

Joint Commission Online

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Quality and safety

Quick Safety focuses on use of telehealth to deliver safe patient care



During the COVID-19 pandemic, use of telehealth services has skyrocketed — enabling the timely delivery and continuity of safe patient care while preventing exposure to the coronavirus.

The use of telehealth to deliver safe patient care is the focus of a new issue of *Quick Safety*.

Continuity of care is crucial for patients that have chronic disease, as well as the elderly and behavioral health care patients who require routine check-ins. Other benefits of telehealth include:

- Promoting social distancing.
- Aiding in monitoring the progression of home-quarantined COVID-19 patients.
- Enabling providers who are quarantined but asymptomatic to provide care remotely from their homes, thus mitigating the loss of highly needed resources.
- Reducing the use of personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Helping patients with transportation barriers connect with their care providers.

[Read](#) the latest *Quick Safety*.

Application deadline for the Eisenberg Awards extended through Nov. 20

The application deadline for the [John M. Eisenberg Patient Safety and Quality Awards](#), presented by The Joint Commission and National Quality Forum (NQF), has been extended through Friday, Nov. 20.

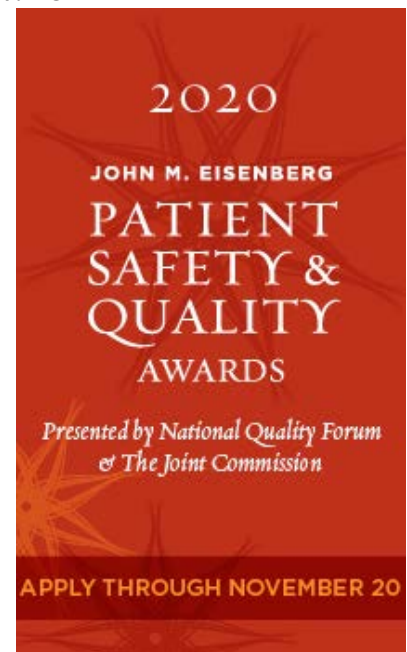
The awards recognize major achievements by individuals and organizations to improve patient safety and health care quality. Awards are presented in three categories:

- **Individual Achievement** – Individuals who have demonstrated exceptional leadership and scholarship in patient safety and health care quality through a *substantive lifetime body of work*.
- **National Level Innovation in Patient Safety and Quality** – A project or initiative that extends beyond local areas to being implemented on a national level.
- **Local Level Innovation in Patient Safety and Quality** – A project or initiative that effects impact at the local community, organization or regional level (e.g., statewide).

Health care organizations submitting nominations for the Local or National Level Innovation in Patient Safety and Quality awards must be able to provide evidence of sustained improvements made by their initiative for at least 12 months. Exceptions will be made to this rule for initiatives related to COVID-19 and pandemic response efforts, as The Joint Commission and NQF recognize the need to share best practices for the rapid improvement of COVID-19 patient care nationwide.

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To provide an example, an initiative related to the improvement of care for COVID-19 patients will likely best fit under the Local or National Level Innovation in Patient Safety and Quality awards to recognize improvements made by an organization. While a commendable individual may have led one of these local- or national-level initiatives, the Individual Achievement award will recognize one person's substantive lifetime body of work and is not intended for contribution to a single initiative. The Joint Commission and NQF may recommend moving a submission to another category to better fit the contents of the submission.

All nominations and the \$400 application fee must be submitted by Nov. 20 for consideration.

[Submit a nomination](#) or email Susan Funk for any [questions about the application](#).

Accreditation and certification

Comment now on potential new water management program standard

The Joint Commission is seeking feedback on a newly proposed water management program standard for accredited hospitals, critical access hospitals and nursing care centers.

The new standard and its elements of performance aim to help organizations reduce the number of cases related to waterborne pathogens that occur in their facilities through the implementation of a comprehensive water management program. The standard is based on guidance from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, as well as from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers.

[Comment now](#). Feedback will be accepted through Nov. 16. (Contact: Meghann Adams, madams@jointcommission.org)

Resources

Up in the blogosphere with The Joint Commission

- **Improvement Insights** — [National Action Plan to Advance Patient Safety](#): The Joint Commission — along with 26 influential federal agencies, safety organizations and experts, and patient and family advocates — worked diligently over the past few years to develop “Safer Together: A National Action Plan to Advance Patient Safety.” I had the privilege of representing The Joint Commission as an NSC member, writes Ana Pujols McKee, MD, Executive Vice President and Chief Medical Officer.
- **Ambulatory Buzz** — [Ambulatory Care Staff Honor Program's Anniversary](#): While we can't gather to celebrate the 45th anniversary of The Joint Commission's Ambulatory Care Program, we wanted to take some time to reflect on how this program has contributed to better care for patients in U.S. outpatient and ambulatory care organizations.

Learn more about [Joint Commission Resources](#)' offerings online or call 877-223-6866.

