Three organizations achieve Joint Commission’s Perinatal Care Certification

It was a photo finish as three organizations jumped ahead of the pack and earned The Joint Commission’s first Perinatal Care Certifications.

This new certification program launched July 1 and covers prenatal through postpartum care in order to improve and maintain the health of newborns and their mothers. The awarding of this certification follows a thorough evaluation of the hospital’s perinatal care program and indicates the three organizations made an extra effort to review and improve the key areas in their perinatal program that can affect the safety and quality of patient care.

The three health care organizations were: Commonwealth Health Moses Taylor in Scranton, Pennsylvania; Mercy San Juan Medical Center in Carmichael, California; and NYU Hospitals Center in New York, New York.

“This is validation of the commitment of our employees to providing high-quality care to all of our patients and especially to the women who entrust us with their care and that of their infants before, during and after birth,” said Justin Davis, CEO of Moses Taylor Hospital. “We could not have earned this recognition and reached this milestone without a total team effort.”

Andrea Solbrig, a perinatal clinical nurse specialist at Mercy San Juan Medical Center, said a lot of the process came together during the pre-work put in by the entire team.

“Looking at our own department processes, policies and education from a surveyor perspective, and reaching out to the staff was time intensive. However, our team is truly stronger as a result of our work. This only solidifies a path of safety and excellence we have already been on,” she said. “We are truly ecstatic to partake in this opportunity and continue the work in the future.”

NYU was the first academic medical center to become certified in perinatal care, following its role as a beta site for testing the program during its development.

According to a statement from NYU:

“We have learned there is value in certification as it provides us with a structure by which to identify program strengths and areas for enhancement. Our team was proud of the work that had already been
done to integrate our services on labor and delivery, mother-baby, and the NICU. This program provided an opportunity for us to reexamine our policies, procedures and practices, and in doing so it became clear we could move from a strong, patient-centered care program to one that is superb.”

Organizations wishing to pursue Perinatal Care Certification can request an application. For more information, email certification@jointcommission.org or call 630-792-5291.

**Comprehensive Stroke Center certification nears 100 organizations**

The Joint Commission is quickly approaching 100. No, not 100 years old, but rather nearing 100 organizations that have achieved Comprehensive Stroke Center certification.

These certified Comprehensive Stroke Centers are part of an elite group of providers focused on complex stroke care and were the first to achieve this certification in the U.S.

"By achieving this advanced certification, the organization has demonstrated the highest level of commitment to the care of its patients with a complex stroke condition," said Wendi Roberts, executive director of the Comprehensive Stroke Center certification program. "Certification is a voluntary process, and The Joint Commission commends these organizations for successfully undertaking this challenge to raise the standard of care for the communities they serve."

Complex Stroke Centers are recognized as industry leaders and are responsible for setting the national agenda in highly specialized stroke care. Comprehensive Stroke Center Certification recognizes those hospitals that have a state-of-the-art infrastructure, staff and training to receive and treat patients with the most complex strokes. Learn more about the Comprehensive Stroke Center Certification program or download a complimentary 90-day trial of the standards.

**Revisions to eligibility requirements for two stroke certification programs**

This summer, The Joint Commission began offering Acute Stroke-Ready Hospital (ASRH) to its accredited hospitals and critical access hospitals.

While applicants for advanced certification must meet the requirements for Disease-Specific Care (DSC) Certification, each stroke program has different requirements for diagnostic testing capability, neurosurgical services and clinical performance measures. In order to clearly delineate the expectations of The Joint Commission’s stroke certification programs, two changes will be made to the ASRH and Primary Stroke Center eligibility requirements.

These revisions, effective as of July 1, 2015, are as follows:

- In order to be eligible for ASRH certification, a hospital should see its role in stroke management as administering intravenous thrombolytics and then transferring patients to a primary or comprehensive stroke center (or center of comparable capability) for continued treatment
- There must be transfer protocols in place indicating that transfer after thrombolytics is the planned pathway for the vast majority of patients (unless the patient is unstable or not a candidate for advanced therapies)
- If a hospital performs intra-arterial (IA) or endovascular procedures for stroke patients, the minimum level of Joint Commission certification for which the hospital is eligible is PSC certification

The Joint Commission’s stroke program requirements were developed in collaboration with the American Heart Association/American, Stroke Association (AHA/ASA) and a group of national stroke experts, who serve on The Joint Commission’s technical advisory panels. Learn more about the Joint Commission stroke programs.

For more information: The Joint Commission Certification Web page
Send questions or comments to: dscinfo@jointcommission.org or staffingcert@jointcommission.org
State regulators can partner with Joint Commission on stroke designation surveys

The Joint Commission offers state organizations and regulators the opportunity to partner up when surveying for a stroke certification program.

One such example of this partnership involves the Maryland Institute of Emergency Medical Services Systems, an independent state agency that focuses on EMS, trauma and specialty care centers. While MIEMS recognizes hospitals that have stroke certification with The Joint Commission, MIEMS still would need to do a modified survey in order for the providers to be able to follow their neurological protocols and bypass non-primary stroke centers.

Currently in Maryland, 17 primary stroke centers are Joint Commission and MIEMS designated; 18 primary stroke centers are MIEMS designated; and two are comprehensive centers that are Joint Commission and MIEMS designated.

“I came into this role in 2009, and one of the first things I did was to reach out to The Joint Commission, because I really wanted to be a partner with them in attending the site surveys for both the primary stroke centers and the comprehensive stroke centers,” said Anna Aycock, chief of health care facilities and special programs at MIEMS.

Aycock believes the partnership has benefitted the hospitals, because it saves them money.

“They were really thrilled, because they didn’t want to pay for two survey teams to come in separately,” she said.

If other state agencies want to enter into similar agreements for stroke program designations, contact Executive Director Wendi Roberts at 630-792-5240 or email wroberts@jointcommission.org.

Disease-Specific Care website gets makeover

Visitors to The Joint Commission’s Disease-Specific Care certification Web pages will notice some changes as the design has been updated to better suit customers. Each type of certification has a dedicated topic page, information on the benefits of achieving a particular certification, a review of the onsite review process involved, requirements of the certification, eligibility and fees, and other resources for a specific clinical program.

Other benefits to the customer include:

- Improved visibility and search function
- Modified language to match what is currently being used in health care organizations to describe certification programs.
- Additional resources and tools to assist customers in the application process for certification, as well as a link to free standards through the E-dition and the opportunity for customers to submit questions directly to the certification team.

“The site is less cluttered and is aligned with our vision to provide customers easy access to Joint Commission resources and tools,” said Wendi Roberts, executive director.

Resources

New issues of Quick Safety:
Issue 17 – October 2015: Temporary names put newborns at risk

New Sentinel Event Alert:
Sentinel Event Alert 55: Preventing falls and fall-related injuries in health care facilities

For more information: The Joint Commission Certification Web page
Send questions or comments to: dscinfo@jointcommission.org or staffingcert@jointcommission.org