

## **A systematic review of failures in handoff communication during intrahospital transfers.**

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Ong M-S, Coiera E. A systematic review of failures in handoff communication during intrahospital transfers. Jt Comm J Qual Patient Saf. 2011;37(6):274-284.

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Communication failures at the time of patient [handoffs](#) have been frequently [implicated](#) in adverse events. While an extensive body of literature addresses handoff problems at shift changes, this systematic review investigates a less studied problem—adverse events arising from transferring patients between hospital units (e.g., from the [emergency department to the inpatient floor](#)). In addition to multiple studies documenting an alarming frequency of errors in such situations, this review identified several studies that successfully implemented [interventions](#) to reduce errors in intrahospital transfers. The review summarizes the key issues pertaining to safety in intrahospital transfers and suggests improvement strategies in each domain. An AHRQ WebM&M [commentary](#) discusses the tragic consequences of poor communication when a critically ill patient was transported from the inpatient ward to the radiology department.