



## NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Joint Commission Monograph to Offer Promising Strategies for Immunizing Health Care Personnel**

*Health Care Organizations Encouraged to Submit Practices*

(OAKBROOK TERRACE, Ill. – November 5, 2008) In an effort to help improve the rate of health care worker influenza immunization, The Joint Commission will produce a new monograph that includes examples of successful strategies and tools that have been used to improve immunization rates. The monograph, with funding from sanofi pasteur, will be produced in partnership with leaders in the fields of infection prevention and infectious disease from the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America (SHEA), and the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID).

According to the CDC, vaccination coverage of health care personnel remains low despite the documented benefits on patient outcomes, staff absenteeism, and reducing infections among staff. In addition, increased vaccination rates can reduce costs within health care organizations. Health care personnel can acquire influenza from patients and can also spread the disease to vulnerable patients or other staff. In 2007, The Joint Commission implemented a new standard in hospitals and long term care facilities requiring that influenza vaccinations be offered to staff and practitioners.

“Simply offering vaccination is not sufficient to increase immunization rates,” says Jerod M. Loeb, Ph.D., executive vice president, Quality Measurement and Research, The Joint Commission. “Increasing immunizations requires staff awareness, education, creative strategies for vaccine delivery, and a shift in organizational culture to sustain improvement.”

The Joint Commission will use funding derived, in part, from an educational grant from sanofi pasteur, to gather and review real-world examples of successful initiatives for implementing influenza

immunization programs for health care personnel. The free, educational monograph, planned for publication in mid-2009, will include:

- Information about the impact and prevalence of the acquisition and transmission of influenza in the health care workplace;
- An overview of barriers to successful influenza immunization programs and strategies for overcoming them; and
- A compilation of promising practices and effective strategies for implementing health care personnel influenza immunization programs.

Health care organizations are encouraged to submit examples of immunization programs that have successfully increased immunization rates among health care personnel. Submissions can be made [online](#). For more information on the project, please contact Linda Kusek, associate project director, Division of Quality Measurement and Research, The Joint Commission at 630-792-5616 or [lkusek@jointcommission.org](mailto:lkusek@jointcommission.org)

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Founded in 1951, The Joint Commission seeks to continuously improve the safety and quality of care provided to the public through the provision of health care accreditation and related services that support performance improvement in health care organizations. The Joint Commission evaluates and accredits more than 15,000 health care organizations and programs in the United States, including more than 8,000 hospitals and home care organizations, and more than 6,200 other health care organizations that provide long term care, assisted living, behavioral health care, laboratory and ambulatory care services. The Joint Commission also accredits health plans, integrated delivery networks, and other managed care entities. In addition, The Joint Commission provides certification of disease-specific care programs, primary stroke centers, and health care staffing services. An independent, not-for-profit organization, The Joint Commission is the nation's oldest and largest standards-setting and accrediting body in health care. Learn more about The Joint Commission at [www.jointcommission.org](http://www.jointcommission.org).