Joint Commission's president talks about high reliability in new PS Net podcast

Mark R. Chassin, MD, MPP, MPH, president and chief executive officer of The Joint Commission, remembers when he was working at a hospital, struggling alongside his colleagues with quality and safety problems. To him, it was as if the team would have to “invent a new solution” for every problem they encountered, because early interventions and available guidance didn’t always work — or succeed at the rate desired.

Simply put, there was a need for high reliability approaches in health care — a topic Dr. Chassin recently spoke about for a podcast with the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality’s Patient Safety Network.

“Every developed health care system around the world is struggling with exactly the same quality and safety problems, so it became clear that we had to look outside health care,” Dr. Chassin said during the interview.

Dr. Chassin told the interviewer, Dr. Robert M. Wachter, that The Joint Commission put a team together to absorb everything it could — “from academics and from practitioners in high reliability industries” — to learn their high reliability practices.

“It became very clear that you couldn’t take what high reliability organizations do and force that on health care today,” Dr. Chassin said. “We had to marry what we were learning from all of that work with what we know from our very deep understanding (we do 13,000 surveys in the United States every year) of where health care is falling short.”

Dr. Chassin said that led The Joint Commission to propose three major domains of change:

- Leadership commitment to getting to the ultimate goal of zero patient harm
- Establishing a safety culture
- Use of Robust Process Improvement® (RPI®) tools, such as Lean, Six Sigma and Change Management

The conversation delved further into the topic of high reliability, as well as the creation of the Joint Commission Center for Transforming Healthcare to promote high reliability and transformative practices. Listen to the [podcast](#) or read the [transcript](#) of the interview.

April is Workplace Violence Prevention Month: Learn about available resources

Health care workers are five times more likely to be victims of violence than workers in other occupations, according to a Bureau of Labor Statistics report. Another report, from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), states that 21 percent of registered nurses and nursing students have reported being physically assaulted — while more than 50 percent reported being verbally abused during a 12-month period.
April is National Workplace Violence Prevention Month, and throughout the month, The Joint Commission plans to call attention to the issue in health care settings, to promote prevention and highlight available resources.

These resources include the Workplace Violence Prevention and Emergency Management Resources portals, as well as various publications and presentations. Kim McCullough, MA, associate director, Communications, The Joint Commission, recently detailed some of these resources in a Dateline @ TJC blog post, “One-Stop Shopping for Workplace Violence Prevention Resources.”

Some resources contributed to the Workplace Violence Prevention portal from the field include:

- Sample policies related to armed intruder/active shooter situations, workplace violence and assault, bomb threats and more, provided by Western Connecticut Health Network.
- A presentation from Loma Linda University Health discussing its response to the 2015 San Bernardino mass shooting, and lessons learned as a result.

Organizations are invited to submit their workplace violence prevention materials to The Joint Commission for consideration for placement on the portal. Send your contributions to wpv_info@jointcommission.org.

The Joint Commission’s outreach on this issue is part of its mission and vision to continuously improve the quality and safety of health care for the public, in collaboration with other stakeholders, across all settings. It also supports the ongoing alliance with OSHA to provide health care workers and others in the health care industry with information, guidance and access to training resources to help them protect employees’ health and safety.

**Occupational Health Safety Network can help organizations improve workplace safety**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) encourages health care facilities to enroll in the Occupational Health Safety Network (OHSN) and participate in a system that assists with and drives the development of occupational safety and health implementation strategies — keeping health care workers safe and healthy on the job in a direct and efficient way.

OHSN is a free, voluntary system that can help health care organizations improve their workplace safety and health by using existing injury data among health care personnel to identify those at highest risk and to develop interventions. Hospitals that participate join a network of data-sharing organizations that can:

- Analyze and report workplace-specific data to illustrate the magnitude of injury and illness events
- Identify trends in a facility
- Access a library of resources specific to the health care sector
- Share lessons learned

Also, OHSN is a resource of a Joint Commission monograph, “Improving Patient and Worker Safety: Opportunities for Synergy, Collaboration, and Innovation.”

OHSN released two new modules to help hospitals track sharps injury and blood and body fluid exposure. An additional benefit of the modules is that the data collected can be used to help meet both Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulatory and Joint Commission accreditation requirements. These data can be used to hone in on trends in the hospital, highlight the specific area of risk, and provide the opportunity to implement tailored prevention strategies and measure their impact.
More and more hospitals are using OHSN to: analyze their data in minute detail, with user-friendly and visually appealing graphs and charts; and to monitor patterns of injuries while identifying the most promising prevention strategies.

OHSN has additional modules on:
- Slips, trips and falls
- Patient handling injuries
- Workplace violence

These, with the sharps injury and blood and body fluid exposure, are the five common, high risk, preventable injury and exposure events among health care workers. Learn more about the modules or how to enroll.

Certification

Michigan hospital, home care organization first to earn Medication Compounding Certification

Genesys Regional Medical Center, Grand Blanc, Michigan, and Home I.V. Care, Inc., Madison Heights, Michigan, are the first organizations to receive The Joint Commission's Medication Compounding Certification.

Medication Compounding Certification is based on standards from the U.S. Pharmacopeial Convention (USP®) to help compounding pharmacies ensure compliance with standards related to the process, testing and verification of compounded sterile and nonsterile preparations.

“The Joint Commission congratulates Genesys Regional Medical Center and Home I.V. Care, Inc. for being the first organizations to receive this important achievement in their fields,” said Patrick Phelan, executive director, Hospital Business Development at The Joint Commission.

“These two organizations have demonstrated commitment to strengthening their medication compounding policies and procedures to reduce risk and harm for the patients they serve,” said Margherita Labson, RN, executive director of the Home Care Accreditation program at The Joint Commission.

Medication or pharmacy compounding is when a licensed pharmacist combines, mixes or alters ingredients to create a prescription medication tailored to the medical needs of a patient. The practice became a widespread patient safety and quality concern after a 2012 multistate meningitis outbreak from a contaminated compounded medication. As a result, many state legislatures and boards of pharmacy began to enhance and strengthen their laws and regulations, including Michigan, where The Joint Commission piloted its certification program in response to a requirement from the state board of pharmacy for compounding pharmacies to obtain certification. The Joint Commission expects to certify more than 75 organizations in Michigan by early 2017.

To help compounding pharmacies comply with these laws and regulations, as well as to achieve optimal patient safety and quality of care in compounding practices, The Joint Commission's Medication Compounding Certification provides states with an independent evaluation and validation of compliance with leading best practices and USP General Chapters <795> (non-sterile preparations) and <797> (sterile preparations), as well as the use and preparation of hazardous drugs, which will be addressed in the upcoming USP <800>.

The Medication Compounding Certification program, awarded for a two-year period, launched on Jan. 1. All compounding pharmacies operating in or shipping to states with regulations that require compliance with USP General Chapters <795> and/or <797> are eligible to achieve the certification. Learn more about Medication Compounding Certification.
Resources

Up in the blogosphere with The Joint Commission

- **On Infection Prevention & Control** — [Putting a Stop to Medication Compounding-Related Infections](#): Cases of fungal meningitis, bacterial bloodstream infections and other types of infections have been linked to contamination during medication compounding, a process when a pharmacy mixes or "compounds" chemical ingredients into a finished medication.

- **@ Home with The Joint Commission** — [Don't Re-Use Glucometers, Fingerstick Devices and Lancets](#): Don't risk a condition-level deficiency. Margherita Labson, RN, MS, executive director, Home Care Accreditation program, writes about the correct use of lancet, fingerstick and glucometer devices.

- **Ambulatory Buzz** — [Register Today for May 9-10 Ambulatory Care 'Accreditation Essentials'](https://www.jointcommission.org/): There are plenty of new developments at The Joint Commission that make it more important than ever to attend the Ambulatory Care "Accreditation Essentials" program, from May 9-10.

Learn more about [Joint Commission Resources](https://www.jointcommission.org/) offerings online or call 877-223-6866.