



THE RISK AUTHORITY
STANFORD

VIEWPOINT

A monthly newsletter of The Risk Authority Stanford | May 2018

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VIEWPOINT is published monthly by TRA Stanford. To be added to our mailing list, please call us at 803.731.5300 or 800.849.8010.

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New National Steering Committee for Patient Safety meets in Boston

Aiming to relaunch the nation's patient safety agenda with renewed energy and focus, last week the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) hosted representatives from 25 organizations to begin work on a national strategy for reducing harm in the delivery of healthcare. The National Steering Committee for Patient Safety, with members from the healthcare, policy, regulatory, and advocacy communities, is charged with creating a National Action Plan to serve as a roadmap to accelerate progress.

This new effort stems from a 2017 Call to Action issued by the National Patient Safety Foundation (NPSF), which merged with IHI last year to combine the strengths of the two organizations around patient safety. The Call to Action frames medical harm as an issue that affects all of society, demanding a coordinated response by the healthcare and public health sectors.

"For decades, experts have called for increased coordination to improve patient safety, but such a strategy has not been fully instituted," said Tejal K. Gandhi, MD, MPH, CPPS, chief clinical and safety

officer, IHI, co-chair of the committee. "There is still so much work to be done in patient safety, in part because we've reached the limits of what a project-by-project approach can achieve. Instead of declaring 'mission accomplished,' we need to take steps to advance total systems safety – safety that is reliably and uniformly applied wherever care is provided."

As outlined in a 2015 NPSF report, a total systems approach contains elements that have proven to be at the foundation of safety and are key to making sustainable progress in all health settings. They include safety culture, leadership, communication among team members, measurement, and patient and family engagement.

The public was first exposed to the term "patient safety" nearly 20 years ago with the release of *To Err Is Human: Building a Safer Health System*, a report estimating that as many as 98,000 deaths in the U.S. each year are the result of harm accidentally inflicted during a medical

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Preventing workplace violence in healthcare settings

By: Michael W. Dunning, CEM, CHPA, Allied Universal National Director, Healthcare Operations

Hospitals and other healthcare facilities can be scary places to work – if the right precautions and measures aren't put into place for safety of staff, visitors and patients. Violence against healthcare workers tops the list.

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), approximately 75% of nearly 25,000 workplace assaults reported annually occurred in healthcare and social service settings between 2011 and 2013. Moreover, for healthcare workers, assaults comprise about 11% of workplace injuries involving days away from work, as compared to 3% of injuries of all private sector employees.

The Joint Commission has just published a Sentinel Event Alert (#59) regarding physical and verbal violence against healthcare workers. This alert highlights the prevalence of workplace violence (WPV) in healthcare, provides contributing factors, and offers "suggested" actions by The Joint Commission.

Ways to prepare include:

- Define WPV and implement systems across your organization that enable staff to report instances
- Capture, track and trend reports of WPV, such as verbal abuse and attempted assaults

- Offer support to victims and others affected by the violence
- Review cases of WPV to determine contributing factors for intervention
- Develop ways to reduce future incidents of WPV
- Train staff and the security team on de-escalation and response to emergency codes
- Evaluate your reduction initiatives to make necessary adjustments



Michael W. Dunning,
CEM, CHPA

The alert also provides a chart of all The Joint Commission Standards that apply to WPV in healthcare. It's a great reference for what you need to be aware of from a standards perspective. Healthcare providers in California should already be following new Cal OSHA requirements for implementing a WPV prevention program. All providers, regardless of their location, should be prepared to prevent WPV, and know what's required of their organizations and security programs to address any such situations.

For information on how Allied Universal serves the healthcare industry, visit www.aus.com/healthcare. ■

Successful Worker Safety Symposium

The 3rd Annual PHT Worker Safety Symposium was held on May 17 & 18, 2018 in Charleston, SC, with 30 participants from 12 facilities attending. During this invitation-only symposium, Trust data trends and key prevention strategies for leading loss drivers were shared, including how healthcare institutions can implement and improve worker safety programs related to slip/trip/fall prevention, patient handling, workplace violence, and needlesticks/sharps/splashes. The Symposium was, once

again, a great success, with evaluation comments including:

- "The workplace violence presentation was excellent with an excellent presenter."
- "Enjoyed panel discussion and great topics."
- "Loved the group discussions." ■



PHT Claims Coordinator Workshop

The *PHT Claims Coordinator Workshop*, to be held on June 22 at TRA GSC in Columbia, is an excellent opportunity for Trust members to keep up with the current and emerging developments in workers' compensation.

This year, participants will learn about essential function testing as well as hear a legal update on medical marijuana. Time has been built into the agenda for an open discussion on the nurse practitioner's evolving role in workers' compensation. Participants will also have an opportunity to learn how to use safety huddles to educate senior leaders on worker safety issues. Finally, we will present awards to recognize those organizations that have excelled in safety over the past year.

Learning Objectives:

- Discuss essential function testing - how to start and how to finish

- Discuss the topic of medical marijuana and its potential impact on workers' comp
- Discuss discoverability of e-mails between case managers and claims coordinators
- Learn how the nurse practitioner role is evolving as the gatekeeper for workers' compensation
- Learn how one member uses safety huddles to enhance reporting of employee safety events

For more information, please contact Janine Wall, ARM, AIS, GBA, director of marketing at TRA GSC, at jwall@theriskauthority.com. ■

Group Disability Product & Cancer Protection Assurance Plan

Aflac launches two new offerings

Aflac is creating a fresh perspective in the marketplace by combining its voluntary benefits experience with true group fundamentals through the launch of its latest group disability product.

"With the introduction of the new group short- and long-term disability products, the depth and breadth of Aflac's offerings on behalf of our policyholders continue to climb," said Stephanie Shields, vice president of premier broker solutions at Aflac. "By adding to our already extensive voluntary plans and value-added services, we are creating value not only for our customers, but also for our broker partners, while meeting the needs of certificate holders and providing an affordable solution for large employers, as well."

Aflac's expansion of its group disability product offerings is highly customizable, allowing insureds to create or match any existing plan to meet their needs. This latest group disability offering aligns with the company's ongoing commitment to support employees in their time of need and during their recovery journeys.

Aflac also recently reaffirmed its long-standing commitment to help those facing cancer through the launch of its Aflac Cancer Protection Assurance plan. The new plan design reflects the evolution of patient needs and challenges, and covers modern approaches to prevention, early detection and diagnosis, treatment and ongoing care.

"We recognize that as cancer treatment evolves, so do the needs of policyholders, and so should our products," said Wendy Herndon, second vice president of product development and implementation at Aflac.

Aflac Cancer Protection Assurance provides more options to help meet the needs of policyholders through all life stages. Coverage is now offered for screening tests and surgeries performed on the basis of genetic testing results, and the wellness payout for early diagnosis is also increased. Other additional benefits include nonsurgical treatment such as immunotherapy, an annual care benefit to help manage costs with delayed effects, and surgery on a non-diseased body part.

Also, every Aflac policyholder can explore My Cancer Circle, an online tool that helps caregivers coordinate volunteers and friends to assist with tasks such as meal preparation or transportation.

Aflac Cancer Protection Assurance is available through the worksite, as well as on an agent-assisted individual-paid basis, and offered with high, medium and low options – all with Health Savings Account (HSA) compatibility.

For more information on the services available through TRA GSC and Aflac, please contact Adam Allen, chief operating officer at TRA GSC, at adamallen@theriskauthority.com. ■

encounter. Recent studies claim that four times as many deaths can be attributed to medical harm, making it by some estimates the third leading cause of death in the U.S. and a source of long-term physical, emotional, and psychological damage.

"We've seen success in targeted areas, such as reductions in healthcare-associated infections and hospital-acquired conditions," said committee co-chair Jeffrey Brady, MD, MPH, director, Center for Quality Improvement and Patient Safety at the U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. "Those gains have been supported by prominent national initiatives and efforts involving governmental agencies and public-private partnerships. This renewed, shared focus on keeping patients safe and the work of the National Steering Committee reflect the importance of effective coordination at all levels – from national organizations to individual clinicians. Teamwork will be necessary to achieve patient safety across the entire continuum of patient care."

The care continuum includes office practices, ambulatory centers, and clinics where most care is now delivered in the U.S. Studies about the extent of harm and effective strategies to address problems in these settings, such as errors in diagnosis and lost test results, are only now starting to get attention.

For example, a growing number of people receive care in outpatient settings and in their own homes with very little guidance or knowledge about patient safety. Care

in the home is the subject of a forthcoming report from IHI outlining the potential risk of harm to patients along with recommendations for improving safety in this setting. Patient safety in ambulatory care is also one of the focus areas of this year's Patient Safety Congress, with a session addressing safety in home care and others focused on a variety of outpatient settings.

The National Steering Committee for Patient Safety includes representatives of the following organizations, among others:

- Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)
- American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE)
- American Hospital Association (AHA)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)
- ECRI Institute
- Institute for Healthcare Improvement and the IHI/NPSF Lucian Leape Institute
- The Joint Commission
- Mothers Against Medical Error
- National Association for Healthcare Quality (NAHQ)
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

For more information on the work of the National Steering Committee, visit www.ihl.org/patientsafety. ■

Around TRA Stanford Global Service Center

Dan Dolinger, senior insurance accountant, attained four years of service on May 7.
Mattie Mitchum, vice president, claims, attained 18 years of service on May 22.

DATEBOOK

June 5	"All Hands on Deck! All Hands... all...?" (audioconference 1:00-2:00 p.m.) (HortySpringer) +	
June 19	"Occurrence Reporting: How to Report, Identify, and Resolve Problems" (webinar 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.) (HCPro)**	
June 22	PHT Claims Coordinator Workshop & Awards Lunch (PHT Members Only)*	Columbia, SC
August 30	Safe Patient Handling Champions & Coaches Workshop (PHT Members Only)*	Columbia, SC

+ To register or for more information, call 800.245.1205

* To register or for more information, visit www.theriskauthority.com or contact Janine Wall, ARM, AIS, GBA, director of marketing at TRA GSC, at jwall@theriskauthority.com

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