

National Quality Forum
Serious Reportable Events in Healthcare

The National Quality Forum (NQF) periodically issues a list of *Serious Reportable Events in Healthcare*, designed to form the basis for a national, state-based adverse events reporting system.¹ Last updated in 2006, this list identifies 28 serious, preventable events that should be reported on a per-incident basis:

Surgical events:

1. Surgery performed on the wrong body part
2. Surgery performed on the wrong patient
3. Wrong surgical procedure performed on a patient
4. Unintended retention of a foreign object in a patient after surgery or other procedure
5. Intraoperative or immediately post-operative death in an ASA Class I patient

Product or device events:

6. Patient death or serious disability associated with the use of contaminated drugs, devices, or biologics provided by the health care facility
7. Patient death or serious disability associated with the use or function of a device in patient care, in which the device is used for functions other than as intended
8. Patient death or serious disability associated with intravascular air embolism that occurs while being cared for in a health care facility

Patient protection events:

9. Infant discharged to the wrong person
10. Patient death or serious disability associated with patient elopement (disappearance)
11. Patient suicide, or attempted suicide resulting in serious disability, while being cared for in a health care facility

Care management events:

12. Patient death or serious disability associated with a medication error (e.g., errors involving the wrong drug, wrong dose, wrong patient, wrong time, wrong rate, wrong preparation, or wrong route of administration)
13. Patient death or serious disability associated with a hemolytic reaction due to the administration of ABO/HLA-incompatible blood or blood products

Care management events (continued):

14. Maternal death or serious disability associated with labor or delivery in a low-risk pregnancy while being cared for in a health care facility

¹ NQF is a nonprofit organization created to develop and implement a national strategy for health care quality measurement and reporting. It was established as a public-private partnership with participation from all parts of the health care system, including national, state, regional and local groups representing industry, government and consumer stakeholders. More information is available at: www.qualityforum.org

15. Patient death or serious disability associated with hypoglycemia, the onset of which occurs while the patient is being cared for in a health care facility
16. Death or serious disability (kernicterus) associated with failure to identify and treat hyperbilirubinemia in neonates
17. Stage 3 or 4 pressure ulcers acquired after admission to a health care facility
18. Patient death or serious disability due to spinal manipulative therapy
19. Artificial insemination with the wrong donor sperm or wrong donor egg

Environmental events:

20. Patient death or serious disability associated with an electric shock while being cared for in a health care facility
21. Any incident in which a line designated for oxygen or other gas to be delivered to a patient contains the wrong gas or is contaminated by toxic substances
22. Patient death or serious disability associated with a burn incurred from any source while being cared for in a health care facility
23. Patient death associated with a fall while being cared for in a health care facility
24. Patient death or serious disability associated with the use of restraints or bedrails while being cared for in a health care facility

Criminal events:

25. Any instance of care ordered by or provided by someone impersonating a licensed health care provider
26. Abduction of a patient of any age
27. Sexual assault on a patient within or on the grounds of the health care facility
28. Death or significant injury of a patient or staff member resulting from a physical assault (i.e., battery) that occurs within or on the grounds of the health care facility