

Wilford Hall Surgical Services commander wins award in Journal Writers' Contest
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3/14/2008 - LACKLAND AIR FORCE BASE, Texas -- Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Payne, 59th Surgical Services Flight commander, recently published an article in the Association of PeriOperative Registered Nurses Journal. The article won an award in the research category of the 2007 AORN Journal Writers' Contest.

The article, titled "Pediatric Medication Errors in the Postanesthesia Care Unit: Analysis of MEDMARX Data," addressed the significantly higher errors in calculations, decimal points and dosage form confusion of postanesthesia medication in the pediatric population when compared to the overall population. The article referenced U.S. hospitals in general and was not concentrated on one specific medical center.

MEDMARX is a national, Internet-accessible database that hospitals and health care systems use to track and trend adverse drug reactions and medication errors.

Colonel Payne and his colleagues wrote the article when they were perioperative clinical nurse specialist students at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences. As a USUHS student, Colonel Payne was allowed access to data from the United States Pharmacopeia, for pediatric medication errors in the post anesthesia care unit.

Colonel Payne, along with his colleagues, provided analysis of the data, interpreted the medication error events and provided implications for practice. The article associated inaccuracies with specific medications frequently used in the PACU that are more likely to cause harm in a pediatric patient. It also explained the dosages, causes and severity of errors. The article concluded with recommendations for safe medication use in the pediatric population.

His interest in the topic was aimed at producing awareness in operating room nurses of patient safety needs for pediatric care.

"The math involved can complicate dosages for pediatric patients. When a nurse is more accustomed to dealing with adults, something as small as misplacing the decimal point can have tremendous affects on a child," said Colonel Payne. "Patient safety is our number one priority, and is what nursing is all about."

<http://www.whmc.af.mil/news/story.asp?storyID=123090261>