Approved: New and Revised Pain Assessment and Management Standards for Behavioral Health Care, Home Care, and Nursing Care Center Programs

Effective July 1, 2019, new and revised pain assessment and management standards will be applicable to Joint Commission–accredited behavioral health care organizations, home health services under the home care program, and nursing care centers. This project is a continuation of the initiative that resulted in new and revised pain assessment and management requirements for ambulatory health care organizations, critical access hospitals, hospitals, and office-based surgery practices (see July 2017 Perspectives and July 2018 Perspectives).

The project’s program-specific R³ Reports provide the rationales for the requirements as well as references to the research articles and reports used to develop them. In addition to an extensive literature review, new and revised requirements were developed based on public field review and expert guidance from the following groups:

- A technical advisory panel of practicing clinicians from various health care and academic organizations, professional associations, and the payor and health technology sectors.
- Program-specific expert panels consisting of professionals with clinical and leadership experience relating to pain management in behavioral health care, home health, and nursing care center settings.
- Program-specific standard review panels composed of clinicians and administrators who provided a frontline point of view and insights into the practical application of the proposed standards. Members included those from program-specific expert panels as well as additional representatives from organizations or professional associations.

Pain management is an important aspect of patient care in behavioral health, home health, and nursing care centers organizations. Many patients or individuals receiving care in these settings are treated with opioid medications or have a history of opioid use, or have age-related, psychiatric, and other comorbidities that make the task of pain management challenging. The new program-tailored requirements outline a multi-level approach to pain management to help frontline staff and clinicians deliver safe, individualized pain care. Depending on the program and service design, the requirements reflect the following key components of quality pain management:

- Consistent pain assessment and reassessment that includes evaluation of functional ability and treatment–associated side effects and risk factors
- Involvement of patients in pain management planning to develop individualized, realistic objectives to be used for evaluation of treatment progress
- Provision of pain treatment that includes nonpharmacologic, pharmacologic, or a combination of approaches
- Availability of educational resources to guide staff and practitioners’ practices for pain screening, assessment, and management
- Responsible use of opioid medications supported by the following practices:
  - Educating patients on safe use, storage, and disposal of opioids
  - Facilitating practitioner access to prescription drug monitoring programs
  - Monitoring the use of opioids

**Understanding the Standard Applicability**
The new requirements have limited applicability in the behavioral health care and home care programs as follows:

**Behavioral Health Care Program**
- The new “Care, Treatment and Services” (CTS) requirement, CTS.02.01.09, EP 3, to assess, and then treat or refer individuals for treatment of physical pain will apply to acute 24-hour settings where consistent nursing care and medical monitoring and supervision are in place. For other organizations, at a minimum, the organization needs to screen all individuals served to identify those for whom a physical pain assessment is indicated (CTS.02.01.09, EP 1). Then if physical pain assessment is indicated, the organization either assesses and treats or refers individuals served for assessment or treatment (CTS.02.01.09, EP 2).

  The following elements of performance (EPs) in the “Human Resources Management” (HRM) and “Medication Management” (MM) chapters include a lead-in statement that clarifies the setting or circumstances under which the EP is applicable to an organization.
  - Standard HRM.01.05.01, EP 12
  - Standard MM.01.01.01, EP 2

**Home Care Services**
- The new and revised pain assessment and management standards are not applicable to the following home care services:
  - Personal care and support services
  - Durable medical equipment
  - Respiratory equipment
  - Supplies
  - Orthotics and prosthetics
  - Clinical respiratory services
  - Rehabilitation technology
  - Pharmacy dispensing
  - Clinical/monitoring pharmacist
  - Long-term care pharmacy

  For hospice programs and freestanding ambulatory infusion services, current “Provision of Care, Treatment, and Services” (PC) requirements under Standard PC.01.02.07 underwent editorial changes that can be reviewed on the Prepublication Standards page.

  These new and revised standards will be posted on the Prepublication Standards page of The Joint Commission website and will be published online in the spring 2019 E-dition® update to the Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Behavioral Health Care (Cambhc),
Comprehensive Accreditation Manuals for Home Care (CAMHC), and Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Nursing Care Centers (CAMNCC). For customers who purchase it, the spring 2019 update for CAMBHC and CAMHC will include these revisions; these revisions also will be included in the hard-copy 2020 CAMNCC.

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