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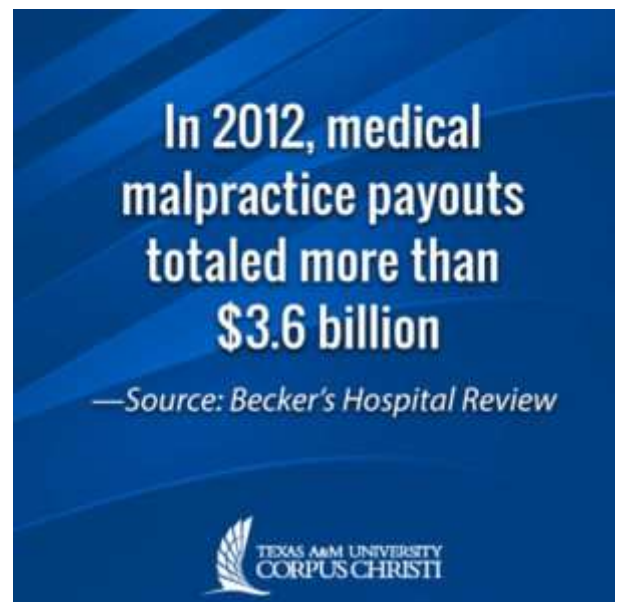


Malpractice and Its Effects on the Healthcare Industry

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For healthcare providers, there is perhaps no word that elicits as much confusion, fear and anger as “malpractice.” It is often the topic of impassioned debate among political leaders, policymakers, insurance companies and nonprofit groups. It even occasionally informs the storylines of Hollywood blockbusters, which tend to portray the subject as black-and-white.

The truth, however, is much more complex. A key issue within any healthcare system, malpractice is a continually evolving and controversial subject. Although the effects of malpractice appear to apply mainly to doctors, patients and lawyers, any case of medical malfeasance affects healthcare providers at all levels, especially those in managerial and leadership positions.



How Does Malpractice Affect Society and the Healthcare Industry?

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malpractice claims are the leading cause of escalating healthcare costs. The worry is that as malpractice legal suits become more commonplace, and claimants receive settlements for millions of dollars, patients will have to swallow some of these costs through higher insurance premiums and doctor's fees.

Malpractice insurance premiums for doctors can also affect patients. The premiums can vary drastically by state and by medical specialty. Rising premiums may cause doctors to move to states with more manageable costs, which in turn will greatly influence patient access to the best doctors. Access to healthcare may grow increasingly limited in areas where premiums are especially high.

Another concern for patients arises from doctors practicing "defensive medicine," a euphemism for the ordering of additional tests and procedures that are not strictly necessary but provide protection against claims of negligence and malpractice charges.

Likewise, the effects of malpractice on doctors and other healthcare professionals is substantial. Being involved in a legal suit rarely involves only the insurance companies and the lawyers resolving the matter. Rather, it is a great cause of stress in a healthcare professional's life. It can make professionals question their abilities, which can in turn affect their job performance. In some cases, when the cost of malpractice insurance becomes too high, healthcare providers leave the industry to find work in a related field that carries less risk of litigation.

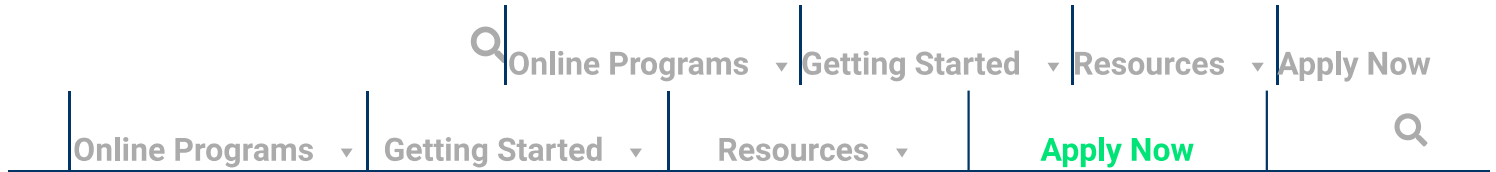
Your Role as a Healthcare Administrator

Those aspiring to leadership roles in the medical services industry must familiarize themselves with the effects of malpractice. Senior executives and managers in the healthcare field will need at least a basic understanding of such things as duty of care, causation and negligence — as well as the laws and policies regarding malpractice and insurance that vary by state.

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An online MBA program with a concentration in healthcare administration can offer future healthcare executives the skills to tackle the complex challenges facing the healthcare industry.

Learn more about the [TAMUCC online MBA with a Concentration in Healthcare Administration program](#).

Sources:

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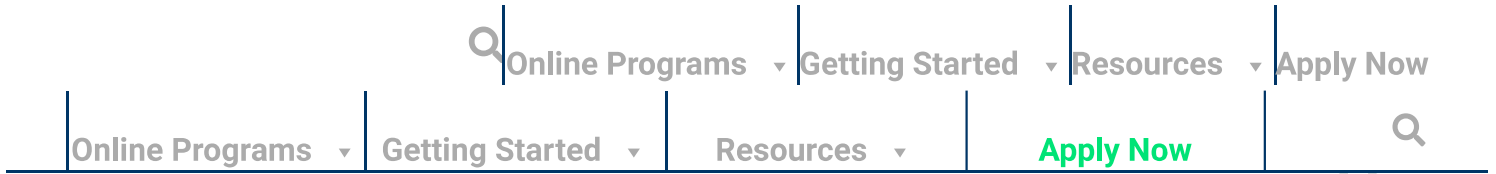
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