Effective July 1, 2014, several Medication Management (MM) requirements will include applicability to the management of sample medications for the ambulatory care, behavioral health care, critical access hospital, home care, hospital, and office-based surgery programs.

In response to increasing customer concerns regarding compliance and sample medications, The Joint Commission conducted an in-depth review of MM elements of performance (EPs) and selected several that were applicable to sample medications.

After the selected MM EPs were evaluated with stakeholders, by professional and technical advisory Committees, and through a field review, The Joint Commission determined that the EPs listed in the box at right are applicable to sample medications.

Each of the EPs selected as applicable to sample medications will be clarified with the following Note:

“Note: This element of performance is also applicable to sample medications.”

This Note will appear the MM chapter in the spring 2014 E-dition® and the 2014 Update 1 to the Comprehensive Accreditation Manuals for the programs listed above. The requirements will also be available on The Joint Commission website at http://www.jointcommission.org/standards_information/prepublication_standards.aspx.

A Note on Applicability

Please note that, in making this clarification, The Joint Commission is not endorsing the use of sample medications. The new Note is meant only to identify which MM EPs are applicable to sample medications for organizations that permit their use. MM EPs that do not have this Note are not applicable to sample medications.

In addition, The Joint Commission determined that in the rare event a sample medication is used in an inpatient setting, the sample medication is subject to the complete MM standards like any other inpatient medication. The accreditation manuals will address this with a clarification to the MM Chapter Overview.

Questions about this clarification may be directed to Kelly Podgorny DNP, RN, project director, Department of Standards and Survey Methods, at kpodgorny@jointcommission.org.