Effective July 1: Revised accreditation and certification decision reports align with CMS

Changes to The Joint Commission’s accreditation and certification decision reports will be effective July 1, 2014, to align with requirements of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). This alignment is part of The Joint Commission’s application to renew its hospital deeming authority. CMS’ approval means that Joint Commission-accredited hospitals may be surveyed by The Joint Commission for compliance with the health and safety requirements of CMS for participation in the Medicare and Medicaid programs. The Joint Commission strives to help all health care organizations achieve “zero harm” and these changes to the decision reports will provide accredited and certified organizations a single place to find all of their risks identified by the survey team.

<table>
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<th>Decision report change summary</th>
<th>What is the current process</th>
<th>What will change after July 1, 2014</th>
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| Added a new section: Opportunities For Improvement (OFI)                                       | • EPs are either Category “A” (yes/no) or Category “C” (how frequently it occurred).  
  • If a Category C EP is scored only once, it does not result in a requirement for improvement (RFI) and it does not appear in the decision report  
  • If a Category C EP is scored twice, it generates an RFI and requires evidence of standards compliance (ESC) follow-up. | • The new OFI section will list single observations of noncompliance with Category C EPs.  
  • A single observance of noncompliance will not require ESC follow-up. This means that organizations will not be able to submit clarifying evidence in an effort to remove the item from the OFI section of the decision report. |
| Added a new section: Open Plans For Improvement (PFIs)*                                         | • The organization creates a PFI to address noncompliance with life safety requirements (see the May 28 Joint Commission Online article, “Notice: Overdue PFIs previously accepted during survey must be addressed by July 1, 2014”).  
  • The open PFI does not appear in the decision report.  
  • The organization completes the work identified in the PFI. | • Open PFIs will be listed in the decision report.  
  • ESC follow-up is not required for open PFIs, however, the organization will still need to complete any required work identified in a PFI.  
  • Failure to resolve a PFI may result in an on-site survey. |
| Life Safety Code® equivalencies to be approved by the CMS Regional Office                       | • Equivalencies are used when an organization uncovers an existing Life Safety Code® deficiency that cannot be corrected without major construction. In these cases, the organization may ask for approval of an “equivalency” by demonstrating that alternative building features exist that comply with the intent of the Life Safety Code.  
  • The Joint Commission reviews and approves equivalency requests. | • The Joint Commission will review the equivalency request and forward it to the CMS Regional Office for final action.  
  • The organization and The Joint Commission will receive a response to the request from the CMS Regional Office.  
  • Appropriate Interim Life Safety Measures (ILSM) will need to be in effect until the final response from the CMS Regional Office is received. |

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Center for Transforming Healthcare

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The Joint Commission’s Center for Transforming Healthcare recently re-launched its Twitter page. Keep up with the latest in patient safety initiatives by following the Center @TJC_TheCenter or on Facebook and YouTube. (Contact: Ziad Karam, zkaram@jointcommission.org)

Resources

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Help your staff meet the requirements of The Joint Commission National Patient Safety Goal (NPSG) on alarm management with free replays of webinars offered by the Advancing Safety in Medical Technology (AAMI) Foundation’s Healthcare Technology Safety Institute. (Contact: Marilyn Neder Flack, MFlack@aami.org)

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  - Certification Matters
- Podcast: Take 5 with The Joint Commission: Removing treatment barriers for patients with sepsis
- Blog posts
  - The View From The Joint Commission: Core Measure Success: Sharing Lessons Learned. Mark G. Pelletier, R.N., M.S., chief operating officer, Accreditation and Certification Operations, examines the benefits of the Core Measure Solution Exchange.
  - Ambulatory Buzz: Ambulatory Care Program Showcased on LinkedIn

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