

# Medical Errors in Massage Therapy

Judith DeLany LMT NMT Center - St. Petersburg

## 1999 - The Institute of Medicine reported

- 44,000 - 98,000 deaths occur annually in the United States as a result of medical errors
- 8th leading cause of death - more than MVAs, breast cancer or AIDS
- \$17-29 billion annual cost in the US

## 2011 - The Lancet reported

- As high as 1 in 3 patients encounters a medical error during a hospital stay
- 180,000 – 195,000 deaths per year from medical errors
- Compensation for death from medical errors is rare - < 2% litigate

## 2014 – A Senate Hearing revealed

- #3 Killer in US, second only to heart disease and cancer
- More than 1,000 deaths per day (over 400,000 per year!)
- More than 10,000 cases daily with serious complications from medical errors
- Including indirect costs, such as lost labor, the total yearly bill is over \$1 trillion

## Quality Interagency Coordination Task Force (2000) defines a medical error

- Error as a failure of a planned action to be completed as intended or the use of a wrong plan to achieve an aim.
- Errors can include problems in practice, products, procedure, and systems.

## Typical Errors in Health Care

What about “use” errors?

- Overuse (unnecessary therapy is applied or therapy is continued beyond usefulness)
- Underuse (inadequate use or error in diagnosis fails to apply therapy in timely manner)
- Misuse (a service is inappropriately used)

What can we do?

- Prevent Errors – such as contamination, privacy and therapeutic application
- Make Errors Visible
- Mitigate the Effects of Errors

## Identifying Errors when patient is treated

- No Error Made

**Good outcome OR Bad outcome (unpreventable adverse reaction)**

- Error Made

MINOR or no injury

**Caught (close call) OR Not caught (preventable adverse reaction)**

SERIOUS – results in patient injury

**Caught (close call) OR Not caught (preventable adverse reaction)**

## Preventing Errors – Patient responsibilities

- Tell practitioners about pre-existing conditions
- Tell practitioners about all medications
- Tell practitioners about all reactions to medications
- Ask questions to thoroughly understand all procedures, tests, results and treatments
- Make sure medication received is the one prescribed
- Understand medication/treatment and what to expect

## Preventing Errors – Practitioner responsibilities

- Educate patients
- Record and understand patient's case history
- Understand the patient's medication profile
- Be aware and updated regarding patient's current medications, their side effects, their actions, and all contraindications
- Understand patient's physical profile and how any existing conditions or medications will affect the treatment plan
- Ask clear questions - receive clear answers

## Prevention Solutions avoid crisis management and have to do with

WHY treatment was inadequate - WHY the machine needs repair - WHY cleanup was necessary

DO NOT INCLUDE Removing, Reworking, Redesigning, Fixing things, Cleaning up, Modifying, or Fortifying. These are crisis management and are also very consuming.

## Develop strategies that troubleshoot or prevent errors

- Identify your approach in problem solving
- Develop a systematic investigative procedure
- Gather relevant information through clear questions
- Probe for specific data - get clear answers
- Get to the 'root cause', if possible
- Refer, if needed

## Root cause analysis looks at - **Why? Why? Why?**

### Root Cause Analysis Asks

- What happened?
- Why did it happen?
- What system or process failed?
- What improvements in the system or process would tend to decrease the likelihood of reoccurrence in the future?

### Why Analysis Sometimes Fails

- In health, there may be several 'roots'.
- 'List the Symptoms - Pick a cause' fails to uncover the source
- Only one option per customer is a fallacy and a patient is allowed to have more than one cause of symptoms at a time.
- Grab-Bag Approach; Mixed Bag Approach; Do Everything Approach

**Problem Prevention** - First, see the problem.

- Think beyond the immediate.
- Prioritize protecting against potential problems.
- Gain a greater understanding of “why” things happened.
- Put steps forward to prevent it occurring again.

## **Medical Errors in Massage Therapy**

**Symptoms can be deceptive - Even for the best practitioners!**

An Example:

Monosodium glutamate (MSG) is a drug and neurotransmitter. It is highly regulated chemical of the nervous system. A proper balance is necessary for healthy brain and organ function.

However, adverse reactions to MSG include

Headaches/migraines, nausea/vomiting, stomach upset, diarrhea/irritable bowel, asthma, mood swings, balance difficulties, skin rash, runny nose, short breath, mental confusion, neurological disorders, anxiety/panic attacks, bags under eyes, heart, flushing, partial paralysis, heart palpitations, mouth lesions, depression, behavior disorders, and more...

Sources of MSG include autolysed yeast, calcium caseinate, yeast extraction, hydrolyzed protein, sodium caseinate, gelatin, vegetable gum, textured protein, carrageenan, seasonings, spices, flavoring, natural flavorings, chicken or beef or pork flavorings, whey protein, bouillon, broth, stock, barley malt, malt extract, malt flavoring, soy protein, soy sauce, soy extract, and more.....

Another example:

Breathing Pattern Disorders mask with a number of common symptoms, including Chest pain, feeling tense, blurred vision, dizzy spells, feeling confused, faster or deeper breathing, short of breath, tight feeling in chest, bloated feeling in stomach, tingling fingers, unable to breath deeply, stiff fingers or arms, tight feeling around mouth, cold hands or feet, palpitations, and feelings of anxiety.

\* Nijmegen questionnaire: Patients grades 0-4 points to indicate how often they suffer from the symptoms listed. A score of 23/64 is diagnostic of hyperventilation syndrome and breathing mechanics should be assessed and treated.

Prevent Medical Errors by making more informed decisions to improve the quality of health care.

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