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Continuous Compliance

PC.02.01.03 continues to lead home care standards compliance issues

According to statistics from Jan. 1, 2015, through June 30, 2015, Provision of Care, Treatment, and Services (PC) standard 02.01.03 continues to be the top standards compliance issue for Joint Commission-accredited home care organizations, as 39 percent fell short of meeting the standard. The data represents citations only from organizations due to be surveyed during this time period.

The standard — the organization provides care, treatment or services in accordance with orders or prescriptions, as required by law and regulation — requires orders to be in place prior to care taking place, said Carol Mooney, MSN, senior associate director, Standards Interpretation Group. “Organizations may not have a reliable process for obtaining and documenting those required orders,” Mooney said. “But essentially, anything by law and regulation that requires an order, needs to have an order obtained from the physician and put in writing for the physician to sign.”

This can become complicated if the home care personnel and physicians are in different locations. Other road blocks can occur when organizations don’t have appropriate processes in place.

Possible ways to overcome these obstacles include:
- Establishing electronic health records (EHRs) at the point of service
- Improving coordination between the physician signing the order and the home care team
- Auditing clinical records and spot checking that staff have copies of complete orders
- Utilizing information management systems and technology to make the process faster and simpler
- Using the Targeted Solutions Tool® for hand-off communications
- Verbally reading back the transcribed order to the prescriber

The second top standards compliance issue was Infection Prevention and Control (IC) standard 02.04.01, with 35 percent of home care organizations not complying with the standard — the organization offers vaccination against influenza to licensed independent practitioners and staff.

“Most organizations have a vaccination program they offer practitioners, but they don’t necessarily have strong educational components,” Mooney said.
She said staff members need to understand why this is important. Sharing the rationale for the benefits to be gained by patient, clinician and others can be the tipping point to engaging clinicians to adopt safe practices. Another tip is to track the vaccinations annually, so organizations can track who has or hasn’t been vaccinated and why. Understanding those reasons can help determine if the organization needs to better educate staff or if there are other reasons for noncompliance.

Another factor can be if the vaccination is occurring offsite, which Mooney said requires better communication from organizations so that employees know where to go to be vaccinated.

Mooney said this is a national initiative and that organizations are being asked to achieve 90 percent compliance by 2020.

For more information about standard IC.02.04.01, see the R3 Report, “Influenza vaccination for licensed independent practitioners and staff.” For questions, contact: the Standards Interpretation Group at 630-792-5900 or complete the online question form.

**Certification**

**New Community-Based Palliative Care add-on certification program to launch July 1**

This year, The Joint Commission will offer a new Community-Based Palliative Care (CBPC) certification program for accredited home care organizations that provide palliative care services. The add-on certification will be implemented July 1.

The need for palliative care outside of the hospital has grown. Home care organizations that provide home health and/or hospice services have begun to develop palliative care programs to meet the needs of chronically ill patients who may or may not qualify for home health services, but who need the physical and psychosocial support that palliative care services can provide.

The CBPC standards were developed as an optional certification program that would be evaluated at the time of an organization’s home care accreditation survey.

“Over the past couple of years, we’ve had a number of our customers, both small and large, ask for a certification program for this service,” said Kathy Clark, MSN, RN, associate project director specialist.

The proposed requirements were developed based on the 2013 Clinical Practice Guidelines for Quality Palliative Care (3rd edition); the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization’s Standards of Practice for Pediatric Palliative Care and Hospice (2010); other current palliative care professional literature; and input from a panel of home care and palliative care experts. The proposed CBPC program standards underwent a six-week field review to obtain feedback from customers and other health care professionals. The Joint Commission also hosted two focus group conference calls with accredited home care organizations currently providing palliative care in order to review the palliative care concepts included in the program requirements.

Free webinars for interested customers will take place from noon to 1 p.m. CST on Feb. 18 and April 28. Registration is open. Information about the application process will be available at a later date. The program standards will publish in the July 1 update to the Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Home Care and in the July 1 E-dition update. They can be viewed on The Joint Commission’s website for prepublication standards. For more information about the CBPC certification program, contact Kathy Clark at 630-792-5932 or kclark@jointcommission.org.
In the Know

Joint Commission surveyors attend NAHC meeting in October
In an effort to further enhance their knowledge of the home care industry and be up to date on latest trends and challenges, more than 50 Joint Commission surveyors attended the National Association for Home Care and Hospice meeting in October, held in Nashville, Tennessee.

Deborah Ryan, MS, RN, field director of home care in the surveyor management and development division of The Joint Commission, also attended the meeting and facilitated a group education session focused on Joint Commission updates and survey process requirements. Sessions at the conference ranged from clinical updates, to quality, financial and administrative issues, as well as regulatory and legal aspects.

"I think the surveyors will be better versed in industry-wide trends, as well as the Joint Commission standards, and will be able to bring that to the organizations they survey," Ryan said. "I think there are many challenges ahead for home care, and we want Joint Commission surveyors to continue to support organizations with their efforts to tackle those challenges."

Some of those challenges include reduced reimbursements and increased requirements for reporting, such as the Hospice Quality Reporting Item Set, as well as value-based purchasing.

"I think the industry is positioned to respond to these challenges, and I think it was motivational for the surveyors to hear that the home care and hospice organizations are prepared for the challenge and are willing to work toward improving," Ryan said.

Learn more about home care accreditation by attending free Joint Commission webinars
Don’t miss out on these free webinars offered by The Joint Commission. The one-hour webinars — which all start at 10 a.m. PT, 11 a.m. MT, noon CT, 1 p.m. ET — can help organizations learn more about Joint Commission accreditation for home care organizations, including home health, hospice, personal care, pharmacy and DMEPOS.

Register for upcoming webinars, which include:
- Feb. 11 - Standards Compliance 301: What to Expect on Survey
- Feb. 18 - Community-based Palliative Care Certification
- April 12 - Improving Patient Perception for Care

Additional Resources a Click Away

Join the conversation: @home with The Joint Commission
Written by Margherita Labson, Home Care Executive Director

Join the LinkedIn Home Care Accreditation Page: The Joint Commission’s Home Care Accreditation Program is designed to improve quality and safety across the continuum of care, including home health, hospice, personal care, DMEPOS and pharmacy.

See what the Home Health Community is tweeting about.