

## **JCAHO- Ensuring Highest Patient Safety Standards**

JCAHO stands for Joint Commission for Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations and is a non-profit and non-government organization that provides accreditation to hospitals and healthcare organizations. The commission has health care surveyors who visit hospital and healthcare facilities to check for the compliance of healthcare norms that have been framed by the Joint Commission.

Patient safety is one of the priorities of the Joint commission and it has framed safety policies for the hospitals and healthcare facilities so that deaths due human error are completely eliminated. Keeping in mind the safety of the patients undergoing treatment at various facilities, JCAHO has set standards that must be implemented by the hospitals. The organization at the same time evaluates its own standards with the aim to make them even better by setting up higher goals. The purpose is to maintain high level patient care and remove the existing deficiencies in the healthcare system. To do this effectively Joint commission adopts following policies:

### **Reporting Sentinel Events:**

- The term, Sentinel event, is used for an unexpected event like death or loss of limb or function due to some unattended risk in the healthcare premises. It is mandatory for the healthcare facilities and the hospitals to report such events so that root cause analysis of the event can be done with aim to know the true reasons behind it. Appropriate counter measures can be taken to prevent the reoccurrence in the future. To spread the awareness about the sentinel events the Joint Commission performs following duties
  - Provides aggregate data and analysis of sentinel events on the website.
  - It provides information on the errors and their frequency.
  - Sheds light on the outcomes and the methods of review.

### **National Patient Safety Goals:**

- The organization every year reviews the safety requirement of the patients so that they can be provided the treatment in safe environment without exposing them to the risks, associated with the treatment process and healthcare premises. While creating the goals for the coming year some of the existing goals are dropped and replaced with new emerging priorities. This approach provides flexibility to find effective solutions for the emerging patient safety problems. For the year 2010 the new set of goals are:
  - Ambulatory Health care
  - Behavioral Health Care
  - Critical Access Hospital
  - Home Care
  - Hospital
  - Laboratory
  - Long term care
  - Office- based surgery

### **Creating an Environment of Care:**

- JCAHO patient care initiative make is necessary for the hospital to implement a caring environment for the patient by establishing proper communication procedures to prevent adverse effects on the health care workers, patients and visitors. The implementation of

a proper, information collection and evaluation system makes it easy to avoid adverse and unexpected events like patient fall or other injuries during intervention and improvement phase of the treatment.

### **Recommending Risk Reduction Strategies:**

- The Joint Commission recommends certain risk reduction strategies to the health care facilities. It is not necessary to follow them completely; rather they should analyze which of the practices are most suitable for their organization and adopt those. Below are the mostly likely risk reduction steps that are recommended by JCAHO and also reflect in the sentinel alerts on the website.
  - Eliminating wrong- site surgery
  - Manage high alert medications
  - Eliminate use of usage and inappropriate patient restraints
  - Eliminate intravenous infusion pump errors
  - Reduce risks of fatal falls
  - Reduce risks of adverse transfusion events
  - Reduce pre/post operative complications
  - Reduce inpatient suicide
  - Reduce infant abduction

Thus **JCAHO** strives to improve the patient safety during the treatment by initiating guidelines to hospitals on the safe practices that they should adopt and reviews their working on timely basis. Once the compliance is confirmed, the Joint Commission issues the accreditation certificate to the concerned health care facility.

### **About emPower**

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