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Accreditation

Starting now, surveys will check for compliance with FDA ban on powdered gloves
In response to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) ban on powdered gloves that went into effect Jan. 18, The Joint Commission will now evaluate organizations for compliance. This requirement applies to all accreditation programs. Citations will be listed under Leadership (LD) 04.01.01 element of performance (EP) 2 — The organization provides care, treatment and services in accordance with licensure requirements, laws, and rules and regulation.

The ban on the use of powdered gloves was noted in the Dec. 19, 2016, Federal Register notice. It noted that powdered surgeon’s gloves, powdered patient examination gloves and absorbable powder for lubricating surgeon gloves “present an unreasonable and substantial risk of illness or injury and that the risk cannot be corrected or eliminated by labeling or a change in labeling.”

The Federal Register notice stated that “the use of powder on medical gloves presents numerous risks to patients and health care workers,” including:

- Inflammation
- Granulomas
- Respiratory allergic reactions
- Adverse reactions to natural rubber latex allergens
- Surgical complications related to peritoneal adhesions

The Federal Register notice also provided guidance on the proper way to dispose of any remaining stock of powdered gloves — suggesting use of the established process of the organization’s local community, as determined by that community’s waste management system. The Joint Commission will not evaluate the organization’s disposal process.

Revisions coming to lab accreditation to add mass spectrometry requirements
The clinical chemistry requirements for The Joint Commission’s Laboratory Accreditation program are being expanded to add specific quality control (QC) and testing requirements for mass spectrometry, effective July 1, 2017.

Mass spectrometry is a continuously advancing analytical technique, and laboratories have increasingly adopted the use of mass spectrometry in various settings, such as drug testing and therapeutic drug...
monitoring. The revisions address specific issues and challenges on the application of mass spectrometry in clinical laboratories.

View the prepublication standards.

**Updated molecular, genetic testing standards for lab program**
After performing a gap analysis on its molecular and genetic testing standards for its Laboratory Accreditation program, The Joint Commission has added standards that will become effective July 1, 2017.

The updated standards address:
- Prevention of sample degradation
- Nucleic acid extraction
- Turnaround time requirement
- Indication for genetic testing

View the prepublication standards.

**Updated CAMLAB aligns with CMS lab standards on routine maintenance**
To maintain alignment with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments of 1988 (CLIA ’88), The Joint Commission updated four areas in the *Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Laboratory and Point-of-Care Testing* (*CAMLAB*). The updated requirements will go into effect July 1, 2017, and cover:
- Blood gas quality control testing
- Calibration verification on instruments that are manufacturer-calibrated and/or tests that are considered non-quantitative
- Implementation related to an individualized quality control plan
- Staffing and workload requirements for cytology

View the prepublication standards.

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**People**

**Laboratory Accreditation program has new leader in Hurley**
The Joint Commission recently appointed Heather Hurley to the position of executive director of Laboratory Business Development. In this leadership role, Hurley will be responsible for leading business strategies and activities, including the development and implementation of products and services, for The Joint Commission’s [Laboratory Accreditation program](#) — which accredits approximately 1,500 U.S. organizations that provide clinical and reference laboratory services.

Hurley also will lead The Joint Commission’s Laboratory Professional Technical and Advisory Committee, Advisory Council and similar groups, as well as serve as liaison to associations, collaborative partners, and accrediting and regulatory bodies in the laboratory field. She will provide technical oversight and assistance in support of the development of laboratory accreditation manuals, standards, education programs and other accreditation-related materials.

See the last page of this newsletter for a letter Hurley wrote for customers, introducing herself and her goals for the Laboratory Accreditation program.
Don’t delay: Get flu smart today with two free Joint Commission courses

With the changing of seasons, influenza lurks around every corner, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicates that flu season is expected to continue for several weeks. So, don’t delay: Take advantage today of two free, online courses on improving influenza preparedness and response in ambulatory settings.

The courses were developed by The Joint Commission in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and both offer an easy, flexible, “start now, finish later” format. The courses are:

- **Strategies for Improving Rapid Influenza Testing in Ambulatory Settings (SIRAS)** — a four-part course that can be taken in 30-minute segments. It focuses on influenza testing, including the proper collection of respiratory samples; information regarding the appropriate use and interpretation of rapid influenza diagnostic tests (RIDTs); and diagnosis and treatment of influenza in ambulatory settings.

- **Influenza Pandemic Preparedness and Response in Ambulatory Settings** — a two-part course that focuses on how to effectively respond to an influenza pandemic.

Analysis of Laboratory Accreditation program survey data indicates that standard HR.01.06.01 — “staff are competent to perform their responsibilities” — had the highest compliance issues after 724 applicable surveys in 2016. Taking the SIRAS and Influenza Pandemic Preparation and Response courses will help improve staff competency in laboratory and point-of-care testing for influenza.

Those who have taken the courses have spoken highly about them, pointing to the concise nature of the topics and the wealth of knowledge gained from taking them. Others stated that after watching these modules, they plan to make changes at their organizations regarding:
- Influenza surveillance practices
- Diagnostic testing practices
- Specimen collection practices
- Infection prevention and control practices
- Pandemic planning and response practices

These courses provide resources, including short illustrative specimen collection videos, related guidance documents and web links, and offer two free continuing education credits each. (Contact: siras@jointcommission.org)
March 28, 2017

Dear Clients and Partners,

With 2017 in full swing, I wanted to take a moment to introduce myself as the new executive director of the Laboratory Accreditation Program at The Joint Commission.

I am joining the team with more than 13 years of commercial experience in the life sciences industry. I am excited about the incredible opportunity to lead the laboratory program and uphold the highest level of patient care by providing the most comprehensive evaluation process in the industry.

As we all know, the clinical laboratory is a critical component in driving prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of disease impacting the entire continuum of health care.

As clinical laboratories continue to drive toward a patient centric approach, so does The Joint Commission. Our unique tracer methodology uses information from the organization to follow the experience of care, treatment or services for a number of patients through the organization’s entire health care delivery process. This a tremendous benefit to our customers, as we are the only accreditation organization that spans the entire continuum of care.

Additionally, by utilizing a single accreditation organization, you can reduce the time spent managing accreditation activities, which also results in reducing duplication of policies and processes.

I look forward to working with our partners and stakeholders to continue to evolve the laboratory program to meet the needs of the laboratories and continue to raise the bar on delivering the highest quality of patient safety and care.

As I settle in to my new role, I would love to hear from you — our clients and partners — on how we better serve your institutions and together continue to drive the highest level of care for our patients and our communities. Please send all comments and feedback to quality@jointcommission.org.

Thank you for your continued support!

Sincerely,

Heather L. Hurley