Coronavirus updates

Joint Commission Resources, Deloitte release white paper on COVID-19 lessons learned

A new, free white paper is available from Joint Commission Resources and Deloitte focusing on lessons learned so far from the coronavirus pandemic.

“COVID-19 Lessons Learned: A Resource for Recovery” touches on best practices identified through discussions with a diverse group of health care leaders. The white paper includes assessments of readiness/preparedness efforts across national, regional and local stakeholders, as well as a review of public documents.

The white paper examines specific actions that organizations have taken to address issues and provides access to guidance and tools that health care leaders can use to create and enact their own plan to address those challenges. Some of the wide array of health care domains covered in this in-depth resource include:

- Leadership
- Emergency readiness and crisis response
- Infection control
- Patient safety and high reliability
- Communications and change management

Download the white paper.

Marwa Zohdy, PhD, CJCP, Vice President, Global Consulting Services, Joint Commission Resources and Joint Commission International, also expanded on some of the topics discussed in the white paper during a Take 5 podcast. Listen to the conversation. [9:49]

Accreditation

Effective Jan. 1, 2021: Deletion of Infection Control EP on influenza vaccination rate goal

Beginning next year, The Joint Commission is eliminating its element of performance (EP) for Infection Control (IC) Standard IC.02.04.01 on organizations setting incremental influenza vaccination goals to try and achieve the 90% rate set by national initiatives.

This comes after the August publication of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ “Healthy People 2030” goals, in which HHS removed its goal of reaching a 90% influenza vaccination rate.

The deletion of IC.02.04.01, EP 5 will go into effect for the following programs on Jan. 1, 2021:

- Hospital
- Critical Access Hospital
- Ambulatory Health Care
- Behavioral Health Care and Human Services
- Home Care
- Laboratory
- Nursing Care Centers
- Office-Based Surgery
Organizations should continue to strive to increase compliance with influenza vaccinations and take action to improve vaccination rates. Moving forward, The Joint Commission will not score noncompliance if the organization has not reached 90%, but instead will review that organizations have a goal to improve influenza vaccination rates and have leadership support and processes in place to support achievement of these goals.

View the prepublication standards.

**CMS reapproves Joint Commission as accrediting organization for ASCs for 4 more years**

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) have approved The Joint Commission for continued recognition as a national accrediting organization for ambulatory surgical centers that want to participate in Medicare or Medicaid programs.

The deeming recognition is effective for a period of four years, effective Dec. 20, 2020 through Dec. 20, 2024.

Read the final notice and learn more about The Joint Commission’s Ambulatory Health Care Accreditation Program.

**Quality and safety**

**McKee named Joint Commission’s new chief diversity and inclusion officer**

Ana Pujols McKee, MD, Chief Medical Officer, Executive Vice President, has accepted an additional appointment as The Joint Commission’s Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer.

Following a summer of demands for societal change and disparate COVID-19 deaths rates and outcomes for people of color, The Joint Commission feels strongly that it must be an active participant in creating a more equitable world for those who have historically been left behind. Dr. McKee holds senior-level responsibility for new efforts aimed at:

- Eliminating racism and other forms of discrimination.
- Focusing on The Joint Commission’s duty to its employees to foster an inclusive environment.

Additionally, a new Diversity and Inclusion Steering Council, chaired by Dr. McKee, will be formed to develop:

- Diversity and inclusion strategy.
- Oversee implementation.
- Monitor progress.

The council will help uphold The Joint Commission’s zero-tolerance policy for discrimination, as well as adherence to its recent statement.

“I am very proud of our leadership team,” Dr. McKee said. “They are unified in their support of this initiative and know that it is the right thing to do for our organization.”

Dr. McKee also wrote about The Joint Commission’s new diversity and inclusion efforts in a Dateline @ TJC blog post.

Recently, Dr. McKee was named to the Board of Directors of the Philadelphia Lawyers for Social Equity, and she was named one of Modern Healthcare’s Top 25 Minority Leaders in Healthcare in 2020 and 2014.

Learn more about Dr. McKee.

**New Take 5 podcast celebrates Health Care Facilities and Engineering Week**

The American Society for Health Care Engineering (ASHE) is celebrating its annual Health Care Facilities and Engineering Week, which began on Oct. 25 and ends on Oct. 31.
In recognition of the annual weeklong event, The Joint Commission recorded a new Take 5 podcast with Timothy Markijohn, MBA/MHA, CHFM, CHE, Field Director, Surveyor Management and Support, Division of Accreditation & Certification Operations, about the critical role facilities staff play in protecting patients.

The podcast also covers:
- How facilities staff have made a difference in patients’ lives.
- Things Joint Commission surveyors look for regarding the physical environment while at health care organizations.
- What differences facilities staff have made to aid in the effort to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

Listen to the podcast. [7:02]

A Leading Hospital Improvement blog post also was published regarding Health Care Facilities and Engineering Week, written by Marisa Voelkel, BSN, MBA, CHSP, CHEP, Engineer. The post discusses how engineers and individuals working on the maintenance of a health care organization are often the unsung heroes of the industry.

**Resources**

Up in the blogosphere with The Joint Commission

- **Dateline @ TJC — New Diversity and Inclusion Efforts at The Joint Commission**: Over the summer, Ana Pujols McKee, MD, Executive Vice President, Chief Medical Officer, was asked to serve as The Joint Commission’s chief diversity and inclusion officer. Though it is a new position, she has been working on issues related to racial and gender equity and inclusion for her entire career.

- **Dateline @ TJC — Meet Some Heroic Pharmacists on the COVID-19 Frontlines**: In any other year, pharmacists have not been the likely topic of conversation when defining a “health care hero,” but these members of the health care team have rightfully taken the spotlight in 2020. As we celebrate National Pharmacy Week, sponsored by American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP), I am proud to call these heroes, who continue to set the pace for the future of health care, my colleagues, writes Robert Campbell, PharmD, BCSCP, Director, Clinical Standards Interpretation Hospital/Ambulatory Programs, Director, Medication Management.

- **On Infection Prevention & Control — Supporting Infection Preventionists During COVID-19**: The theme for this year’s International Infection Prevention Week — “WeLoveIPs” — couldn’t be more appropriate, writes Sylvia Garcia-Houchins, MSN, RN, Director, Infection Prevention and Control, and Diane Cullen, MSN, RN, MBA, CIC, Associate Director, Standards Interpretation Group.

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