

Syllabus for OLLI Course

Medical Errors:

How your Healthcare may be Hurting You

Fall 2023 Semester

Introductory Note:

Thank you for registering for this course.

Much of the information may be dry facts, but I will always try to look at the human aspect, and possibly explore the real-life experiences of audience members.

1. Instructor Information:

Néstor A. Ramírez, MD, MPH, FAAP is a retired physician with a specialty in Pediatrics and a sub-specialty in Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine (care of premature and ill newborn infants). See the OLLI classes catalogue for more details. You can contact me at nestorbabydoc@gmail.com before, during and after the course.

2. General Course Information:

Purpose and Plan of this Program: This course aims to explore the history of medical error detection, correction and prevention in the US. We will start with a short executive summary of the seminal study *“To Err is Human”* issued by the Institute of Medicine (IOM, now called National Academy of Medicine) in 1999. This wake-up call generated actions, plans, projects, criticisms and proposed some basic solutions. We will analyze the different types of medical and healthcare system errors, like medication, diagnostic, and surgical errors and how we are currently dealing with them.

The second part of the course will discuss the US healthcare system, its flaws and negative results, and will draw a comparison with other industrialized countries. We will end with a discussion of current conditions, almost 25 years after *“To Err is Human”*.

3. Course objectives: At the end of the sessions, participants should be able to:

- ❖ Understand the basic findings of *“To Err is Human”*, its assumptions and misconceptions.
- ❖ Analyze the fallacies of the media and public perceptions of the results.

- ❖ Visualize the multiple problems of the US healthcare “system”.
- ❖ Comprehend the diagnostic process in medicine.
- ❖ Realize that doctors are not all bad or all good.
- ❖ Understand the faults of the medical education and training processes.
- ❖ Analyze the results of the Commonwealth Fund’s study.
- ❖ Accept that patients have the right and responsibility to be involved in their care.
- ❖ Verbalize possible preventive and/or corrective solutions to the problem.

4. Course policies:

Registered OLLI members can participate in any or all sessions of the 8-week course. If special accommodations are required, they must be requested from and arranged through OLLI administration. Attendees may download all presentation materials which will be available at least one week before each session from the instructor-specific Box in the OLLI website. Out of respect for the time of all participants, short questions and comments during the session are permitted and encouraged. I usually have at least three question sections: at the first and second thirds during the presentation, and one at the end. Longer discussions should be done after the end of each session.

5. Grading and Evaluation:

There is no required reading material. There will not be any type of testing or grading.

6. Learning Resources:

The class presentations will be available in the instructor-specific Box of the OLLI website several days before each session both as PowerPoint and PDF versions. If you don’t have PowerPoint, in the Internet you can find free software to watch PowerPoint presentations on your device.

A *suggested optional supplementary* list of reading or viewing materials is attached and will also be posted on the website. This is alphabetized by title, and is not a formal bibliography. This is intended only to provide references for members who want to dig deeper into a topic. This is totally voluntary. Most of the titles are available at the U of I library and/or the Champaign and Urbana Public libraries.

7. Course Calendar:

Duration: 8 weekly sessions, Tuesdays from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM, from September 7, 2023 through October 26, 2023, **Live** at OLLI. (Unfortunately, no ZOOM or hybrid option is available.)

8. Short description of the course sessions:

- ❖ Session 1 September 7th, 2023: Introduction to the problem.
 - The IOM *To Err is Human* Report of 1999
 - Definitions of terms
 - Medical vs. System errors
 - The concept of Iatrogenesis

- ❖ Session 2 September 14th, 2023: Diagnostic errors.
 - How Doctors are trained to think (or not)
 - The diagnostic process and its pitfalls: overdiagnosis and underdiagnosis
 - Cognitive biases
 - “Cookbook” medicine and diagnosis “Pathways”

- ❖ Session 3 September 21st, 2023: Medication errors and Surgical errors.
 - Incorrect dosages, incorrect medications
 - The “Five Rights” of medication administration
 - **Look -Alike** and **Sound-Alike** medications (LASA)
 - Computerized Physician Order Entry (CPOE)
 - Surgical **Wrong Side, Wrong Site, Wrong Procedure Errors** (WSPEs)
 - Time-outs and Checklists

- ❖ Session 4 September 28th, 2023: Communication Errors.
 - Medication ordering, dispensing, and dosing errors
 - Oral and written miscommunication
 - Nursing strategies to improve communication
 - Language barriers, cultural barriers
 - Health literacy, illiteracy, innumeracy

- ❖ Session 5 October 5th, 2023: The US Health System.
 - Too many disjointed, moving parts in a flawed “system”
 - Our Healthcare Industry
 - Electronic Health Record (EHR) promises and problems
 - Inequities and disparities, lack of Universal coverage

- ❖ Session 6 October 12th, 2023: Science and Technology.
 - Medical research and publication
 - Lab tests and diagnostic imaging
 - Cost of technological advancement
 - The Internet and Dr. Google
 - Telemedicine and Digital Hospital
 - Big Pharma and Direct to Consumer Advertising (DTCA)

- ❖ Session 7 October 19th, 2023: Comparison with other countries.

- The Commonwealth Fund Report
 - US has highest cost with poorest outcomes
 - Better technology does not give better care
 - US is last in administrative efficiency
- ❖ Session 8 October 26th, 2023: Solutions, Prevention, Reduction, Elimination (?)
- Government and Private sector collaboration
 - Positive reinforcements and negative coercions
 - Specific responsibilities
 - Patient individual awareness and self-protection

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Suggested Optional Reading/Reference List

(Alphabetical by Title)

1. **Avoiding Medical Errors**, One Hundred Rules to Help You Survive Mistakes by Doctors and Hospitals. Fox, Robert M and Landon, Chris. Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham, MD, 2020.
2. **Caring for Patients from Different Cultures**. Galanti, Geri-Ann. PENN University of Pennsylvania Press, 4th Edition, Philadelphia, PA, 2008.
3. **Checklist Manifesto (The)**, How to Get Things Right. Gawande, Atul. Metropolitan Books, Henry Holt and Company, New York, NY, 2009.
4. **Complications**, A Surgeon's Notes on an Imperfect Science. Gawande, Atul. Picador, Henry Holt and Company, New York, NY, 2002.
5. **Creative Destruction of Medicine (The)**. Topol, Eric. Basic Books, Perseus Books Group, New York, NY, 2012.
6. **Doctors Make Mistakes. Can We Talk About That?** Goldman, Brian. TED Talk, www.TED.com, November, 2011.

7. **Ending Medical Reversal**, Improving Outcomes, Saving Lives. Prasad, Vinayak K., and Cifu, Adam S. Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore MD, 2015.
8. **Hippocrates' Shadow**, What Doctors don't know, don't tell you, and how truth can repair the Patient-Doctor Breach. Newman, David H. Scribner Books, New York, 2008
9. **How Doctors Think**. Groopman, Jerome. Mariner Book, Houghton Mifflin Company, New York, NY, 2007.
10. **How do We Heal Medicine?** Gawande, Atul. TED Talk, www.TED.com , March 2012.
11. **Laws of Medicine (The)**, Field Notes from an Uncertain Science. Mukherjee, Siddhartha. TED Books, Simon and Schuster, New York, NY, 2015.
12. **Medical Harm**, Historical, Conceptual and Ethical Dimensions of Iatrogenic Illness. Sharpe, Virginia A. and Faden, Alan I. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, 1998.
13. **National Action Plan for Adverse Drug Event Prevention**, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Washington, DC, 2014.
14. **To Err is Human**, Building a Better Health System. The Institute of Medicine, National Academies Press, Washington DC 2000.
15. **When Doctors Don't Listen**, How To Avoid Misdiagnoses and Unnecessary Tests. Wen, Leana, and Kosowsky, Joshua. Thomas Dunne Books, New York, NY, 2012.
16. **When We Do Harm**, A Doctor Confronts Medical Errors. Ofri, Danielle. Boston Press, Boston, MA, 2020.