

QUICKVIEW

FIRST, DETERMINE WHAT AN ERROR IS

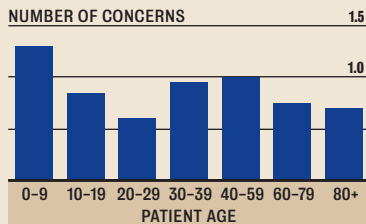
Patients are being encouraged to take an active part in preventing medical errors, but sometimes have a broad definition of what an error is. A study in the January *Joint Commission Journal on Quality and*

Patient Safety found that patients believed health professionals who did not respond to their requests, or did not communicate or listen effectively were committing medical errors. Patients also were concerned an error might be occurring when things didn't "feel right" and health professionals appeared to lack confidence in procedures.

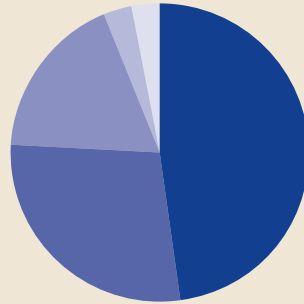
The study, based on a 2002 survey of 1,656 patients contacted within 10 days of discharge from one of 12 Midwestern hospitals, found that 39% of patients believed they experienced at least one medical error, with blacks much more likely than whites or Asians to hold that belief.

Some of the study's findings:

NUMBER OF MEDICAL SAFETY CONCERNS BY PATIENT AGE



OVERALL PERCEIVED LEVEL OF MEDICAL SAFETY



Excellent	48%
Very good	28%
Good	18%
Fair	3%
Poor	3%

TOP PATIENT CONCERNS

1. Medication errors	17%
2. Nurse mistakes	15%
3. Physician mistakes	10%
3. Equipment-related errors	10%
3. Misdiagnosis	10%
4. Wrong test/wrong procedure	8%
5. Mistaken for another patient	6%

SOURCE: "PATIENTS' CONCERNS ABOUT MEDICAL ERRORS DURING HOSPITALIZATION," JANUARY *JOINT COMMISSION JOURNAL ON QUALITY AND PATIENT SAFETY*.

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