Standards Changes in Response to California Law for Organizations Performing CT Scans

Revisions Effective July 2012

In October 2010 California enacted a law that requires organizations performing computerized tomography (CT) scans in the state to do the following:

- Record the dose of radiation produced during each CT scan.
- Send each CT study and protocol page listing the technical factors and dose of radiation to an electronic picture archiving and communications system.
- Have the radiation dose produced by the CT imaging equipment verified annually by a medical physicist.

To more firmly align its accreditation requirements with these legislative changes, The Joint Commission added elements of performance (EPs) to Environment of Care (EC) Standard EC.02.04.03 and Provision of Care, Treatment, and Services (PC) Standard PC.01.02.15 for the ambulatory care, critical access hospital, and hospital programs. The addition of EP 17 to Standard EC.02.04.03 and EPs 5–7 to Standard PC.01.02.15 for California organizations that provide CT scans will strengthen The Joint Commission's accreditation

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* According to the California law, radiation dose is defined as one of the following:
  - The computed tomography index volume (CTDI vol) and dose length product (DLP), as defined by the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) and recognized by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).
  - The dose unit as recommended by the American Association of Physicists in Medicine.

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**Radiation Safety Requirements**

**Applicable to Ambulatory Care, Critical Access Hospitals, and Hospitals in California Only**

Effective July 1, 2012

Environment of Care (EC)

**Standard EC.02.04.03**

The [organization] inspects, tests, and maintains medical equipment.

**Element of Performance for EC.02.04.03**

A 17. For [organizations] in California that provide computerized tomography (CT) services: A qualified medical physicist measures the actual radiation dose* produced by each CT imaging system at least annually and verifies that the radiation dose displayed on the system is within 20 percent of the actual amount of radiation dose measured. The dates of these verifications are documented.  

**Note:** This element of performance is applicable only for systems capable of calculating and displaying radiation doses.

Provision of Care, Treatment, and Services (PC)

**Standard PC.01.02.15**

The [organization] provides for diagnostic testing.

**Elements of Performance for PC.01.02.15**

C 5. For [organizations] in California that provide computerized tomography (CT) services: The [organization] documents the radiation dose* on every study produced during a CT examination.  

**Note:** This element of performance is applicable only for systems capable of calculating and displaying radiation doses.

C 6. For [organizations] in California that provide computerized tomography (CT) services: The radiology report of a CT study includes the radiation dose* The dose is either recorded in the patient’s radiology report or included on the protocol page, which is then attached to the radiology report.

**Note:** This element of performance is applicable only for systems capable of calculating and displaying radiation doses.

C 7. For [organizations] in California that provide computerized tomography (CT) services: The [organization] electronically sends each CT study and protocol page that lists the radiation dose* and related technical factors to the [organization's] electronic picture archiving and communications system.

**Note:** This element of performance is applicable only for systems capable of calculating and displaying radiation doses.

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* For the definition of “radiation dose” according to California Senate Bill 1237, refer to http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/09-10/bill/sen/sb_1201-1250/sb_1237_bill_20100929_chaptered.html.
Standards Changes in Response to CA Law for Organizations Performing CT Scans (continued)

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requirements related to radiation safety and ensure that accreditation continues to meet the intent of this law.

These changes, which apply only to organizations performing CT scans in California, become effective July 1, 2012.

The revisions are shown in the box on page 10; the new text is underlined. These revisions will appear in the 2012 Update 1 to the accreditation manuals and the E-dition®, scheduled for publication in spring 2012.