

OVERVIEW

IOWANS' EXPERIENCES AND VIEWS ON MEDICAL ERRORS¹

FINDINGS FROM A SUMMER 2017 SURVEY OF IOWA ADULTS AGE 18 AND OLDER

- ✓ **First-ever survey of Iowans to measure their experiences with medical errors.**
- ✓ **Survey conducted May – June, 2017.**
- ✓ **A total of 1,010 Iowa adults (age 18+) participated, with statistics being accurate to within plus-or-minus 3.1 percent, at the 95 percent confidence level.**
- ✓ **Although the majority of Iowans have not experienced medical errors during the past five years, errors nonetheless, do happen. Many of these errors, according to Iowans, are preventable.**
- ✓ **Survey results reveal that Iowans largely believe that healthcare providers should be required to report when medical errors have been made.**
- ✓ **Key Survey findings include:**
 - Nineteen percent of Iowans say they have personally experienced a preventable medical error in their own care or in the care of someone close to them during the past five years. Over one-third of respondents indicated the error happened personally, and almost six in 10 reported the error happened to someone close to them. Another seven percent shared that errors have happened both personally and with someone close to them.
 - The most common error reported by Iowans was a mistake made during a test, surgery or treatment (60 percent). The second most common error was related to being misdiagnosed (55 percent), whether the patient had a medical problem that was not diagnosed, diagnosed incorrectly – or a delayed diagnosis.
 - The majority of the medical errors (59 percent) occurred at the hospital, while 30 percent of errors occurred at the doctor's office or clinic. Four percent of errors happened in nursing homes.
 - Six in 10 Iowans who experienced a medical error reported having serious health consequences, while another 23 percent indicated minor health consequences.
 - One-third of Iowans who experienced a medical error indicate serious financial consequences.
 - Overall, most Iowans say medical errors have stayed the same (32 percent) or have improved over the last five years (24 percent), yet 18 percent feel errors have worsened and one-quarter are unsure.
- ✓ **The Iowa Patient Safety Study was conducted by Data Point Research, Inc. on behalf of Heartland Health Research Institute. The study was entirely funded by David. P. Lind. A full report is available at HHRI.net**