Joint Commission Accreditation and Specialty Certifications for Nursing Care Centers:

Gaining A Quality-Focused Competitive Edge

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Today’s Presenters

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Today’s Objectives

- Discuss how accreditation and specialty certification keeps your organization “ahead of the quality curve”
- Identify the key components of the Joint Commission’s products for nursing care centers including certification for Post-Acute Care and Memory Care
- Provide a high-level overview of the accreditation and certification process and how it differs from a state survey experience
- Learn tips to prepare for your survey
- Learn from recent customer experiences
The Joint Commission—Who We Are

- The leader in standards development promoting quality and safety in health care organizations for nearly 60 years
- Began accrediting nursing homes, including skilled nursing facilities, in 1966
- Currently the nation’s largest and only full continuum accreditor; with more than 20,000 accredited health care organizations
- Currently accredit over 90% of the nation’s hospitals
- Our experience and expertise has propelled Joint Commission accreditation to become the most widely recognized quality and safety distinction across the continuum, among managed care contractors, liability insurers and other key stakeholders
What Can Joint Commission Accreditation Do for Your Organization?
Builds a Solid Quality Foundation
Supports The Success of Your Ongoing Quality Efforts

- Accreditation is a proactive “preparedness” strategy
  - QAPI crosswalk
  - DHHS National Dementia Initiative
  - State surveys

- Safeguards your patients, residents and financial resources
  - Fewer deficiencies* = less financial penalties
    - Penalties can also inhibit your ability to take new resident/patients
    - Addressing deficiencies take up valuable staff time that could be spent caring for patients/residents

How Nursing Homes Leverage Their Accomplishment

**Partners in the Continuum of Care**
- Often a requirement for contracting with managed care and other payers

**Payers**
- Provides differentiation of an organization in its market and among referral sources

**Liability Insurers**
- Provides a framework for high-quality and safe practices to help organize and strengthen an organization’s ongoing quality improvement efforts

**Community Recognition**
- Strengthens community confidence and validates quality care to patients, residents and their families

**Within the Facility**
- Often leads to reduced insurance premiums
Additional Impact of Accreditation

Joint Commission accredited nursing homes have better resident outcomes which continue to improve over time

Additional Impact of Accreditation

Fewer deficiency citations and better perceptions of patient and resident safety culture

Your Partners are Looking for…

- Sustainable quality
- Cost efficiencies
- Data that proves outcomes
- Reduced hospital readmissions

...a partner in the continuum of care.
Flexible Product Options To Meet Your Unique Quality Objectives

Nursing Care Center Accreditation

Provides a solid foundational platform upon which optional specialty distinctions may be built

VISION:
Accreditation requirements relate to high-value quality and safety issues affecting all patients and residents in Nursing Home Settings and include contemporary focus on person-centered care and cultural transformation.*

Optional Specialty Certifications

Accredited organizations may elect optional specialty certifications to highlight areas of additional competence based on their unique service offerings and market needs

- Post-Acute Care Certification
- Memory Care Certification
Snapshot of the Accreditation Experience

Standards developed with national experts, educators, policymakers and providers

Web-based standards manual that allows you to easily share standards information and compliance tools online

On-site survey conducted by well-qualified and trained surveyors who facilitate and collaborate to provide an educational survey experience

Dedicated Account Executive to assist your organization throughout the accreditation cycle

Private, secure on-line extranet site to organize your Nursing Care Center’s communications and interaction with The Joint Commission

Intracycle Monitoring activities to assist your organization in maintaining continuous compliance

Access to standards experts and tools to support your organization’s efforts in improving quality and safety for the patients and residents you serve
Foundational Accreditation Requirements
Foundational Accreditation Requirements

Include:

- Requirements that focus on key care processes aimed at promoting improved patient and resident outcomes
- Requirements that promote person-centered care and the culture transformation movement within the industry
- National Patient Safety Goals (NPSGs) that focus on promoting resident safety through system-wide solutions
Foundational Accreditation Requirements

- Leadership
- Provision of Care, Treatment and Services
- Medication Management
- Human Resources
- Infection Prevention and Control
- Performance Improvement
- Information Management
- Life Safety and Environment of Care
- Emergency Management
Sample Standard and Element of Performance

Standard PC.02.03.01

The organization provides resident education and training based on each resident’s needs and abilities.

1. The organization performs a learning needs assessment for each resident. This assessment includes the resident’s cultural and religious beliefs, emotional barriers, desire and motivation to learn, physical or cognitive limitations, and barriers to communication.
Specialty Certification in Post-Acute Care
Post-Acute Care Certification Defined

- Care and services are...
  - goal-directed
  - time-limited (short-stay)

- Care is provided to patients...
  - recently hospitalized (or require higher acuity care and services in lieu of hospitalization)
  - Requiring medically complex care/rehabilitative services

- The goal...
  - To help effectively transition the patient to a lower level of care setting or to their home
Post-Acute Care Certification

Eligibility Criteria

– Organization must be currently accredited or simultaneously seeking accreditation under the Nursing Care Center Accreditation Program

– Must have served a minimum of 5 patients within the program with a minimum of 2 active patients at the time of survey
Post-Acute Care Certification

- Leadership accountability
- Staff knowledge and competency
- Provision of care for the high acuity patient
- Transitions of care
Specialty Certification in Memory Care
Memory Care Certification Defined

- Care is provided to patients or residents...
  - Who have been diagnosed with memory-impacting conditions such as Alzheimer’s disease or dementia.

- The goal...
  - To enable patients or residents with memory-impacting conditions to remain engaged in their environment at the level of their cognitive ability and to function at the highest level possible for as long as possible.
Memory Care Certification Defined

Memory Care focuses on...

1. Person-centered care that honors lifelong routines and preferences
2. Activity programming that matches the resident’s cognitive level
3. Alternatives to medication use for managing behaviors
4. Physical environment that promotes function and independence
Memory Care Certification Eligibility

Eligibility Criteria

- Organization must be currently accredited or simultaneously seeking accreditation under the Nursing Care Center Accreditation Program
- Organizations do not have to have a distinct memory or dementia care unit to be eligible
Memory Care Certification

- Care coordination
- Staff knowledge and competency
- Activity programming based on abilities
- Behavior management
- Safe and supportive physical environment
The Survey Process
What to Expect During a Survey

- On-site observations and interviews by Joint Commission surveyor
- Verbal and written information provided to the surveyor
- Collaborative approach, focus on best practices and information sharing
- Expectation for continuous compliance with standards
- Consultation
What to Expect During a Survey

- Compliance is evaluated using “Tracer” methodology
  - Surveyor “traces” care delivered within the organization
  - Individual patient and resident care Tracers
  - System Tracer, such as data management

- How a “Tracer” works
  - Start on care unit, record review, move through organization departments
  - Observations of environment and direct care
  - Interviews with patient/resident, family, and staff
Joint Commission Surveyors

- Masters-prepared nurse and/or administrator
- Practical industry experience in skilled nursing and other long term care settings
- Extensive initial and ongoing surveyor training
- Continual management support and oversight
Joint Commission Pricing

Example for an organization having an Average Daily Census of 100, including Joint Commission accreditation and Post-Acute Care and Memory Care Certifications.
Joint Commission Pricing

Accreditation Fees for 100 beds equates to $0.12/day/bed over the 3-Year accreditation period.
7 Steps to Accreditation

#1 Obtain a copy of the standards

#2 Conduct a self-assessment of standards compliance

#3 Identify opportunities for improvement and develop action plans

#4 Implement standards compliance into daily operations

#5 Complete and submit an application for survey

#6 Use the package of performance improvement services on Joint Commission Connect, your organization's secure Joint Commission Website

#7 Facilitate the on-site survey
Publicize Your Achievement!

- Your Community
- Payers
- Hospitals and Health Systems

The Joint Commission
National Quality Approval
A Customer’s Perspective

Christine Baldini
Executive Director
Ledgewood Rehabilitation & Skilled Nursing Center, Beverly, Massachusetts

Ledgewood Rehabilitation & Skilled Nursing Center is a 123-bed skilled nursing facility, owned by Kindred Healthcare, Inc, a healthcare services company that through its subsidiaries operates hospitals, nursing centers, home health, hospice and non-medical home care locations and a contract rehabilitation services business across the United States.

Ledgewood recently underwent a survey using the revamped Nursing Care Center accreditation standards and survey process.
Your organization previously had the abbreviated Medicare/Medicaid certification-based survey, what were your impressions of the new survey process? I felt the whole process was driven toward patient care, performance improvement, resident rights and culture change. It’s not the medical model, it’s the resident model. It forces us to consider, “How are we going to make our processes work in their home?” Resident choice must be at the forefront of our decision making. In addition, the surveyor was excellent and brought a lot of value to the survey. She presented her findings in a constructive way, which we all appreciated.

Has your organization made changes as a result of the survey? What we learned during the survey was that we need to focus on pain management and safety. We do a good job of identifying a patient’s pain, but we weren’t documenting the effectiveness of pain medication. We needed to go back 35-45 minutes after a medication was given to see if it was working. In addition, we weren’t medicating patients before physical therapy. The surveyor pointed out that research shows people make more gains during therapy if they’ve received pain medication beforehand. This was very helpful to our patients. We also looked at our high alert medication list, the frequency of glucometer testing competency, and assessing residents on antipsychotic medications. The changes we made have definitely improved resident and patient safety.
A Customer’s Perspective

Ledgewood Rehabilitation & Skilled Nursing Center

What are the specific benefits Ledgewood realized as a result of being Joint Commission accredited? We are a very busy post-acute provider, particularly in orthopedics. We are a preferred provider for a number of accountable care organizations (ACOs). The ACOs expect us to be Joint Commission accredited, as does Blue Cross Blue Shield and other payors. We use it as a selling point and a marketing point. Accreditation helps manage efficiencies by providing a blueprint for how to do things in a consistent and thoughtful manner. It also helped us prepare for our state survey, which occurred the same day. It was very hectic, but we were prepared because of The Joint Commission.
A Customer’s Perspective

Michelle Stuercke, DNP, MSN, MPA, RN, LNHA
Chief Learning Officer
Symphony Post Acute Network

The Symphony Post Acute Network is one of the most innovative providers of Post Acute Care in the nation. A proud family-oriented organization, Symphony takes a proactive approach to delivering quality outcomes for the guests in our care. With current locations in Illinois, Wisconsin, Arizona and future sites in Indiana, Symphony is committed to making every one of its locations the Provider of Choice in the community that it serves. Symphony’s ability to meet patients’ needs and offer a consistently high level of quality care is unmatched.

Symphony Post Acute Network Member Facilities provide a variety of Post Acute Services including Skilled Nursing & Rehabilitation, Assisted Living and Supportive Living. The Symphony Post Acute Network Rehabilitation & Skilled Nursing Programming focuses on chronic disease management programs, post hospital short-term rehabilitation, long term care as well as Alzheimer's and memory care programming. Symphony Post Acute Network Member Facilities work in concert with top area physicians, nurses and therapists. Its healthcare environments are filled with luxurious and comforting amenities that facilitate quick recoveries and optimal results. [www.symphonypan.com](http://www.symphonypan.com).
A Customer’s Perspective

Symphony Post-Acute Network

**What has the Post-Acute Care Certification done to foster relationships between you and your referral sources?** Since all of the hospitals our Member Facilities’ work with have Joint Commission accreditation, this achievement allows them to talk about quality, sentinel events and continuation of care using the same framework. For example, when discussing an issue with medication reconciliation, both levels of care can conduct a root cause analysis and share what was found using the same terms. Instead of focusing on people, the organizations can focus on process to ensure ongoing safety. Certification, in addition to accreditation, has made our medical directors feel more comfortable with the competencies of staff in the buildings. When we can demonstrate the same credentialing process and standards that are at the hospital, physicians are more comfortable discussing quality concerns with their peers because there is a commonality in the framework.

**In regard to patient safety, what impact has the achievement had on hospitalization rates?** Communication between care providers is the key to preventing errors and leading to an unnecessary return to the hospital. Medication reconciliation and hand off between levels of care have been where we’ve seen the greatest impact. With Post-Acute Certification, Our Member Facilities’ feel empowered to insist on a comprehensive hand off from the hospital. The hospitals are seeing that this communication increases satisfaction among the patients and decreases their potential for return to the hospital. Also, the physician is required to see the resident within 48 hours of admission. The previous lack of a physician visit had been one of the main reasons for hospitalization. With the buy-in from our physicians getting in to see the residents they feel much more comfortable in managing changes of condition in house.
How has the achievement helped you meet your overall census goals? By achieving Post-Acute Certification from The Joint Commission our Member Facilities are not only able to tell people we are a quality-focused post-acute provider, but they have proof with their certification. Hospital discharge planners and potential residents know that a facility has gone above the current standards and has verification of the services provided. This certification has also helped facilities acquire managed care contracts which helped them achieve census goals.

In your opinion, what is the primary difference between the state survey process and the Joint Commission process? The Joint Commission process is about just that, process. If something doesn’t go as planned what do you do about it and how are you going to ensure quality going forward? It is about ensuring ongoing quality improvement and root cause analysis when things go wrong. Credit is given for having processes in place, but there is also very collaborative discussion with the surveyors regarding best practice and helping give ideas when a standard is not met.

In contrast, the CMS process exudes more of a "gotcha" mentality. The CMS surveyors are not permitted to consult nor share best practices, which leads to frustration when a facility does not understand how they did not meet the standard.
Share your top one or two tips that helped your Member Facilities prepare for Joint Commission Accreditation. First, get buy-in from everyone from administration to line staff. A successful Joint Commission survey cannot happen with the input of one or two staff; nor can it happen with only administration. Staff at all levels of the organization need to be involved and participate in the process. At the beginning of your journey, hold all staff meetings to talk about the organization’s goals and how they can assist. As the journey develops, continually share with staff what you are working on and how they’re contributing to meet the standards. This is great to do at staff meetings or via story boards in the break room. Once you have accomplished your goal, make sure to celebrate with all your staff.

Second, review the standards and see where you are most vulnerable. As obvious as that sounds, make sure you focus on where you are weakest and put those systems in place. While you may not have perfection in all areas, it is important to get your processes in order so you can show your intent to meet the standards.
The New “PI”: Partners in Improvement!

- A robust preparedness strategy
- Customizable product options
- Resources to support your readiness
- Surveyors and process: Collaborative, solutions-oriented
- Resources to support ongoing success
Contact Us!

Nursing Care Center Accreditation Program
For more information about how to get started with accreditation, access our free standards, or to request an application for accreditation:

Phone 630-792-5020
Email ncc@jointcommission.org
Website www.jointcommission.org/NCC

Standards Interpretation
For questions about standards compliance
630-792-5900, option 6
Open Phone Lines!

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