

MEDIA ADVISORY

WHAT IS BEING DONE TO PREVENT MISDIAGNOSIS?

AS REPORTED IN USA TODAY, DOCTOR'S MISDIAGNOSE 8% - 24% OF THE TIME

WHAT: Experts featured in the September 6 *USA Today* article "For Doctors, Diagnosing Gets a Technological Boost," (www.usatoday.com/news/health/2007-09-05-diagnosis-technology_N.htm?csp=34) available to discuss prevalence of misdiagnosis and prevention.

Misdiagnosis is a failure or delay in diagnosis that typically occurs due to cognitive error – how doctors think. With the exponential increase in biomedical knowledge, is it humanly possible for a physician to remember the various symptoms and signs associated with all diagnoses?

A poll commissioned by the National Patient Safety Foundation found that one in six people have personally experienced a medical diagnosis error. Additionally, a 2003 paper published by the American Medical Association found that at least four percent of all U.S. patients who die in a hospital might have survived had their diagnosis been correct. In fact, it is estimated that diagnosis errors lead to death in as many as one in 20 patient deaths.

A growing number of top-ranked U.S. hospitals are aware of this issue and are now using Isabel, a validated, web-based decision support system to reduce diagnosis error and improve patient safety. In a split second at the point of care, Isabel addresses the question clinicians frequently ask themselves: What are the diagnoses I should be considering? Isabel acts as an instant reminder system and aids the diagnosis process, however, it is up to the provider's clinical judgment to determine which diagnoses to investigate and treat. A 2005 study, conducted at the University of Virginia, found that in one of ten cases, Isabel caused users to consider a major diagnosis that had not been considered.

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