Following a recent home care survey, Inova Health System in Fairfax, Virginia, described their onsite survey experience as “highly collaborative and truly enlightening.”

According to Inova, the surveyor made their team feel at ease. Inova’s Manager of Program Development, Dr. Monika Virk, said, “It felt like the surveyor was part of our team and was here to help us make progress on our already extensive process improvement practices.”

Dr. Virk learned about The Joint Commission’s approach to the onsite survey long before the surveyor had come to visit. She had attended the Home Health Leadership Conference hosted by The Joint Commission in September of 2013. During the conference, the home health leaders described a “collaborative and non-punitive” process and an overall culture change at The Joint Commission. “Our surveyor truly embodied this new Joint Commission approach of learning and process improvement-driven verses a ‘hunt for deficiencies’,” Virk continued, “This culture change was felt at every interaction we had during the 3-day survey proceedings.”

A specific example, that demonstrated the cultural change that Inova experienced, occurred within the opening meeting. Inova expressed to the surveyor their interest in deemed status and that they would like to learn more about it. The surveyor not only shared with the team the basics of how to achieve the deemed status, but also provided learning opportunities throughout the survey process and pointed out areas for improvement, as if they were being surveyed as deemed. Virk said, “This act was greatly appreciated by the whole team and the leadership.”

The surveyor gave helpful examples of initiatives that would aid the Inova team in continuing their process improvement practices. One suggestion was a “Walk Behind Visit” as an alternative to their existing in-patient hand hygiene “secret shopper” initiative. The collaborative nature of the survey process was demonstrated again when the surveyor expressed that the organization’s Surgical Wound Improvement Process and Practice was very impressive and encouraged the Inova team to submit the process to The Joint Commission’s Leading Practice Library.

The surveyor went a step further by contacting Inova’s account executive to understand the submission process for the Leading Practice Library and then explained how to initiate that process, while also informing their Joint Commission account executive of Inova’s interest in deemed status. “Due to the surveyor’s excitement for our initiative we were able to successfully submit our practice to the Leading Practice Library, and we are on our way to achieving deemed status,” stated Dr. Virk.

“The surveyor led a very successful, empowering and informative leadership session,” shared Virk, “The expertise and best practices shared are grounded in extensive experience within the home health industry. These are the best learning examples for us. Our surveyor was approachable and transparent, which is the specific quality that made what we thought would be a tough and daunting survey process, a seamless learning experience for our whole team. Our experience is a perfect example of a positive change agent for The Joint Commission.”

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**OVERVIEW**

The Joint Commission continually looks to optimize the onsite survey experience for our accredited organizations. Our experienced, solutions-focused survey team help ensure it’s a collaborative and educational process for organizations across the continuum of care. Read one new customer’s perspective of Joint Commission’s onsite survey experience and the difference it has made in their organization.

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Dr. Monika Virk, MD
INOVA VNA Home Health
Fairfax, VA