**Subject area/course**: Science/Anatomy & Physiology, Biology

**Grade level/band**: 11-12

**Task source**: Educational Policy Improvement Center (EPIC); Original Author: Donna Carter

**Investigating Medical Mistakes**

**STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS**

1. **Task context**:

Even well meaning, well-prepared individuals occasionally make mistakes on the job. In the healthcare industry, these mistakes can have severe consequences for both the patient and the medical professional. In 2011, the medical journal “Health Affairs,” published a study showing that one in three people admitted to hospitals suffers a medical error or accident.

As a current healthcare student, you will be investigating the issue of medical mistakes in a sector of the healthcare industry that you find most interesting and developing a journal article to share with your colleagues at an upcoming medical conference to be hosted next month at your local hospital. You will conduct research to findthree related incidents (e.g., three incidents of wrong-site surgery or three incidents of adverse drug effects) and then use evidence from your research in your journal article. Your journal article will focus on the following question:

**What was the impact of the mistakes on the human body systems that were directly affected? How might these mistakes affect other body systems?**

You will want to consider the following questions as well to support your findings:

* How do professionals identify/define "medical mistakes" in your selected area of interest?
* What specific mistakes did the professionals make in these cases, and what caused them?
* What were the physical, emotional, and professional "costs" to both the patient and practitioner in these cases?
* What might the long-term impact of the medical mistakes be on both the patient and practitioner?
* Are there currently practiced industry safeguards to help prevent these mistakes?
* What additional interventions might you propose to prevent reoccurrences? What is the feasibility of these interventions?

1. **Final product**:

You will be writing a 3–4 page journal article investigating medical mistakes. Be sure to include evidence from your research, create a Works Cited page, and cite your sources using either MLA or APA style.

**additional information**

1. **Knowledge and skills you will need to demonstrate on this task:**

* The major functions of the human body systems and how they operate together to maintain homeostasis
* How disruptions to one human body system may affect the normal functioning of another body system
* How to critically read and evaluate scientific writing and how to use evidence to support your evaluation
* Correct MLA or APA citation methods
* Conduct independent research
* Determine strengths and weaknesses of resources collected
* Produce a coherent, well-reasoned analysis that integrates the central ideas of the texts

1. **Materials needed:**

* Internet access to conduct research
* Word processing software

1. **Time requirements:**

You will have approximately nine days to complete this task. You may be asked to finish writing or revising your journal article for homework.

1. **Scoring:**

Your work will be scored using the SCALE Scientific Literacy Rubric, Grades 11-12. You should make sure you are familiar with the language that describes the expectations for proficient performance.