

Solutions: Back to Basics

The nursing community continues to be plagued with reoccurring problems. A recent article published by Smartmoney.com warns patients about what to look out for when going to the hospital. How can travelers be part of the solution to healthcare issues? I say, start with getting back to basics.

Nursing Shortage

Travelers already serve as somewhat of a solution or patch to the nursing shortage by traveling away from their homes to work in areas with higher needs. It doesn't solve the nursing shortage, but it helps those hospitals in need.

Medication Errors

According to The Institute of Medicine, an average of 1 person per U.S. hospital per day is harmed yearly by administration of wrong drugs. It has been suggested that computerization of hospitals are the solution to medical errors. I am not sure I agree. However, computers can alarm you to noncompatible drugs and dosages. Travelers can't rely on computers. Only 10% of hospitals are completely computerized. Travelers must know their drugs, dosages and double check themselves, especially in new facilities. Sometimes medications are packaged differently or the pharmacy has different way of doing things. You can't make assumptions.

Hospital Related Infections

The latest report is 2 million people a year that get hospital related infections resulting in 90,000 deaths a year. No matter where you are, wash those hands, and wear gowns when you feel it is necessary. Be a traveler that demonstrates good practices wherever you go.

We all know these basic "good practices," but are we taking the time to do them in our busy schedule? This is a reminder to all of us to stick to the basics and be part of the solution to what patients fear when going to the hospital.

Bibliography

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