

TO: Observers - Combined JCAHO/BPHC Survey of BPCCH Supported Health Centers
FROM: Michael Jarema, Department of Standards, JCAHO
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DATE: August 20, 1997
SUBJECT: Observer Guidelines & Data Collection Forms

Thank you for agreeing to serve as an observer of the combined JCAHO-BPHC survey process for Bureau of Primary Health Care (BPHC) supported health centers.

In order to facilitate the open exchange of ideas as part of the survey, surveyors and observers are encouraged to coordinate travel and lodging plans. BPHC observers will be provided with hotel information in order to coordinate with the JCAHO team. If you have any transportation/lodging questions please call Lon Berkeley (630-792-5787) prior to survey.

In the past, survey teams have found it helpful to meet either for dinner the night before the survey or for breakfast on the morning of the survey to become acquainted and to plan the details regarding the impending survey. Upon arrival at your hotel, contact the JCAHO team chairperson for information on this presurvey meeting.

The observer should agree upon their surveyor "shadowing assignment" for the survey prior to the first day of survey. The pre-survey dinner/breakfast offers a good opportunity to discuss the observer assignment. Expectations and guidelines for observers are attached.

An observation template is attached as a tool for taking notes. The template identifies basic issues which should be noted during the survey. Observers should not feel constrained to limit comments to the amount of space or to only the issues identified on this document. Any issues salient to the joint survey process should be noted.

For each survey activity, note the time actually spent in the activity (identify travel time between activities separately), the staff who participated in the activity by title, the issues the surveyor(s) addressed in that activity and the data sources utilized by the surveyor (note documents, interviews, or observations made by the surveyors). Observers should focus on issues which impact the survey process such as methodological issues including sampling methodologies, the identification of other data sources, staff participation in survey activities, appropriateness of surveyor assignments, questions of standards' interpretations that arise during the course of the survey, and reactions--either positive or negative--from the organization's staff regarding the survey process.

The observer's notes and any other summary information should be returned to Lon Berkeley as soon as possible after the survey observation but no later than two weeks after the survey.

The returned data, along with other information, will be used to evaluate the on-site survey activities, refine the survey process, and gauge field readiness and process acceptance. Revisions will then be made as necessary.

Thanks again for your contribution to this on-going performance improvement effort.

ROLE OF THE OBSERVER

The observer:

1. accompanies a given surveyor during the survey;
2. is a data gatherer, noting such issues as:
 - a. responsibilities or disciplines of organization staff who are present at a given survey activity;
 - b. total number of staff participating in a given activity;
 - c. the standards issues raised by surveyors during the activity;
 - d. length of the activity;
 - e. types of documents reviewed by surveyors during each activity;
 - f. reactions of organization staff to the activity;
 - g. questions asked by organization staff about specific standards;
 - h. the surveyor's application of standards to BPHC supported health centers
3. records general observations about the overall survey process;
4. notes any unique circumstances at the organization or during the survey which impacted the survey or survey process.

The observer:

1. is not expected to evaluate the surveyor;
2. does not actively participate in the survey process, beyond introductions and expressions of thanks when appropriate;
3. comes to the survey prepared with a sufficient number of copies of the observer template for the length of the survey;
4. returns written comments within two weeks after the completion of the survey;
5. is welcome to join the rest of the group at meals and during group discussions when there is such a gathering;

OBSERVATION TEMPLATE: INTERVIEW/SURVEY ACTIVITY SUMMARY

JCAHO - BPHC Surveys
Ambulatory Survey Process - BPHC Supported Health Centers

Organization Name _____ Observer Name _____

1. Survey track

___ Administrator ___ Physician ___ BPHC Fiscal Reviewer

2. Interview/Survey Activity _____

3. Starting time _____ Ending time _____

4. What issues/standards were addressed in detail during the activity?

5. What documents were needed or reviewed in the survey activity/interview?

6. Were the appropriate members of the organization in attendance? If not, who should have been included?

7. Field readiness issues, i.e., was the organization prepared to demonstrate compliance with the standards? If not, in which area were they unprepared and why?

8. Comments/questions regarding the standards or their application, scoring guidelines, etc:

9. Reactions of organization staff to the survey activity:

Please note:

In recording data it is important not to interfere with the survey process. If an item cannot be completed from what you see or hear, leave the item blank. Do not ask questions of surveyors or organization staff during the course of survey activities.

Other potential questions/observations:

OPENING

At the opening, issues regarding the survey schedule. Any concerns, issues expressed by staff?

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT OVERVIEW PRESENTATION

What topics did the organization present? Did the organization's overview address

- Basic philosophy of the organization's approach to performance improvement
- Description of how the approach is organized (committees, groups, etc. and their relationship to each other)
- Approach to measurement activities
- Other...please specify

Did the organization use any sort of visual media in this presentation? If yes, please describe.

Questions asked by surveyors during the presentation:

DOCUMENTATION REVIEWED

Besides the name of the documents reviewed, why were the documents requested. Were the documents read thoroughly or scanned/sampled? Were documents reviewed as part of a survey activity or as an activity in and of itself?

INTERVIEWS

Were issues from the functional chapters addressed?

- Collaboration of senior leaders:
- Strategic planning
- Improving organizational performance
- Information management
- Environment of care
- Human resources
- Continuum of care
- Patient rights and organizational ethics
- Education of leaders regarding performance improvement

MEDICAL/CLINICAL RECORD REVIEW

Type of medical/clinical records reviewed

Rationale (if mentioned by surveyor) for selection

Were the following issues raised by surveyors during the clinical record review?

The process(es) used by the organization to conduct the ongoing review of their medical record for completeness, accuracy, and timely completion of information;

Activities and/or strategies undertaken to address problems found as a result of the organization's ongoing review of the clinical records

Activities undertaken to improve the quality and usefulness of the medical record.

PATIENT CARE AND REMOTE SITE VISITS

Identify the areas visited and significant issues encountered, e.g. imaging, surgery, registration. Were environment of care issues (such as equipment, safety, etc) addressed as well as standards related to the specific services provided in the setting? Were any of these areas subsequently re-visited? If so, why?

Identify methodology for selection of remote site visits. How did the surveyors determine which sites to visit? How much travel and survey time are associated with a remote site visit. What issues can only be surveyed at a remote site?

CREDENTIALS REVIEW & PERSONNEL RECORDS REVIEW

Describe how these activities were conducted.

Were these activities interactive? How were records selected?

CONVERSATIONS WITH PATIENT OR FAMILY MEMBER:

Minutes (approximate) _____

Topics of discussion

DAILY BRIEFING

How long did it take? What issues were raised?

LEADERSHIP EXIT CONFERENCE

Approximate number of participating staff (excluding observers from organization): _____

Identify the departments/disciplines/titles of key participants.

Did the surveyors present a balance of positive and constructive comments?

Did the organization ask surveyors questions for the purpose of clarification?

SCHEDULE CONFLICTS / OPPORTUNITIES FOR JOINT JCAHO-BPHC SURVEY ACTIVITIES

Identify any activities which might benefit from joint survey activities. Identify any instances where there was competition for staff resources or time between the surveyors.

OTHER

Did the organization receive adequate education/consultation from the surveyors? If no, why not?

Did the organization raise any challenges to recommendations by the surveyors? What were the issues?

Did the surveyors survey in an integrated fashion?

Please use additional pages as necessary to write comments on issues not covered in the data collection forms. Comment as appropriate if the site is subject to specific survey issues, e.g. uniqueness due to the services offered or populations served.