Updates to the Requirements for Advanced Certification for Total Hip and Total Knee Replacement

In the August 2018 edition of Perspectives, The Joint Commission announced a new requirement for participation in a national joint replacement registry for hospitals, critical access hospitals, and ambulatory surgery centers (ASCs) that participate in the advanced certification for Total Hip and Total Knee Replacement (THKR); this requirement appears in the program-specific eligibility criteria, as well as Performance Measurement (DSPM) Standard DSPM.4, Element of Performance (EP) 2b in the Comprehensive Certification Manual for Disease-Specific Care. The new requirements are scheduled to go into effect January 1, 2019.

The Joint Commission has received many calls from customers asking which registries meet this requirement. After much discussion, including discussions with the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS), The Joint Commission has decided to revise the program-specific eligibility requirement and DSPM.4, EP 2b to require advanced THKR certified programs to join the American Joint Replacement Registry (AJRR) and to use the data collected from the registry to analyze and improve processes. The AJRR, operated by the AAOS, is the largest national registry of hip and knee joint replacement data based on annual procedure counts, with more than 1.4 million orthopedic procedures in its database. AJRR participants receive near real-time feedback reports and summary statistics and the scale allows for meaningful national benchmarking and peer-to-peer comparisons, including custom reports. The AJRR also has processes in place to audit data quality and to ensure completeness of data submission. The Joint Commission believes that having all organizations join AJRR and work closely with AAOS to use the data from the registry in improvement initiatives will provide opportunities to strengthen quality improvement activities for organizations with advanced THKR certification.

This revised requirement will be effective July 1, 2019 for all new customers applying for THKR certification after that date. Organizations that are certified in the advanced THKR program prior to July 1, 2019 and have entered into contracts with a registry other than AJRR will have until the end of their contract or January 1, 2020, whichever comes first, to transition over to AJRR.

The revision to the eligibility requirement—as shown by the underlined text in the following box—applies to all organizations seeking initial certification or recertification under the advanced certification THKR program.
Advanced Disease-Specific Care Eligibility Requirements for Total Hip and Total Knee Replacement

The Advanced Certification for Total Hip and Total Knee Replacement program (THKR) is available to hospitals, critical access hospitals, and ambulatory surgery centers with total hip and total knee replacement programs.

In addition to the eligibility criteria described in “The Joint Commission Certification Process” (CERT) chapter of this manual, programs seeking THKR certification must also do the following:

- Apply for the site that provides total hip and total knee replacement procedures. Each individual site must independently meet the eligibility requirements and standards.
- Provide both total hip and total knee replacement procedures.
- Be an active and continuous member of the American Joint Replacement Registry (AJRR) at the full subscription level.
- At time of review, arrange for the reviewer to observe either a total hip or total knee replacement operation.

The revision to DSPM.4, EP 2b—as shown by the underlined text in the following box—aligns with the revised eligibility requirement and is designed to improve the safety and quality of services for patients electing to undergo total joint arthroplasty by selecting AJRR, a robust and well-established national registry to improve processes.

Applicable to Ambulatory Surgical Centers, Critical Access Hospitals, and Hospitals

Effective July 1, 2019

Performance Measurement (DSPM)

Standard DSPM.4: The program collects and analyzes data to determine variance from the clinical practice guidelines.

Element of Performance for DSPM.4

2 The program evaluates variances that affect program performance and outcomes.

Requirement Specific to Total Hip and Total Knee Replacement

a. The performance improvement program includes evaluation of care processes and transitions of care.

b. The program analyzes its total hip and total knee arthroplasty data in the American Joint Replacement Registry (AJRR) and uses it for quality improvement purposes.
The revision to DSPM.4, EP 2b has been posted on the Prepublication Standards page of The Joint Commission website; revisions to both the EP and eligibility requirement will be published online in the THKR chapter in the spring 2019 E-dition® update to the Comprehensive Certification Manual for Disease-Specific Care. (These revisions do not appear in the hard-copy 2019 Comprehensive Certification Manual for Disease-Specific Care, which includes requirements effective January 1, 2019.)

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