
ECRI Chief Executive Calls for Patient Safety Changes at OR Manager Conference



Marcus Schabacker, MD, PhD, president and CEO of ECRI, the nation's largest independent patient safety organization, will speak to perioperative leadership about "Where Are We Now with Patient Safety and Quality" in a keynote address at the OR Manager Conference on September 18, 2023.

Preventable medical errors are the leading cause of death for more than 100,000 people each year in the United States (Institute of Medicine).

"Deaths of this magnitude would never be tolerated in commercial aviation, and they certainly are unacceptable in healthcare," says Schabacker, a board-certified anesthesiologist and intensive care specialist. "We must take a different approach to keep patients safe from preventable harm."

Citing proprietary ECRI research and patient safety data analysis, Schabacker will discuss how to take a total systems safety approach to improving perioperative safety. This approach focuses on creating greater efficiency and resilience in clinical and safety operations. It incorporates principles of human factors, systems design engineering, health equity, and advanced safety solutions to redesign how individual components of a system can be more aligned, facilitating healthcare providers to deliver safer and more effective care.

In his talk, Schabacker will also explain how to identify root causes of failure and incorporate strong and reliable actions throughout patients' care journeys. He'll challenge attendees to consider how their teams may be missing the mark on patient safety and how to fix it.

"The new report by the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology shines a national spotlight on the challenges and transformational changes needed to make care safer for patients. Using systemwide processes and improved reporting of adverse events are important components of transparent, equitable care," notes Schabacker.

Surgery is one of the areas where a patient is most likely to suffer an adverse event. Annually, 35.8 million outpatient surgical procedures are performed in hospital-based outpatient settings and freestanding ambulatory surgery centers (Franklin Trust Ratings). Approximately 14% of surgical patients in hospitals experience at least one adverse event (Anderson et al.).

There are six key risk categories of adverse event reports related to operative procedures, according to ECRI's 2020 publication, *Deep Dive: Strategies for Surgical Patient Safety*. The highest percentage of events, 31%, are classified as complications. The complexity of operative procedures means that problems may have ripple effects, causing disruptions, delays, or other consequences for providers, staff, and patients.

"Making improvements to patient safety isn't easy because of the multifaceted nature of healthcare systems," says Schabacker. "Taking a total systems approach that proactively accounts for all factors that affect patient safety is imperative to make impactful and sustainable changes."

[Dr. Schabacker](#) has more than 35 years of healthcare experience in complex global environments, and more than 20 years of senior leadership responsibilities serving the medical device and pharmaceutical industries across the healthcare value chain. In 2018, he became ECRI's third president and CEO in the nonprofit organization's 55-year history.

The OR Manager Conference takes place September 18 to 20, 2023, in Nashville, TN. The annual event attracts more than 900 attendees and

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aims to educate leaders and foster relationships that will exceed expectations in the future of surgical suite management and patient care.

For more information, visit www.ecri.org or contact ECRI at clientservices@ecri.org.

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