To keep its programs current, The Joint Commission regularly reviews its requirements against the latest standards of practice and professional literature for significant developments that may necessitate modifications to requirements.

Due to changes in ventricular assist device technology and patient characteristics, The Joint Commission recently evaluated its disease-specific care (DSC) advanced certification program for Ventricular Assist Device for Destination Therapy (VAD).

After a review of the current literature, staff engaged experts in the field and consulted with professional organizations to determine whether changes were needed to continue to provide the field with standards that support the highest levels of quality and safety. Feedback from the expert panel, professional organizations, and others in the industry highlighted the following themes for consideration when conducting further research and, ultimately, in developing revisions to requirements:

- The need for an interdisciplinary team
- Modifications to patient selection/inclusion criteria for implant

Continued on page 13
Revisions included enhancements to all five standards chapters for the VAD program and will be effective March 23, 2014. Organizations can view the revised VAD program requirements on the Prepublication Standards webpage at http://www.jointcommission.org/assets/1/18/PrepublicationRpt_VAD_09162013.pdf.*

Please note that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will publish its final National Coverage Determination (NCD) memorandum with modified VAD program requirements before the end of 2013. After the NCD is published, The Joint Commission will update VAD certification program requirements accordingly to remain aligned with CMS.

For more information about the enhanced VAD requirements, please contact Teresa Gomez, RN, MSN, associate project director, Department of Standards and Survey Methods, at bgomez@jointcommission.org or The Joint Commission Disease-Specific Care Certification Program at dscinfo@jointcommission.org.

*As announced in the October 2013 Perspectives (page 5), the Disease-Specific Care Certification manual will be available only online—via both the fall 2013 E-dition® and Joint Commission Connect™—in November. While the enhanced VAD requirements will not be included at that time, they will appear in the updated hard copy and online manual in spring 2014.