

Medical Errors in Perspective

Elkhart General participates in the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) Medical Error Reporting Program. This program involves Indiana hospitals reporting specific preventable medical errors to ISDH, which then annually releases all errors in a collective report on their website (www.in.gov/isdh.) From a statistical standpoint, the overwhelming majority of care and procedures performed at Elkhart General are safe. The Hospital participates in this program highlighting medical errors because it helps reinforce the importance of patient safety and the idea that “one medical error is one too many.”

Our Principles

- “Transparency” contributes to improvement and accountability.
- Full and honest reporting of medical errors.
- Complete review & process improvement steps when errors occur.
- Sharing of information among EGH staff as well as with staff from other health care organizations. “Best Practices” often result from information sharing among multiple sources.
- We believe that pursuing perfection is not unrealistic - it’s the right thing to do.
- We protect the confidentiality of practitioners. The event and the process are the focal point of process improvement, not individuals.
- We do not blame. Honest mistakes are a fact of life in every arena of human activity. Blaming drives the truth underground.

Our Approach to Sharing Information

- A full explanation of our patient safety program, including a description of the medical errors reported to ISDH, are available 24/7 on our web site www.egh.org.
- We explain our medical errors on the web site so people better understand what happened and how we are trying to prevent it from happening again.
- We respond to all inquiries from the general public and the media as appropriate to the circumstances.
- We do not talk about medical error reports involving other hospitals or health care organizations.

For further information on medical errors, call Elkhart General Community Relations at (574) 523-3303. For in-depth information on our website ~www.egh.org~ go to the top of the Home Page and click on “About EGH. ” From the “About EGH” page, scroll down and click on “Emphasizing Patient Safety.” This will take you to an introductory article by Elkhart General President Gregory W. Lintjer.