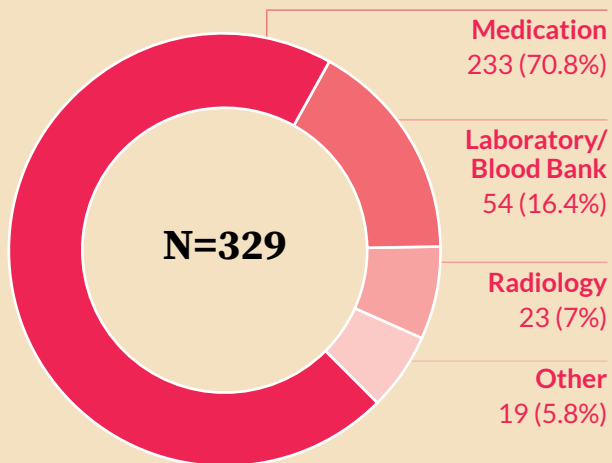


Free Text as Part of Electronic Health Record Orders: Context or Concern?



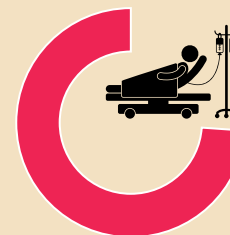
The objective of our study was to develop a deeper understanding of the conditions under which free-text information, or special instructions, are used in the electronic health record and the patient safety issues associated with their use, through a qualitative analysis of **329 patient safety event reports**.

Special instruction reports were related to



Issues associated with special instructions included:

- **Contradictory Information**
62 (18.8%)
- **Confusing, Incorrect, or Incorrect Use**
58 (17.6%)
- **Not Seen**
25 (7.6%)
- **Not Viewable**
11 (3.3%)
- **Instructions Absent**
11 (3.3%)



The error **reached the patient** in roughly three quarters (n=243 of 329, 73.9%) of the reports reviewed.

Based on our analysis, we provide recommendations regarding EHR design and policies and protocols to address patient safety issues associated with free text to **enable safer and more resilient care delivery**.

