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Patient safety

Latest Quick Safety focuses on curbing MRI risks
The Joint Commission’s latest Quick Safety highlights the need for creating MRI safety programs in order to prevent safety events, as there is a potential for injury because of the strong electromagnetic fields used in MR scanning. Some of these hazards include:

- Dislodging medical or other implants
- Tissue heating
- Induced electrical currents
- Equipment or materials becoming dangerous missiles or projectiles
- Interrupting patient monitoring equipment

The Quick Safety states the development of a complete and efficient screening procedure for all individuals in the MR setting is one of the most critical components of a comprehensive safety program. It suggests, among other things, using an MR Item Classification System to test items that will be brought near the MRI scanner.

Learn more about the issue and safety actions to consider.

Joint Commission staff to speak at Patient Experience Summit in May
The Joint Commission’s Ana Pujols McKee, MD, executive vice president and chief medical officer; Dawn Allbee, MA, director of corporate Robust Process Improvement® (RPI®); and Christina Cordero, PhD, MPH, project director in the Division of Healthcare Quality Evaluation, are scheduled to speak at this year’s Patient Experience: Empathy + Innovation Summit.

The eighth annual conference is set for May 22-24, at the Cleveland Convention Center in Ohio. The Joint Commission is a sponsor of the event.

McKee is scheduled to speak on “Empathy and High Reliability,” at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, May 23.

Allbee and William Choctaw, MD, JD, CSSBB, chief transformation officer at Citrus Valley Health Partners, are scheduled to speak on “Improving Patient Care and Organizational Culture Through Robust Process Improvement®,” on May 23, at 9:40 a.m. This workshop will teach the tools and methodologies of The Joint Commission’s RPI process, as well as how it helped Citrus Valley Health Partners improve their patient care and experiences.

Cordero will take part in a panel discussion, “How Collecting and Using Race, Ethnicity and Language Data Leads to Better Patient Experience and Engagement,” from 3-3:50 p.m. on May 23.

The Patient Experience Summit brings together leaders, stakeholders and experts who are interested in not only providing the best care but also delivering the best “human experience.” The theme of this year’s
summit is “Empathy by Design,” and some of the featured topics are: care technology and innovation; communication; continuous improvement; engagement; and quality and safety.

Learn more about the Patient Experience Summit.

Accreditation

Comment by May 1 on proposed revisions to NPSGs related to suicide
The Joint Commission is considering revising the National Patient Safety Goals pertaining to suicide risk assessment. Your input can help determine how to better identify and treat individuals with behavioral health diagnoses that may point to suicide risk.

Suicide is now the 10th leading cause of death, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) — accounting for more deaths annually than traffic accidents and homicides. Despite the increase, suicidal ideation often goes undetected by health care teams.

The proposed NPSG changes affect the hospital and behavioral health care accreditation programs, and the NPSG is proposed as a new requirement for critical access hospitals. Comments are due by May 1.

Resources

Free toolkit on safe use of health IT for patient identification
The Partnership for Health IT Patient Safety released a free resource for patient identification using health information technology (IT). The Joint Commission’s Gerry Castro, PhD, MPH, project director for patient safety initiatives, participated on a 45-member workgroup that contributed to the development of the toolkit.

“Health IT Safe Practices: Toolkit for the Safe Use of Health IT for Patient Identification” details eight safe practice recommendations in two key areas:
- Attributes, which addresses the information-gathering aspects of patient identification, such as the fields and formats.
  - Include: Electronic fields containing patient identification data should consistently use standard identifier conventions.
  - Detect: Use a confirmation process to help match the patient and the documentation.
  - Evaluate: Use standard attribute formats in all transactions to improve matching.
  - Normalize: Use a standard display of patient attributes across the various systems.
- Technology, which addresses new ways in improving identification methods, as well as improving older technologies.
  - Tailor: Include distinguishing information enhancing identification on screens, printouts, and those areas that require interventions.
  - Innovate: Integrate new technologies to facilitate and enhance identification.
  - Follow up: Implement monitoring systems to readily detect identification errors.
  - Yield: Include high-specificity active alerts and notifications to facilitate proper identification.

According to the report, while technology can introduce its own set of risks – for instance, errors can be rapidly disseminated electronically – harnessing the benefits of technology to facilitate accurate and complete identification is imperative in order to avoid the safety risks introduced by the rapid and diffuse propagation of incorrect identification information.

ECRI Institute has additional resources in the area, including a special report on patient identification errors.
New Take 5 podcast focuses on Fire Drill matrix tool
The Joint Commission’s Environment of Care (EC) standard EC.02.03.03 requires health care organizations to conduct fire drills, as well as to critique the drill in order to evaluate the fire safety equipment, building features and staff response.

This evaluation must be documented, and The Joint Commission has developed a tool, the Fire Drill Matrix, to help guide the fire drill evaluation. This tool — which can be accessed on an organization’s Joint Commission Connect™ extranet website — is a useful resource to help organizations correctly document their compliance with these requirements.

The Joint Commission’s Life Safety Code Field Director, Jim Kendig, spoke about the tool for a podcast — Take 5: The Environment of Care Fire Drill Matrix Tool. [6:22]

Up in the blogosphere with The Joint Commission
- Leading Hospital Improvement — Safety Culture: A Daily Dose of Reporting and Learning: Readers can learn about how a 15-minute daily operations briefing cut one hospital’s Clostridium difficile rates by 44 percent. Colleen Smith, RN, MBA, CPHQ, CPPS, the director of high reliability initiatives at the Joint Commission Center for Transforming Healthcare, shares the story.
- Dateline @ TJC — Beyond the Harm Identification Study Q&A: The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety’s Editor-in-Chief Dr. David Baker asked lead author Dr. Christine Sammer about her study, “Developing and Evaluating an Automated All-Cause Harm Trigger System,” which was published in the April 2017 issue.
- Ambulatory Buzz — Total Hip / Total Knee Replacement Certification Raises Bar for Orthopedic ASCs: Patrick Phelan, executive director of hospital business development at The Joint Commission, writes about how technology has enabled more procedures outside the acute-care setting, and how ambulatory surgery centers (ASCs) are providing even more advanced surgical care.

Expand your knowledge at JCR’s Accreditation Basics on June 19
Registration is open for Joint Commission Resource’s Accreditation Basics seminar, scheduled for June 19 at the Joint Commission Conference Center, in Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois.

The event is aimed at helping new accreditation professionals gain the knowledge they need to get their organization through the accreditation process. Upon attending, participants will be able to:
- Describe The Joint Commission’s accreditation process
- Apply concepts of accreditation chapters and standards in their everyday work
- Identify Joint Commission resources that help organizations remain in compliance
- Construct a Continuous Compliance program

Learn more about Joint Commission Resources’ offerings online or call 877-223-6866.