

Catching a Wave

How seizing an opportunity led to a NICU's 47% reduction in ADEs

"If you want to do something opportunistically, you have to catch that wave before it hits the shore," says Frank H. Morriss, Jr., M.D., Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Iowa, and a member of the Division of Neonatology at the University of Iowa Children's Hospital in Iowa City.

When Dr. Morriss and his colleague, Paul W. Abramowitz, Pharm.D., University of Iowa's Pharmacy Director – and the 2009 recipient of the Harvey A.K. Whitney Award – learned that the hospital was planning to install a BCMA system, they saw a unique opportunity for a potentially significant research study. But they had to move fast to make it happen.

The resulting observational study, "Effectiveness of Medication Barcode Scanning in a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit," measured adverse drug event (ADE) rates before and after implementation of a bar code medication administration (BCMA) system, showed a 47% decrease in ADEs, and contributed solid evidence to the body of literature about BCMA systems – demonstrating that such systems not only reduce medication errors but also reduce harm to patients.

[How'd they do it? Read more!](#)



Dr. Frank Morriss and Dr. Paul Abramowitz outside of the University of Iowa Children's Hospital NICU.



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