Revisions to Requirements for Critical Access Hospitals

Effective November 12, 2017, The Joint Commission has revised Human Resources (HR) Standard HR.01.01.01, Element of Performance (EP) 15 and Leadership (LD) Standard LD.04.01.01, EP 6 for critical access hospitals. In addition, Standard LD.04.02.03 includes new EP 23 regarding the disclosure of information. These EP changes are intended to more clearly address the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Conditions of Participation (CoPs) for critical access hospitals.

Also effective November 12, 2017, are revisions to Standard LD.01.03.01, EP 21 and Provision of Care, Treatment, and Services (PC) Standard PC.02.01.03, EP 1 for psychiatric and rehabilitation distinct part units in critical access hospitals. The Joint Commission also has deleted all standards requirements related to distinct part units in a critical access hospital’s use of a unified and integrated medical staff (Medical Staff [MS] Standard MS.01.01.05, EPs 1–4 and MS.01.01.01, EP 37). Per clarification from CMS, critical access hospitals are not permitted to have a unified and integrated medical staff.


For more information, please contact Laura Smith, MA, project director, Department of Standards and Survey Methods, The Joint Commission, at lsmith@jointcommission.org.

Revisions to Patient Blood Management Certification Requirements

Effective January 1, 2018, The Joint Commission has updated several requirements in its certification program for Patient Blood Management. An evidence-based approach to optimizing the care of patients who might need transfusion, this Joint Commission certification program is based on the AABB Standards for a Patient Blood Management Program and encompasses all aspects of patient evaluation and clinical management surrounding the transfusion decision-making process.

To maintain alignment with the AABB Standards, The Joint Commission has updated the following areas of its Patient Blood Management certification program:

- Requirements for each activity level and program members
- Educational requirements for individuals who order and/or transfuse blood
- Defined guidelines on transfusion orders
- Procedures for emergent/urgent patients including massive blood loss
- Intraoperative methods for patient blood management
- Annual reporting of program performance
- Caring for patients who decline use of blood or blood-derived products
- Policies and procedures that minimize blood loss during phlebotomy
- Specific elements of preventive actions required when responding to nonconformances

The updated standards, which are available on The Joint Commission website at http://www.jointcommission.org/standards_information/prepublication_standards.aspx, will be included in the fall 2017 E-dition® update of requirements for the Patient Blood Management Certification Manual. As a reminder, Patient Blood Management certification is an option available to Joint Commission–accredited hospitals that have at least a four-month track record of compliance with all Patient Blood Management requirements included in this manual.

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