

NEWS RELEASE**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**2008 John M. Eisenberg Patient Safety and Quality Award
Recipients Announced**

(OAKBROOK TERRACE, Ill. – September 25, 2008) The National Quality Forum (NQF) and The Joint Commission today announced the 2008 recipients of the annual John M. Eisenberg Patient Safety and Quality Awards. Honorees were selected in all four award categories. This year's awards also feature a new honorary award for individual achievement.

The honorees, by award category, are as follows:

INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT

- **Michael R. Cohen, R. Ph., M.S., Sc.D.** – Institute for Safe Medication Practices, Huntington Valley, Pennsylvania

Dr. Cohen is being recognized for his life-long professional commitment to promoting safe medication use and a safe medication delivery system. He has routinely challenged legislators and regulators, practitioners, professional organizations and pharmaceutical manufacturers to recognize their responsibility to eliminate preventable morbidity and mortality due to medication errors. As the founder of the Institute for Safe Medications Practices and co-founder of the voluntary and confidential Medication Error Reporting Program, he has championed improvements in drug naming, labeling, packaging, delivery systems and regulation and has influenced changes to hundreds of drug products and the removal of others. In addition, Dr. Cohen has written prolifically on the subject of medication error prevention and has served on numerous national and international committees.

RESEARCH

- **The RAND Corporation and University of California at Los Angeles School of Medicine**, Los Angeles, California

The RAND Corporation and the UCLA School of Medicine are being honored for the development of a comprehensive set of measures, known as the ACOVE (Assessing the Care of Vulnerable Elders) project, intended to assess and improve the medical care provided to vulnerable elderly patients. This assessment, which was developed as a joint project of RAND and Pfizer Inc., forms the basis for implementing tested interventions known to improve patient care and safety for older adults at increased risk of functional decline or death. The ACOVE project represents a significant body of research that has resulted in improved patient care and safety for this rapidly growing at-risk population with unique health care needs and preferences.

INNOVATION IN PATIENT SAFETY AND QUALITY AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

- **National Coordinating Council for Medication Error Reporting and Prevention**, Rockville, Maryland

This organization is being recognized for its substantive body of work to promote medication error reporting and prevention through the broad dissemination of Council work products. These products include the internationally recognized definition of a medication error and other standardized definitions, the index for categorizing medication errors, the taxonomy of medication errors, development and dissemination of multiple sets of recommendations spanning the medication use process, the conduct of two national conferences addressing the use of bar coding and the non-standardized use of suffixes in drug names and many other critical work products that influence the safe use of medications. The Council is comprised of representatives from 24 national organizations who have worked collaboratively over the last 10 years to accomplish the objectives of the Council.

INNOVATION IN PATIENT SAFETY AND QUALITY AT THE LOCAL LEVEL (Two recipients)

- **Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Virginia**, subsidiary of WellPoint Inc., Richmond, Virginia

This organization is being recognized for its development and implementation of performance-based reimbursement programs for Virginia hospitals, cardiologists and cardiac surgeons. These programs are known as the Quality-In-Sights[®]: Hospital Incentive Program (Q-HIPSM) and

Quality Physician Performance Program (Q-P3SM). Q-HIP and QP3 reward hospitals and physicians for practicing evidence-based medicine and implementing other nationally recognized best practices. By aligning hospital and physician goals, these unique programs foster collaborative efforts to improve care across the health care system. By using the metrics based on all-payer, non-administrative data, Q-HIP and Q-P3 endeavor to bring high quality care to all patients and communities.

- **New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation**, New York, New York

The organization is being honored for developing and implementing its transparency website, known as *HHC in Focus*. *HHC in Focus* is designed to make performance data accessible and transparent to all patients and consumers, to demonstrate HHC's willingness to be accountable for the care delivered throughout the system, and to foster a culture of continuous improvement. Data displayed on this site demonstrate the effectiveness of the organization's core investments in patient safety, best practices and quality improvement. The website is a bold advance because it provides high visibility to not only system-wide data, but to hospital-specific data as well. Additionally, both positive data results and data that may indicate opportunities for improvement are displayed.

HONORARY AWARD for INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT

Dennis S. O'Leary, M.D., president emeritus of The Joint Commission, will receive an honorary lifetime achievement award for his leadership in, and many contributions to, improving the safety and quality of health care provided in the United States. Dr. O'Leary, who led the Joint Commission for 21 years until his retirement in 2007, is credited with successfully transforming the accreditation process to focus on organization performance in the provision of patient care. This transformation set the stage for the progressive introduction of care-related outcomes and process measures, as well as National Patient Safety Goals, into the accreditation process. Dr. O'Leary also oversaw the introduction of cutting-edge standards relating to patient safety, pain management, use of patient restraints, and emergency preparedness. In recent years, he spearheaded the launching of a series of Joint Commission public policy initiatives which have addressed the nurse staffing crisis, health professions educational reform, and the nexus between patient safety and the tort system, among others.

“We applaud each of these recipients for their outstanding efforts which have advanced patient safety in the United States,” says Mark R. Chassin, M.D., M.P.P., M.P.H. president, The Joint

Commission. “By demonstrating a commitment to patient safety and the willingness to take the chances that innovations require, they have inspired the American health care community and improved the lives of patients.”

“This year's Eisenberg winners are truly leaders in their field, and their work to increase patient safety is instrumental in moving U.S. health care toward a system of high-quality, safe care,” says NQF President and CEO Janet Corrigan, Ph.D., M.B.A. “They inspire us to remember that patient safety should be the central focus of all health care.”

This year's awards will be presented on Thursday, October 16, at NQF's Annual Policy Conference: Quality at the Crossroads in Arlington, Virginia. The December 2008 issue of *The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety* will feature the achievements of each of the award recipients.

The patient safety awards program, launched in 2002 by NQF and The Joint Commission, honors John M. Eisenberg, M.D., M.B.A., former administrator of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). Dr. Eisenberg was one of the founding leaders of NQF and sat on its Board of Directors. In his roles both as AHRQ administrator and chair of the federal government's Quality Inter-Agency Coordination Task Force, he was a passionate advocate for patient safety and health care quality and personally led AHRQ's grant program to support patient safety research.

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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.

The mission of the National Quality Forum is to improve the quality of American healthcare by setting national priorities and goals for performance improvement, endorsing national consensus standards for measuring and publicly reporting on performance, and promoting the attainment of national goals through education and outreach programs. NQF, a non-profit organization (qualityforum.org) with diverse stakeholders across the public and private health sectors, was established in 1999 and is based in Washington, DC.

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