



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

**DECREASING HOSPITAL ERRORS MAY PREVENT DIMINISHED HEALTH THAT CAN
LEAD TO DISABILITY**

The Campaign for Better Health Care conducted a briefing at the Press Club. The featured speaker was Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. Participants in the event were leaders of major hospitals, employers, health plans, physicians, nurses and patient advocates to announce a new national partnership that will help save 60,000 lives and save up to \$35 billion,

Summary

There were two goals of the new partnership. The first was to keep hospital patient from getting injured or sicker by the end of 2013. Preventable hospital acquired adverse health conditions would decrease 40% by 2013 compared to 2010. This would mean approximately 1.8 million fewer injuries to patients with more than 60,000 lives saved over three year. The second goal was to help patients heal without preventable complications during transition from one care setting to another. This would decrease hospital readmissions by 20% between 2010 and 2013. Steps were to be made to coordinate care to increase the likelihood of a successful recovery and make better use of Medicare and Medicaid dollars. One in three patients admitted to a hospital suffer a medical error or an adverse event, on a given day. Five percent of the patients are infected related to hospital care, and many Medicare patients are harmed in the course of care costing the government \$.4.4 billion. In addition, 250,000 Americans lose their lives each year due to medical errors and many more are harmed by infections and medication-induced complications. Infection prevention strategies to improve health care quality and safety would save both health care dollars and lives.

Disability Prevention

Reducing medical errors is critical to prevention of diminished health and disability because the consequences may contribute to impaired function of social life for considerable periods of time. In addition, there are health disparities issues associated with vulnerable population who lack health insurance, effective treatments and adverse consequences suffered in hospital after care. These conditions can diminish individual health that may contribute to disability.

Activity

There is ongoing study of the impact of hospital medical errors that result in chronic health conditions that may contribute disability.

Principle

Effective evidence based procedures should be employed in hospitals to reduce medical errors.