

# The Joint Commission DSC Update

A complimentary publication of  
The Joint Commission

Issue One 2009

## Executive Director

*Do you have a certification success story you'd like to share with the world? Or at least with the more than 70,000 people who view The Joint Commission's [home page](#) every month?*

*The page has been redesigned to include customer testimonials. For those who participate, it's a wonderful way to showcase your program and offers an excellent opportunity to highlight improvements in patient care. We make the process very easy, so if you're interested, please send Pamela Schumacher, DSC Update editor, an e-mail at [pschumacher@jointcommission.org](mailto:pschumacher@jointcommission.org). She will be happy to work with you on this project.*

*In the meantime, let me know what you think about the new look. We refreshed the home page in response to comments from a recent usability survey. You'll notice it requires less scrolling to get to content like 'Joint Commission Connect' and 'Quality Check.' The rest of the Web site remains the same, and don't worry, your favorite bookmarked pages haven't changed. You can tell us what you think by taking the [survey](#). I look forward to hearing from you.*

Jean Range, R.N., M.S., C.P.H.Q.



## New certification program recognizes exemplary care of heart failure

The Joint Commission, in collaboration with the American Heart Association, has launched a new [Disease-Specific Care Advanced Certification Program in Heart Failure](#).

This certificate of distinction recognizes hospitals that are making exceptional efforts to foster better quality of care and outcomes for heart failure patients.

"Through the use of the standards and quality improvement tools, the advanced certification program promotes successful efforts in heart failure management," says Jean Range, M.S., R.N., C.P.H.Q., executive director, Disease-Specific Care Certification. "Achievement of certification demonstrates to the community that the care meets the unique and specialized needs of heart failure patients."



The Advanced Certification Program in Heart Failure requires organizations to:

- Comply with the standards and performance measurement requirements of The Joint Commission's Disease-Specific Care Certification program.
- Collect data on four Joint Commission core measures for heart failure and use this data in ongoing performance improvement activities.
- Obtain bronze level or higher recognition from the [Get With The Guidelines<sup>SM</sup>-Heart Failure](#), the American Heart Association's hospital-based quality improvement program.

For more information, send an e-mail to [dscinfo@jointcommission.org](mailto:dscinfo@jointcommission.org) or call (630) 792-5291.

## Stroke measures approved for all hospitals

Eight performance measures currently used by certified Primary Stroke Centers will be expanded for use by all hospitals. The measures have been modified to meet national core measure specifications and will be published in the [Specifications Manual for National Hospital Quality Measures, Version 3.0](#) in April 2009 for implementation with discharges on and after October 1, 2009.

Ten standardized stroke performance measures have been used in the Primary Stroke Certification Program since January 2008. Of the original set, eight were endorsed by the National Quality

Forum (NQF) in July 2008 for use in the hospital core measure program. All 10 standardized stroke measures are still required for data collection by certified Primary Stroke Centers, for the present.

### What this means for Primary Stroke Centers

"Primary Stroke Centers should continue to collect data for all 10 stroke measures according to the specifications in the [Stroke Performance Measurement Implementation Guide, 2nd Edition, Version 2.a](#) until October 1," says Karen Kolbusz, associate project director, Clinical Measurement and Research.

*Continued on page 2*

## States recognize Primary Stroke Center Certification

As of March 1, 2009, five states require or recognize The Joint Commission's Primary Stroke Center Certification for designation as a Primary Stroke Center. This means that certified Primary Stroke Centers meet or exceed the requirements set by states for effectively treating stroke patients.

"Certification of your Primary Stroke Center has many benefits, including government recognition that can direct business your way," notes Jean Range, executive director, Disease-Specific Care Certification. "In some states, the designation may permit Emergency Medical Service personnel to transport symptomatic patients to a designated certified Primary Stroke Center before non-designated centers."

Currently, states with Primary Stroke Center recognition are Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maryland and Oklahoma.

Legislative action in other states includes:

- Virginia and Missouri — Passed stroke center legislation, currently in the rule making process.
- Illinois, Texas, North Dakota and Rhode Island — Introduced legislation related to stroke center designation.
- Indiana and South Carolina — Discussing development of state-wide stroke response system.

For more information about the activities in your state, contact Jennifer Hoppe, associate director, Program Development and State Issues, at [jhoppe@jointcommission.org](mailto:jhoppe@jointcommission.org).

## Stroke measure changes...continued from page 1

"After October 1, they should collect data following the core measure specifications, which will include changes to measure information, data element definitions and measure logic, i.e., the algorithms. These changes were made as part of the alignment process with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services."

CMS intends to include the stroke measure set in the [Reporting of Hospital Quality Data for Annual Payment Update](#) program in the future.

For more information, see the April 2009 issue of *Joint Commission Perspectives*. A preview of the revised specifications is available on the [Web site](#).

### Top compliance issues for Disease-Specific Care

Standards PM.6 and DF.1 were the most problematic requirements for Disease-Specific Care Programs in the first half of 2008. The list shows the areas that were most frequently identified as "not compliant." The percentage of programs that received Requirements for Improvement is provided in parentheses. For more information, see the March 2009 issue of *Joint Commission Perspectives*.

**PM.6** (15 percent) The program evaluates participant perception of the quality of care.

**DF.1** (10 percent) Practitioners are qualified and competent.

**NPSG Requirement 10B** (9 percent) Develop and implement a protocol for administration and documentation of the pneumococcus vaccine.

**NPSG Requirement 10A** (6 percent) Develop and implement a protocol for administration and documentation of the flu vaccine.

**SE.3** (5 percent) The program addresses participants' education needs.

If you have questions about the requirements, please complete our online [question form](#) or call the Standards Interpretation Group at (630) 792-5900.

## Resources

### Education

#### **Disease-Specific Care Certification Workshop**

**June 1, Oakbrook Terrace, Ill.**

Provides a comprehensive overview of Joint Commission Disease-Specific Care (DSC) certification. Highlights include:

- Explanation and discussion of DSC requirements
- Description of the on-site review process and preparation tips
- Take-home action plans to help achieve certification
- Breakout sessions addressing specific diseases

Program code: 09024, \$449

To register, go to [Joint Commission Resources](#) or call (877) 223-6866.

### Certified programs on Quality Check®

A new listing of Joint Commission certified Disease-Specific Care Programs is available at [www.qualitycheck.org](http://www.qualitycheck.org). By clicking on the "Certified Organizations" tab, you can access a list of all certified organizations as either a PDF or an Excel spreadsheet. The information includes the program name, mailing address, certification decision and decision date.

### Hot off the press

Be the first on the block to receive *DSC Update*, the free quarterly newsletter, by signing up [here](#).

### Contact us

#### **DSC Certification**

(630) 792-5291

#### **DSC Account Representative**

(630) 792-3007

#### **Standards Interpretation**

**Group** (630) 792-5900

#### **Customer Service**

(630) 792-5800

**Pricing Unit** (630) 792-5115