

# The Joint Commission Home Care Bulletin

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## Executive Director

*It is a privilege for me to serve as executive director of The Joint Commission's home care program. It is the reason I made the decision to move 1,500 miles away from my family.*

*I have always believed that home care is where the heart is. The service you provide your patients should not be underestimated. And I believe that we can help you improve the quality and safety of that care.*

*The home care program is the largest program at The Joint Commission—almost 4,400 home care organizations across the country have chosen to be accredited by us. And one of our goals is to provide you with the highest level of customer service.*

*The accreditation experience is only valuable if it translates into better care for your patients. If we're doing our jobs right, together we can improve the quality of life for each home care patient.*

*Let me know how we're doing. E-mail me at [mlabson@jointcommission.org](mailto:mlabson@jointcommission.org), or call (630) 792-5284.*

*Margherita C. Labson, R.N., M.S.H.S.A.*



## From the other side of the clipboard: One surveyor's view

An interview with Wayne Murphy, Joint Commission home medical equipment surveyor.

*What do home medical equipment companies gain from Joint Commission accreditation?*

There are many advantages to becoming accredited. First, it helps HMEs reduce risks and improve safety for their customers. Second, their customers understand that the company has had an external review to evaluate their performance based on our standards. Third, many companies tell me it has helped to standardize and improve their business practices.

*From your perspective, what is the greatest value of accreditation?*

The number one value is what the standards provide. Our standards are guidelines to improving the quality and safety of care. They should be an integral part of every HME's business plan.

*What advice would you give to HMEs preparing for accreditation?*

- Get everyone involved.
- Review the accreditation manual. Ask questions. Call the Standards Interpretation Group, (630) 792-5900, if you don't understand a standard.
- Don't try to do it all at once. Review sections of the manual or chapters one at a time.
- Practice, see how things are working, and evaluate the changes you've made.
- Try not to stress! Know that the process and the preparation will help your organization.

*Is there a common misconception among HMEs that you'd like to dispel?*

One myth is that it is extremely difficult to become accredited. HME companies should know that Joint Commission surveyors and Central Office staff are here to help them improve! They should never be afraid to contact us to ask a question.

They should use the survey as a learning experience.

*What National Patient Safety Goal do HMEs find challenging?*

National Patient Safety Goal 9, implementing a

fall risk reduction program, can be challenging for HMEs. Successful companies have implemented some or all of the following strategies:

- Complete a home safety evaluation that looks at potential fall risks, such as throw rugs, and provide education to customers. Some HMEs give their customers a handout.
- Review the equipment and supplies provided and evaluate them for potential fall risks. For example, oxygen equipment provided with too much tubing can create a fall risk.
- Don't forget to follow-up on these risks during subsequent visits. Many customers have return visits, and you must consider those same risks again.

*What resources do you recommend?*

The use of the Internet has changed the way that we do business and get information. Some helpful Web sites include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov); the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, [www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov); and The Joint Commission, [www.jointcommission.org](http://www.jointcommission.org).



## Changes improve customer service



Over the next few months, The Joint Commission's largest division—Accreditation and Certification Operations—will

realign into program specific teams to better support the unique nature of each type of customer. Dedicated home care account representatives will build on their knowledge of all areas of the home care program.

“Account representatives will become subject matter experts on many topics, from deemed status to home medical

equipment,” says Diane Naimark, Home Care Service Team manager.

According to Naimark, the realignment signals a renewed focus on customer needs. “Anyone who works with home care customers—whether account representatives or individuals from the Standards Interpretation Group—will be located in the same area. Being in the same physical location will offer an opportunity for a cross-pollination of ideas and solutions for our customers.

“The staff is excited about these changes and is confident this realignment will help our customers reach their goal to provide safe, high quality care,” she adds.

## Alive and well in New Jersey

The Joint Commission is an approved accrediting body in New Jersey and is actively accrediting home personal care and support service providers that seek reimbursement through the Medicaid program administered by the New Jersey Department of Disability.

In addition to The Joint Commission accreditation survey, this option includes an annual, on-site clinical service audit conducted by a certified surveyor to review the organization's personnel and staffing records and all clinical records on Medicaid cases. The audit may also include changes in policies and proce-

dures that have taken effect since the last audit.

This option reduces the interruptions that can occur with multiple surveys from different oversight organizations. In addition, it offers an opportunity to interact with a Joint Commission surveyor with national exposure to best practices and successful strategies.

For more information about this option, contact your account representative or Jasmina Juric, senior business development specialist at The Joint Commission, (630) 792-5251.

## Update 1 “in the mail”

Accredited home care organizations should have already received Update 1 to the *2009 Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Home Care*. Changes include:

- Revised accreditation requirements for hospices seeking to obtain or maintain Medicare certification
- Revised accreditation requirements for suppliers of durable medical equipment, prosthetics and orthotics, and supplies
- New appendix of “Medicare Requirements for Hospice,” and “Early Survey Policy” Option chapter

- Replacement pages for corrected applicability grids; however, the grid for NPSG.07.04.01 applies to home health (HH) providers and does not apply to personal care and support providers (PC&S). The Xs should have appeared in the first column under HH, and not under PC&S.
- Updated “Required Written Documentation” chapter

Accredited organizations receive one complimentary update for their manual, addressed to the CEO. If you have not received your update, contact your account representative.

## TakeNote

JCR education programs

### Home Care Executive Briefings

Oct. 28, Phoenix, Ariz.

Nov. 4, Oakbrook Terrace, Ill.

### Home Care Accreditation: A Primer for Beginners

Nov. 1, Oakbrook Terrace, Ill.

### Home Care Accreditation Essentials

Nov. 2-3, Oakbrook Terrace, Ill.

To register, or for more information, contact JCR Customer Service at (877) 223-6866, or visit the JCR Web site, [www.jcrinc.com](http://www.jcrinc.com)

## The Joint Commission reaches out via social media

Follow The Joint Commission on Twitter, Facebook and YouTube:

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/JCommission>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Joint-Commission/104533371063>

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/TheJointCommission>

## Look for us

The home care team will exhibit at the National Association for Home Care and Hospice, Los Angeles, Calif., Oct. 10-14, booth 400.

## Contact us

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