Facts about Office-Based Surgery Accreditation

The Joint Commission introduced its Office-Based Surgery (OBS) accreditation program in 2001. It serves as a quality oversight tool for smaller, office-based surgical practices.

Benefits of accreditation
- Demonstrates a commitment to the highest level of patient safety and patient care.
- Eases access to managed care contracts and encourages patient referrals.
- Increases competitive edge.
- Nationally acknowledged benchmark of quality.
- Provides constructive educational opportunity.
- Experienced surveyors offer valuable insights and educational tips.

Eligibility
In order to be eligible for OBS accreditation, the organization or practice must meet these and other criteria:
- If required by law, the organization or practice has a license or registration to conduct its scope of services. The organization can demonstrate that it continually assesses and improves the quality of its care, treatment, and/or services. This process includes a review by clinicians, including those knowledgeable in the type of care, treatment, and/or services provided at the organization.
- The organization or practice provides services that can be evaluated by The Joint Commission’s standards.
- The organization or practice meets parameters for the minimum number of patients/volume of services required for organizations seeking Joint Commission initial accreditation or reaccreditation; that is, three patients served, with at least one patient having a procedure at the time of survey.
- The organization or practice is limited to business occupancy, which is defined as an occupancy that can only have three or fewer individuals at the same time, who are either rendered incapable of self-preservation in an emergency or are undergoing general anesthesia.
- The organization or practice must be physician owned or operated, for example, a professional services corporation, private physician office or small group practice.
- The organization or practice administers local anesthesia, minimal sedation, moderate sedation or general anesthesia. (Includes laser eye surgery using topical anesthesia.)

Organizations or practices seeking Medicare certification through The Joint Commission (deemed status surveys) must be surveyed under the Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Ambulatory Care (CAMAC).

Standards
The OBS standards are a customized subset of The Joint Commission’s ambulatory care standards, maintaining the integrity of the ambulatory care accreditation process and ensuring the highest level of patient care and safety. The Joint Commission develops its standards in consultation with health care experts, providers and researchers, as well as purchasers and consumers. The 2016 Standards for Office-Based Surgery Practices is available for purchase in both spiral-bound and electronic format.

Accreditation process
The Joint Commission’s accreditation process concentrates on operational systems critical to the safety and quality of patient care. To earn and maintain accreditation, an office-based surgery practice must undergo an on-site survey every three years. A typical OBS survey lasts one day. The objective of the survey is not only to evaluate the practice, but to provide education and guidance that will help staff continue to improve performance. Surveyors for the OBS accreditation program are health care professionals from the ambulatory care field who have knowledge, training and experience in smaller surgery settings.

Read more about Office-Based Surgery accreditation
- Standards and survey process
- Cost of accreditation
- Public information on Quality Check®

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