteran over an [Illinois](#) Veterans Affairs Hospital medical procedure. The widow’s husband allegedly received a blood infection after a biopsy. The man’s estate claims that the physician was [medically negligent](#) during his treatment at the Illinois hospital. That same physician has been connected to other [medical malpractice claims](#).

August 5, 2009

VA Hospital Leaves Patients Exposed to Infections

A veterans' hospital allegedly has exposed patients to infectious bodily fluids after treating them. A [medical malpractice attorney](#) claims that his clients were given [false diagnoses](#) at the hospital telling the patients they tested positive for infections that later came out negative. This gave his clients tremendous emotional distress, he claims. The [medical malpractice attorney](#) is filing multiple medical malpractice claims against the veterans' hospital.

Read more about the veterans' hospital [medical malpractice](#) suits here.

June 28, 2009

Patients Given Incorrect Radiation Doses

At a veterans' hospital, 92 veterans were given [incorrect radiation doses](#) to treat their prostate cancer. According to the article, "most veterans got significantly less than the prescribed dose while others received excessive radiation to nearby tissue and organs." Since then, the medical center has stopped all prostate cancer treatment because of the [medical errors](#) found. Thus far, none of the patients have filed a [medical malpractice suit](#) against the medical center.

Read more about the [veterans' hospital](#) here.

June 24, 2009

Military Medical Malpractice Bill Proposed

After long debate, a federal bill has been proposed that would allow military families to sue for [medical malpractice](#). Currently there are laws in place that make it nearly impossible for GIs and their families to sue for [medical malpractice](#). This proposed law is unique because the federal bill would hold the government, not doctors, accountable for non-combatant related injuries. In one example of military personnel unable to sue, a GI had the wrong breast operated on to remove cancer. She was unable to sue. Her [medical malpractice attorney](#) claims even convicted felons in prison can sue the government for medical malpractice, but military personnel cannot.

Read more about this [medical malpractice](#) debate here.

May 27, 2009

Military Have No Medical Malpractice Option

A woman died after giving birth to her first born on a military base. Her parents thought they may have a [medical malpractice](#) case because during surgery a uterine artery was cut causing massive internal bleeding and two surgical sponges were left in her abdomen afterwards. Unfortunately for the family, a legal precedent prohibits [medical malpractice](#) lawsuits when military service members are killed or injured by negligence, according to the article. The parents say the hospital claimed their daughter bled to death.

Read more about the military [medical malpractice](#) precedent here.

April 8, 2009

Nurse Allegedly Infected Patients with Hepatitis C

A previous army nurse, who at the time was currently working as a civilian, at an [Army hospital](#) allegedly infected at least 15 patients with hepatitis C. The allegedly [negligent nurse](#) poured medication into an infected container he brought from home for patients. The nurse is facing 20 years in prison if convicted.

Electronic Health Records Improve VA Hospitals

An article claims Veterans Health Administration System is better than the private sector hospital systems which may be from electronic health records. The article claims the VA hospitals are “safer, more efficient and more technologically advanced than their counterparts in the private sector.” This in turn would reduce [medication errors](#), the article suggests. The article credits Dr. Kenneth Kizer for transforming the VA system through decentralization and introducing the electronic health records.

February 24, 2009

VAs and Possible Contaminant Exposures

A [Veteran's Administration](#) clinic has warned patients they may be susceptible to a possible [contaminant exposure](#) if they were given colonoscopies in the previous years. This has sparked VA clinics nationwide to review their own procedures. The patients may have been exposed to “infectious bodily fluids” from other patients that have also received colonoscopies. Another VA clinic has now warned their patients there may have been a problem with their ear, nose and throat clinic.

February 11, 2009

Failure to Diagnose May Have Led to Soldiers' Suicides

After reviewing 5 cases of soldier suicides, an article discusses similarities found amongst the men. The article determines there was “a [failure to diagnose](#) or properly treat combat veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder or brain injuries, despite clear symptoms” and [overmedication](#) resulting from these stresses and injuries that may have contributed to the death of these soldiers.

For the full story, [click here](#).

January 20, 2009

Woman Settles Medical Malpractice Suit with Illinois VA Hospital

The widow of man who died shortly after undergoing gallbladder surgery at an Illinois VA Hospital has settled her lawsuit against the U.S. Government. A statement released by the widow's attorney alleges a mixture of [medical negligence](#) and a failure to adequately perform a background check as the factors which caused the veteran's death. This same Illinois VA Hospital has been the subject of many recent [medical malpractice lawsuits](#) and internal governmental investigation after 9 veterans were killed and 34 more were seriously injured over a two year span. To read more about this [VA medical malpractice](#) story, [click here](#).

January 16, 2009

Congressmen Act to Prevent Veterans' Injuries Resulting from VA Medical Malpractice

Two United States Congressmen have recently re-introduced legislation aimed at hedging against [VA medical malpractice](#). Amongst the call for more stringent background checks of doctors and staff, the bill requires applying physicians to disclose all prior [medical malpractice](#) allegations. Call for this legislation originated over a year ago when it was discovered some Illinois veterans received substandard care in an Illinois Department of Veteran Affairs Hospital which ultimately resulted in their [wrongful death](#). To read more about this [Department of Veteran Affairs medical malpractice](#) story, click here.