

A recent study entitled **"Adverse Events in Hospitals: National Incidence Among Medicare Beneficiaries"** published on the website for the Office of Inspector General for the Department of Health and Human Services points out that medical errors are still costly in terms of lives and money.

"The study said unexpected adverse events added at least \$4.4 billion a year to government health costs and contributed to the deaths of about 180,000 patients a year" to hospitalized Medicare patients according to an **article published in the New York Times**.

"One in every seven beneficiaries who is hospitalized is harmed as a result of problems with the medical care there." The study states that in 44% of the instances the medical errors were preventable. Dr. Carolyn M. Clancy, director of the federal Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality said medical errors "were affecting hospital patients at an 'alarming rate.'" According to the authors the study is one of the most statistically valid conducted in the field.

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