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AHRQ News and Numbers

Although there are signs of improvement in some conditions, differences in the quality of health care provided to men and women continue to persist. Women were more likely than men to be hospitalized for high blood pressure in 2003—56 versus 38 per 100,000 population. Hospitalization for high blood pressure can usually be avoided if patients have good quality primary care. [Source: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, *2006 National Healthcare Quality Report*, [report](#).]

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1. U.S. Health Care Sector Moves Rapidly To Provide Consumer Information on Value

Less than a year after launching his Value-Driven Health Care Initiative, HHS Secretary Leavitt announced that more than 100 million Americans are now served by health plans that are committed to providing consumers with transparent quality and cost information. The Federal government; half of the States; about 775 employers, including almost half of the top 200 U.S. corporations; and numerous unions, communities, doctors, and hospitals have joined the movement. In August 2006, President Bush signed an Executive Order committing the Federal government to the "four cornerstones" of value-driven care: health information technology, public reporting of provider quality information, public reporting of cost information, and incentives for value comparison. Select to read the [HHS press release](#). Select for more information on [Value-Driven Health Care](#).

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2. New DVD Will Help Train Health Care Workers to Provide Respiratory Care During Disasters

AHRQ released a DVD titled "Cross Training Respiratory Extenders for Medical Emergencies (Project XTREME)," to train health care professionals who are not respiratory care specialists to provide basic respiratory care and ventilator management to adult patients in any mass casualty event. The DVD includes six training modules with interactive quizzes to test viewers' knowledge. The modules cover

infection control, respiratory care terms and definitions, manual ventilation (using hand-held bags), mechanical ventilation (using the two types of ventilators included in the Federal government's Strategic National Stockpile of medicines and medical supplies for emergencies), airway maintenance, and airway suctioning. The DVD was produced for AHRQ by a team of respiratory care specialists at the Denver Health Medical Center led by Michael Hanley, M.D., as part of Project XTREME. A related report also funded by AHRQ, "Project XTREME: Model for Health Professionals' Cross-Training for Mass Casualty Respiratory Needs," provides further information on the training model as well as the research and methodologies used in developing it. Select to read our [press release](#) and a free, single copy of the DVD and a CD-ROM with the report is available by sending an e-mail to ahrqpubs@ahrq.hhs.gov.

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3. AHRQ Promotes National Women's Health Week

May 13 -19 is National Women's Health Week, which encourages women to take simple steps for a longer, healthier, and happier life. The theme for National Women's Health Week 2007 is "It's Your Time: Pamper Your Mind, Body and Spirit." AHRQ's Women's Health Web page has consumer materials, clinical information by topic, and additional products and research findings from AHRQ relating to women's health. In addition, this week's AHRQ audio podcast features two stories on women's health. The first includes statistics about gender differences, and the second is about screening tests recommended for women by the AHRQ-sponsored U.S. Preventive Services Task Force. The podcast also includes an interview with AHRQ Director Carolyn M. Clancy, M.D., discussing ways to keep children safe from medication errors. Select to access [AHRQ's Women's Health](#) page, which includes a link to the podcast. You can visit to reach the [podcast](#) directly.

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4. AHRQ's CAHPS® Program Releases New Long-Stay Resident Instrument

AHRQ's CAHPS® Consortium has released a survey that can be used to assess the experiences of nursing home residents. The Long-Stay Resident Instrument is the first of three CAHPS® Nursing Home Surveys. Preliminary guidelines for using this instrument are also available; a final protocol will be published on the CAHPS® Web site soon. Select for information about the [CAHPS® Nursing Home Surveys](#).

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5. Free CME Available from Medscape on Task Force Recommendations and New Format

Free continuing education credits are now available for a 2006 U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommendation on screening and supplementation for iron deficiency anemia through Medscape. The CME activity not only highlights the recommendations, but also the design of a new one-page summary of the Task Force recommendation statement specifically intended for practicing clinicians. Many of the questions are designed to provide feedback about the usefulness of this format. Select to participate or review the CME on the iron deficiency recommendation and Task Force one-page recommendation [statement](#). The CME activity is highlighted on the Medscape home page in the Family Practice Specialty Spotlight and will be available until May 2008. Registration on the Medscape Web site is free.

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6. "Improving Health Care, Improving Lives": Save the Date for AHRQ's 2007 Annual Conference

Save the date! AHRQ's 2007 Annual Conference, "Improving Health Care, Improving Lives," will be held September 27-29 in Bethesda, MD. The conference will offer exciting opportunities to learn about the latest AHRQ research ready for use in addressing a variety of clinical and health policy issues. In particular, sessions will feature leading experts active in research and implementation projects aimed at improving quality, safety, efficiency, and effectiveness of care. Stay tuned here for details regarding registration and other key information about attending.

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7. Call for Papers for AHRQ-Sponsored *Health Services Research* Theme Issue

AHRQ is sponsoring the first theme issue for *Health Services Research* on "Improving Efficiency and Value in Health Care." *HSR* is seeking abstracts on research results, advances that improve the reliability and utility of research on efficiency and value, and rigorous methods to evaluate the results to improve efficiency and value. The deadline for submission is August 21. Select to read the [announcement](#).

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8. AHRQ in the Professional Literature

We are providing the following hyperlinks to journal abstracts through PubMed® for your convenience. Unfortunately, some of you may not be able to access the abstracts because of firewalls or specific settings on your individual computer systems. If you are having problems, you should ask your technical support staff for possible remedies.

Scanlon DP, Chernew M, Swaminathan S, et al. Competition in health insurance markets: limitations of current measures for policy analysis. *Med Care Res Rev* 2006 Dec; 63(6 Suppl):37S-55S. Select to read the [abstract](#) in PubMed®.

Nace GS, Graumlich JF, Aldag JC. Software design to facilitate information transfer at hospital discharge. *Inform Prim Care* 2006; 14(2):109-119. Select to read the [abstract](#) in PubMed®.

Mack JW, Wolfe J, Grier HE, et al. Communications about prognosis between parents and physicians of children with cancer; parent preferences and the impact of prognostic information. *J Clin Oncol* 2006 Nov-Dec; 7(6):509-529. Select to read the [abstract](#) in PubMed®.

Ampofo K, Gesteland PH, Bender J, et al. Epidemiology, complications, and cost of hospitalization in children with laboratory-confirmed influenza infection. *Pediatrics* 2006 Dec; 118(12):2409-2417. Select to read the [abstract](#) in PubMed®.

Asplin BR, Flottesch TJ, Gordon BD. Developing models for patient flow and daily surge capacity research. *Acad Emerg Med* 2006 Nov; 13(11):1109-1113. Select to read the [abstract](#) in PubMed®.

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