

## OSHA ALIGNS WITH THE JOINT COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION OF HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS AND JOINT COMMISSION RESOURCES, INC.

**Agreement focuses on reducing exposure to biological and airborne hazards in health care**



(L to R) Joint Commission President Dennis S. O'Leary, M.D.; OSHA Administrator John Henshaw; and JCR CEO Karen Timmons sign the agreement making OSHA, the Joint Commission and Joint Commission Resources partners in the effort to reduce exposure to biological and airborne hazards in health care.

WASHINGTON—The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has joined with the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) and the Joint Commission Resources, Inc. (JCR) to educate the health care community on safety and health issues for healthcare workers.

The Alliance unites JCAHO/JCR and OSHA on efforts to provide education and compliance assistance to healthcare organizations and others with information and access to training resources on biological and airborne hazard topics, in addition to emergency preparedness, ergonomics, and workplace violence.

"We're looking forward to working with both organizations, particularly on emerging occupational biological and airborne safety and health issues in the workplace," said OSHA Administrator John Henshaw. "By drawing on the expertise of JCAHO/JCR, together we can make positive strides in ensuring that healthcare workers are armed with the tools they need to stay safe and healthy at work."

"We're pleased to partner with OSHA to improve and advance workplace safety and health," said Dennis S. O'Leary, M.D., JCAHO President. "This Alliance is a logical extension of our long-standing working relationship that will benefit the more than 16,000 accredited health care organizations by helping them address issues affecting the safety and health of their employees."

Added Karen H. Timmons, JCR's Chief Executive Officer: "JCR's expertise in educational programming, combined with the safety know-how of OSHA and the Joint Commission, will provide a sound framework for disseminating information about opportunities to reduce employee injuries and illnesses in health care organizations. Together, we can ensure that the thousands of Americans working in health care organizations have the information and tools they need to make their daily work safer."

OSHA and JCAHO/JCR will work together to develop information on the recognition and prevention of workplace hazards, and communicate that information throughout the industry.

Information will be shared among OSHA personnel and industry safety and health professionals regarding JCAHO/JCR best practices or effective approaches, and then publicized through OSHA- or JCAHO/JCR-developed materials, training programs, workshops, seminars and lectures.

Founded in 1951, JCAHO evaluates nearly 16,000 health care organizations and programs in the U.S. and accredits health plans, integrated delivery networks, and other managed care entities. JCR (an affiliate of JCAHO) is a global, knowledge-based organization that provides tools and solutions to help health care organizations maintain accreditation standards and respond to issues impacting the health care industry.

OSHA's role is to assure the safety and health of America's workers by setting and enforcing standards; providing training, outreach, and education; establishing partnerships; and encouraging continual improvement in workplace safety and health. For more information, visit <http://www.osha.gov/index.html>.