Patient Safety Systems are focus of new hospital accreditation chapter

The Joint Commission announces publication of a new “Patient Safety Systems” chapter in the 2015 Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Hospitals. The purpose of the chapter is to inform and educate hospital leaders about the importance and structure of an integrated patient-centered system that aims to improve quality of care and patient safety. There are no new requirements in the chapter. Instead, the standards are culled from existing chapters, including: Leadership, Rights and Responsibilities of the Patient; Performance Improvement; Medication Management; and Environment of Care. The standards will continue to be published in their respective chapters, and during on-site surveys, the standards will be scored in their originating chapter. To underscore the importance of a patient-centered safety system, The Joint Commission will make this new chapter available online indefinitely for customers and non-customers alike.

“For the first time, The Joint Commission is providing a standards chapter on our website because this information is so important that we want everyone to have access to it. A solid foundation for patient safety is a safety culture. For leaders, our hope is they will study this chapter and use it as a tool to build or improve their safety culture program,” says Ana Pujols McKee, M.D., executive vice president and chief medical officer. “Developing a culture of safety starts at the top of the chain of command, and then works its way through the layers of management and employees to build trust which is an essential ingredient for improvement. In order for improvement to take root and spread, leaders need to be engaged and know the current state of the culture in their organization.”

The chapter is oriented to leadership because leader engagement is imperative to the trust-report-improve cycle of establishing a safety culture. The chapter has three guiding principles:

- Aligning existing Joint Commission standards with daily work in order to engage patients and staff throughout the health care system, at all times, on reducing harm.
- Assisting health care organizations with advancing knowledge, skills and competence of staff and patients by recommending methods that will improve quality and safety processes.
- Encouraging and recommending proactive methods and models of quality and patient safety that will increase accountability, trust and knowledge while reducing the impact of fear and blame.

The chapter is included only in the hospital accreditation manual; however, other health care settings may benefit from applying the patient safety strategies discussed in the chapter. (Contact: Gerry Castro, gcastro@jointcommission.org)

Ebola Preparedness Resources web page now available; share your Ebola stories

The Joint Commission has launched a new Ebola Preparedness Resources section on its website that contains links to newsletters, blogs, podcasts, articles, publications, and other resources focused on Ebola Virus Disease (EVD). The content will be updated regularly. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there have been more than 9,200 total EVD cases and more than 4,500 deaths since March 2014. The World Health Organization predicts there could be up to 10,000 new Ebola cases per week in West Africa by the end of the year.
“To combat this and other pathogens, The Joint Commission strongly urges all leaders to focus attention on their organization’s infection prevention practices,” says Ana Pujols McKee, M.D., executive vice president and chief medical officer. “A comprehensive assessment of these practices should be conducted, followed by a plan for improvement that includes education, simulation, and ongoing performance monitoring.”

According to current hospital survey results, more than 1,300 findings of noncompliance with the infection control standards will be generated by the end of 2014. These include failures in hand hygiene and proper use of personal protective equipment, breaches in high level disinfection and sterilization, and inadequate sterilizer maintenance. Although the CDC remains the primary website for EVD information, The Joint Commission also offers resources on the Emergency Management, Health Care-Associated Infections, and Infection Control portals.

International Infection Prevention Week focuses on antibiotic resistance

Following the theme of this year’s International Infection Prevention Week, October 19-25, “The ABC’s of Antibiotics,” the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC) has developed a new infographic to help patients and families better understand antibiotic resistance. The infographic illustrates when antibiotics work and when they don’t, explains what can happen if antibiotics are used improperly, and informs consumers about the role they play in preventing the proliferation of antibiotic-resistant organisms. The opposite side of the infographic is a fact sheet on antibiotic resistance, which includes the top five questions consumers should ask their health care professionals about antibiotics. This year’s theme expands on APIC’s multiyear education and awareness campaign – Infection Prevention and You.

National Healthcare Quality Week is October 19-25

National Healthcare Quality Week is October 19-25. Sponsored by the National Association for Healthcare Quality (NAHQ), “Quality Across the Continuum” highlights the work of health care quality and patient safety professionals and their influence on improved patient care outcomes and health care delivery systems. NAHQ members positively impact patient care and play a critical role in clinical outcomes through continuous improvement initiatives; monitoring and analysis of processes and outcomes; integration of new evidence-based practices; and maintaining high quality standards.

Resources

New on the Web

- **Podcast:** Take 5 with The Joint Commission: The Contagious Patient. Lisa Waldowski, M.S., APRN, CIC, infection control specialist, discusses The Contagious Patient: Management of Highly Contagious Diseases in Hospitals.

- **Free webinars:**
  - [Accreditation Basics for Home Care Organizations: Strategies for Success](#): November 18, noon-1 p.m. CT
  - [Gain A Quality-Focused Competitive Edge For Your Nursing Care Center](#): November 20, noon-1 p.m. CT

- **Blog post:** [Leadership Blog: PCMH Certification at work, no matter the location](#). Ann Scott Blouin, R.N., Ph.D., FACHE, executive vice president, Customer Relations, discusses how Sand Point Community Health Center used the Primary Care Medical Home Certification model to improve care for the local Eastern Aleutian tribes.

- **Teleconference replay:** [Inpatient Diabetes: Be an Ace about the Follow-Up Appointment Prior to Discharge](#)

Learn more about Joint Commission Resources’ education programs and publications at [www.jcrinc.com](http://www.jcrinc.com) or call 877-223-6866.