Global Enteral Device Supplier Association
P.O. Box 297707
Columbus, OH 43229

(614) 824-5897
info@gedsa.org
www.stayconnected.org

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Dear Joint Commission,

In 2020 the Global Enteral Device Suppliers Association (GEDSA) assembled nurses, pharmacists, dietitians, and physicians to form a Clinical Advisory Group with the designated mission to facilitate adoption of the ISO 80369-3 (ENFit®) connectors in the United States. Each of us have first-hand experience in making the transition from legacy to ENFit enteral connectors. We view the transition to ENFit connectors as a vital patient safety initiative and are seeking assistance from your organization.

We request your surveyors query hospitals about their transition plan to ENFit connectors during their accreditation audits. As the first in a series of connector changes, the ISO 80369-3 connector for enteral devices will pave the way for future connectors such as NRFit™ for regional anesthesia. Again, these connector changes will promote patient safety by reducing the risks for tubing misconnections.

Although many hospital systems such as Mayo Clinic, Kaiser Permanente, SharpHealthCare, Banner Health System, Intermountain Healthcare | Medical Center, Stanford Hospital, Lucille Packard Children's Hospital, Children's Hospital of Los Angeles, UCLA Medical Center, UCSF Medical Center, Children's Hospital of Orange County, University of Chicago Medical Center, Lurie Children's Hospital, Cincinnati Children's Hospital, and numerous HCA hospitals (to name a few) have decided the ENFit connector meets their patient safety requirements, the conversion process has been exceptionally slow in the US. We are convinced the Joint Commission surveyors could tip the balance toward more hospitals transitioning to ENFit connectors. We see GEDSA and the JC as having dovetailing interests in promoting patient safety around the issue of enteral misconnections based on previously distributed sentinel alerts issued by your organization. We truly need your support to make this happen in the US.

Meanwhile the European Union, a market of 350 million people, is approaching 100% conversion to ISO 80369-3 enteral connectors with no reported adverse events attributed to the ENFit connector since its launch in 2015. Japan has begun its conversion in December 2019 and it will finish by January 2021. China and Brazil intend to begin their conversion in January 2021.

We are especially concerned about the amplified risk of enteral misconnections related to the COVID-19 pandemic which is increasing utilization of critical care beds and ventilators as many of these patients will receive enteral feedings.

What is the best way for the GEDSA Clinical Advisory Board to initiate dialogue with the Joint Commission on strategies to accelerate hospital adoption of the safer ENFit connectors in the US? We look forward to your response to this letter and to collaborating in the near future.

Best regards,

GEDSA Clinical Advisory Board

Co-Chair **Beth Lyman**, MSN, RN, CNSC, FASPEN, FAAN – Nutrition Support Nurse Consultant, formerly of Kansas City Children's Mercy Hospital

Co-Chair **Ruba Abdelhadi**, MD, CNSC, Pediatric Gastroenterology, Kansas City's Children's Mercy Hospital

Jennifer Bonvechio, PharmD, BCPPS – Clinical Pharmacy Coordinator - Medication Safety, Akron Children's Hospital

Joseph Boullata, PharmD, RPh, CNS-S, FASPEN, FACN - Pharmacy Specialist, Clinical Nutrition Support Services, Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania

Christopher Falato, PharmD – Clinical Manager - Pediatric Pharmacy, University of North Carolina Children's Hospital

Barbara Fleming, MS, APN, RNC-NIC, C-ELBW – Clinical Nurse Specialist- NICU, Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago

Kim Gorsuch, BSN, RN, CNSC – Nurse Supervisor, Interventional GI and Pulmonology, Gastroenterology and Nutrition Support at Comprehensive Care and Research Center, Chicago

Lorraine Linford, RN BSN CNSC – Nurse Manager, Nutrition Support and Vascular Access Team, Intermountain Healthcare | Medical Center

Allyn Peters, BSN, RN, MBA – Clinical Supply Consultant – Clinical Supply Program Director, formerly of Banner Health

Cynthia Reddick, RD, CNSC – National Feeding Tube Manager, Coram/CVS Specialty Infusion Services

Debora Simmons, PhD, RN. FAAN – University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston

Leslie Washington, PhD, RN, CNS-BC, CAPA – Clinical Nurse Specialist, Sharp Memorial Hospital, San Diego

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