The Joint Commission created its Advanced Disease-Specific Care Certification for Primary Stroke Centers (PSC) program through a collaborative partnership with the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association. Since the program’s launch in 2003, The Joint Commission has regularly reviewed program requirements alongside the latest standards of practice and professional literature for important developments that may necessitate modifications to requirements.

During a recent evaluation of the PSC advanced disease-specific care certification program, Joint Commission staff referenced the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association’s 2013 Guidelines for Early Management of Patients with Acute Ischemic Stroke for important changes to the field. Staff determined that, in order to remain up-to-date, enhancements were needed to the current certification requirements within the following areas:

- Time frame for the administration of intravenous (IV) thrombolytic therapy
- Necessary diagnostic tests prior to the administration of IV thrombolytic therapy
- Endovascular procedures for patients who are not eligible for IV thrombolytic therapy

Revisions include enhancements to all five standards chapters for the PSC advanced certification program and will be effective July 1, 2014. Organizations can view the revised program requirements on The Joint Commission website at http://www.jointcommission.org/standards_information/prepublication_standards.aspx; additionally, the requirements will be published in both the spring 2014 E-dition® update and the 2014 Disease-Specific Care Certification Manual.

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Reference