

Preface

Pathology Patient Safety



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Guest Editor

The 1999 Institute of Medicine report increased the national awareness of medical errors and patient safety. Pathology departments have been tracking quality measures for decades; although this increased focus on patient safety has affected how pathologists measure and assess practice quality.

The articles in this issue of the *Clinics in Laboratory Medicine* touch upon patient safety in both the anatomic and clinical pathology laboratory. Condel and colleagues discuss how industrial methods of patient safety may be applied to anatomic pathology laboratories, and I report on a federally funded grant designed to improve anatomic pathology practice using cytologic–histologic discrepancies. Becich and colleagues present data on how informatics, including the use of national databases, may be used in error reduction practices. Grzybicki discusses barriers to the implementation of error reduction methods, and her work has import for both the clinical and anatomic pathology laboratories. Pathology patient safety is also an important international issue, and Suba reports on developing national patient safety initiatives designed to improve cytology laboratories. The College of American Pathologists has long focused on patient safety measures; Novis discusses the Q-PROBES and Q-TRACKS programs specifically focused on error. Valenstein and Sirota outline the importance of identification errors in the clinical laboratory, and Meier and Jones discuss patient safety in point-of-care testing. Stankovic outlines the role of the clinical laboratory in patient safety. All of these articles present current

data and offer a fresh perspective on what pathologists are doing to address medical errors.

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