COVID-19 Webinar for Hospital Accreditation

Q&A With The Joint Commission

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Panel

Sylvia Garcia-Houchins, MBA, RN, CIC
Director
Infection Prevention and Control
The Joint Commission

Gayle Jensen-Savoie, PhD, LPC-S, LMFT-S, LCDC
Field Director
Surveyor Management and Development
The Joint Commission

Bridget Kapnick, MPH
Associate Director Accreditation
The Joint Commission

Herman A. McKenzie, MBA, CHSP
Director of Engineering
Standards Interpretation Group
Division of Healthcare Improvement
The Joint Commission

Maura Naddy, MSN, RNC-OB
Associate Director
Standards Interpretation Group
The Joint Commission
Infection Control Practices
We are still using alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) manufactured by a distillery in March 2020. There is no expiration date on the ABHR and we are aware it will need to be disposed of when the PHE ends. Is it ok to continue use until then if we can get FDA approved ABHR?

**Resources:** FDA Withdrawal of Temporary Approval to Produce Hand Sanitizers:

FDA FAQs Q&A for Consumers | Hand Sanitizers and COVID-19:
Pre-submitted Questions

Please provide assistance with quarantine on residential type units - length of time, parameters when space is an issue.
Pre-submitted Questions

Are there any guidelines on stopping all of the COVID-related interventions - for example when can we stop wearing masks and screening visitors?
Pre-submitted Questions

What are the surveyors citing in patient care areas related to eye protection? - especially non-COVID specific units such as Med Surg Units.


We have been told on other seminars that masks should be offered to our patients who arrive without a mask. We have also been told that it should be documented that masks were offered in order to validate that masks were actually offered. Is this true?

Pre-submitted Questions

What are the latest updates on CMS and OSHA requirements for COVID?

Resources:


Pre-submitted Questions

Are using State policies/mandates and CDC recommendations in lieu of policy and procedure changes acceptable?
Pre-submitted Questions

What is the best way to review the infection prevention materials about COVID with the surveyors?
Pre-submitted Questions

Do you think universal masking will be required during flu season?
Pre-submitted Questions

In the event of PPE shortages, where would be the most appropriate location to hang gowns for reuse - taping off an area in patient room or installing hooks outside of the patient door in the hallway?

**Resource:** CDC Strategies for Optimizing the Supply of Isolation Gowns, (updated January 21, 2021)
Pre-submitted Questions

Has COVID-19 affected waste segregation in terms of color coding?

Resource:
Pre-submitted Questions

Which respirators are recommended for employees who cannot be FIT tested?

Resource:
CDC: https://blogs.cdc.gov/niosh-science-blog/2020/04/01/fit-testing-during-outbreaks/
Pre-submitted Questions

How should you handle/clean the outer surface of an O2 tank after use in a COVID/isolation room?

Resource: Compressed Gas Association (CGA)
Recovery and The Joint Commission
Your questions

You have asked several questions about our survey process during COVID-19:

• How or when will we get a survey?
• What type of instruction have you provided your surveyors?
• What will that survey process look like, any differences?
• What will the surveyors focus on?
When and how will survey activity resume?

• Survey activity has been ongoing. We are transitioning from off-site/virtual surveys back to onsite surveys

• As of March 15, 2021, account executives are no longer contacting organizations regarding the scheduling of an on-site event. Organizations should monitor the Notification of Scheduled Events section of the Joint Commission Connect page for notification

• We are aware that surveys are past their due dates, CMS is also aware – we will conduct those surveys when we are able to do so

• We will prioritize initials and past due organizations
Offsite (virtual) survey

**Offsite (virtual) survey**—we have been transitioning away from this model since March 15th

- Surveys will primarily be conducted onsite
- If an offsite event is already in progress, i.e., dry run conducted, the following will be used to conduct the survey:
  - Secure Zoom technology for the survey and facility review
  - Use of a secure SharePoint site for document upload to review pre-survey
How do you determine where to conduct onsite surveys?

Community Prevalence Dashboard

- Number of COVID-19 cases are lower with less impact to organizations
- Cases/thousand population and new cases within the county
- Determination that our staff can travel to area safely and find appropriate accommodations

https://www.jointcommission.org/resources/research/operations-support-research/
What instructions have been provided to our surveyors?

- **Follow the most current CDC guidelines**
- Do not travel if you are sick
- Do not travel if you have been in close contact with individuals with known or suspected COVID-19
- Avoid large crowds
- When traveling wear a mask/face covering
- Practice physical distancing
- Practice good hand hygiene
What instructions have been provided to our surveyors?

- Review and follow individual state department of health specific travel regulations**
- When onsite wear a medical mask and eye protection
- Follow the organizations’ infection prevention and control policies for entry and use of PPE
- Do NOT enter at risk or confirmed COVID-19 resident rooms
- Do NOT enter rooms where high-risk procedures performed
- The Joint Commission does not have a routine COVID-19 testing program for surveyors

**Joint Commission surveyors are designated as essential workers
What has changed about the survey process?

The survey process and its components will remain the same however here are some guidelines for the survey:

• Limiting the number of individuals in group sessions
• The use of audio or videoconferencing could be incorporated to safely expand the number of attendees for sessions
• Use of masks will be a routine practice
• Maximize the use of technology to eliminate the number of people needed to sit directly next to an individual for an extended period of time. (For example, screen sharing or projecting medical records)
• Interviewing patients and staff by telephone
• Driving in separate cars to offsite or patient homes
Survey process - continued

- We will NOT Enter at risk or confirmed COVID-19 rooms or homes.
- We will avoid visiting a unit with any confirmed COVID-19 patients when possible.
- Limited physical review of high risk and aerosol generating procedures
- Consider using a simulation and/or distant review of certain activities/procedures
- Practice social/physical distancing during the survey
- Follow “PPE” and risk reduction strategies as established by the CDC
- Limit attendance at group sessions e.g., opening, briefings, system tracers
- Limiting observers or scribes to avoid additional exposure during the survey
What will be the focus of survey activities?

During the opening conference we will have a discussion with you about the impact of the current pandemic and your organization’s response.

We will discuss both Infection Control and Emergency Management.

The focus of our survey will not be the timeframe of the public health emergency but the current situation within your organization.
Additional Questions

• For onsite surveys, should staff/surveyors be vaccinated?
The Joint Commission recently implemented a policy requiring all US-based enterprise staff to be vaccinated against COVID 19.

• Can we provide additional avoid dates?
We would ask that you do not provide additional avoid dates due to the difficulty in scheduling surveys – avoid dates already submitted will be honored to the extent we can do so.
General Questions
Pre-Submitted Questions

What additional documentation is advised regarding current medical staff members practicing via telemedicine?
Pre-Submitted Questions

Will patient charts and data be reviewed during the height of the pandemic (Jan - June 2020)?
Pre-Submitted Questions

Can you comment on security of medication as it relates to meds at bedside on an isolation patient (ex: COVID patient)?
Environment of Care and Life Safety
Pre-Submitted Questions

What pressure should the OR be at for COVID? Positive, negative, or neutral.
Pre-Submitted Questions

What qualifies as a temporary alternate care site?
Pre-Submitted Questions

Can the expectations for testing negative pressure rooms and units be discussed?
Pre-Submitted Questions

Regarding Emergency Management element of performance EM 03.01.03 EP3 - If the organization activates its Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) for twice in a year for an actual event, are they exempt from both required full scale exercises and exercise of choice for that year?
Pre-Submitted Questions

What are the accreditation standards for COVID-19 and room turnaround, i.e., number of air exchanges?
Pre-Submitted Questions

Fire drill waiver - what will the Joint Commission survey look like related to fire drill standards? What documents would a hospital need to have ready to show to surveyor?
CMS 1135 Waivers
Pre-Submitted Questions

Are there waivers in effect that limit the requirements of nursing documentation during the PHE?
Pre-Submitted Questions

Are the 1135 waivers still able to be utilized?
Public Health Emergency (PHE) Extension

The Department of Health and Human Services released a statement on Friday, 10/15/21 stating the PHE was extended.

The renewal effective date is Monday, 10/18/21 and will last for 90 days.

The is the seventh extension of the PHE.

1135 Waivers will remain in effect during the declared PHE.
Pre-Submitted Questions

Are there going to be considerations given for the COVID surge in regard to the required data collection in the PI chapter? Many hospital staff were reassigned during surge activity, limiting ability to collect the required data.
Pre-Submitted Questions

Suggestions on how to document and show evidence regarding Waivers for surveyors.

What are the requirements for the 1135 Waiver; what documents are needed?

How do organizations know what patient care documentation is required in relation to 1135 Waivers?
Pre-Submitted Questions

Is the list of Joint Commission EPs impacted by CMS waivers up to date?
If a state does not have a State of Emergency, must they submit for an 1135 waiver in the midst of a federal PHE?
Pre-Submitted Questions

How will the 1135 Waivers affect the survey process?
Pre-Submitted Questions

How much time will be provided to hospitals to revert back to compliance with standards once the national emergency is lifted?
Pre-Submitted Questions

Does a hospital have to be operating under their emergency operations plan during all of the COVID declared disaster to be able to claim a waiver during the whole disaster?
Looking for more information on CMS 1135 Waivers?

Accredited organizations can learn more by visiting Resources and Tools > Tools > Learn More in their Joint Commission Connect® extranet site.
Time for a few more questions
Resources

- COVID Resources
  - https://www.jointcommission.org/covid-19/

- Standards Interpretation
  - https://www.jointcommission.org/standards/standard-faqs/
Thank You

We support your efforts in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and hope to provide helpful resources.