For Immediate Release

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Joint Commission Nursing Care Center Accreditation Celebrates 50th Anniversary

Evaluation has evolved to include specialty recognition in memory care and post-acute care

(OAKBROOK TERRACE, Illinois – May 23, 2016) This year, The Joint Commission is commemorating the 50th anniversary of its Nursing Care Center Accreditation Program. The Joint Commission currently accredits more than 1,000 nursing homes that provide nursing care, treatment and services to more than 100,000 patients and residents every day in the United States.

The program was founded in 1966 as the Long Term Care Accreditation Program. In 2013 it was reinvented to address the increasing levels of complex care provided to patients and residents and formally renamed the Nursing Care Center Accreditation Program. The program’s evolution continued and now includes specialty certifications recognizing advanced care competencies in post-acute care and memory care-related services.

“We are proud to celebrate the half century of this program because it serves such an important goal of improving the quality and safety of care provided to thousands of residents and patients in Joint Commission-accredited nursing care centers and other long term care facilities,” said Gina Zimmermann, executive director, Nursing Care Center Accreditation, The Joint Commission. “Over the years, we’ve continuously looked for ways to evolve and advance the program as the complexity of nursing home care has increased. True recognition goes out to the leaders and staff who commit to improving patient safety and quality together with The Joint Commission. It’s your passion, dedication and tenacity that ultimately helps us to improve patient and resident care in the nursing home setting.”

When the program was founded, representatives from the American Association of Homes for the Aging and the American Nursing Home Association provided The Joint
Commission Board of Commissioners with a voice on issues related to long term care. Today, Connie March-Curtis, RN, MSN, who has held clinical and executive healthcare leadership positions for more than 30 years, serves on the board as a representative of nursing care centers.

"I congratulate The Joint Commission for being a true asset to nursing care centers over the past 50 years," said March-Curtis. “The seven years that I have served on the board has been a very exciting time to be part of the re-creation and expansion of the Nursing Care Center Accreditation Program and its specialty certifications. Specialty certifications, such as post-acute care, memory care and integrated care certifications, are bringing renewed focus to the expanding needs of patients, consumers and providers. It has been exhilarating to see the improvement in safety and quality at organizations that go through Joint Commission accreditation and certification processes."

Fifty years ago, organizations applying for accreditation with The Joint Commission followed an eight-page standards manual. They now follow standards in a comprehensive accreditation manual that can be accessed electronically. The standards are developed and continuously renewed with the input of consumers, government agencies, health care professionals, providers and subject matter experts to help organizations measure, assess and improve performance.

Highlights in the recent history of the Nursing Care Center Program include:

- **1989** Scoring guidelines for the long term care standards are published for the first time.
- **1994** The Joint Commission begins surveying dementia special care units.
- **1996** The first Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Long Term Care is published.
- **2002** The first National Patient Safety Goals for improving the safety of resident care in long term care organizations are established.
- **2006** The Joint Commission begins conducting unannounced triennial surveys.
- **2012** The Long Team Care Accreditation Program (its standards, survey process and offerings) begins a reinvention.
- **2013** The program is renamed Nursing Care Center Accreditation Program, and its first add-on certification in post-acute care is debuted.
- **2014** The program launches its second add-on certification in memory care.

For more information, please contact the Nursing Care Center business development team at (630) 792-5020 or ncc@jointcommission.org.
The Joint Commission

Founded in 1951, The Joint Commission seeks to continuously improve health care for the public, in collaboration with other stakeholders, by evaluating health care organizations and inspiring them to excel in providing safe and effective care of the highest quality and value. The Joint Commission accredits and certifies nearly 21,000 health care organizations and programs in the United States. An independent, nonprofit 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.