COVID-19 Webinar for Laboratory Accreditation

Q&A With The Joint Commission

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Panel

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Today’s webinar will be focused solely on laboratory accreditation program related questions as they relate to COVID-19 and The Joint Commission.

For questions related to other accreditation or certification programs, please join us for those webinars.
Pre-Submitted Questions

We are considering starting a "drive-thru" type of COVID collection area for the upcoming influenza season to obtain specimens from patients who are referred for testing by their outpatient provider. What are the standards for this area and where might we find this information?

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/lab/faqs.html (see Laboratory Biosafety section)
Pre-Submitted Questions

If our local/state government issues a universal masking requirement for all citizens of the city/state, would this also apply to patients within a 24-hour inpatient facility? Would patients be required to wear masks outside their room/living unit?
Pre-Submitted Questions

Should the nurse assigned to a COVID patient draw the patient’s blood sample for lab work or should it be a phlebotomist?
Pre-Submitted Questions

What is the timeframe for reporting results to the State and does this apply to molecular (PCR) and rapid antigen testing?

Pre-Submitted Questions

How does The Joint Commission reconcile FDA requirements and recommendations versus CDC recommendations?

Also refer to April 2019 *Perspectives* Clarifying Infection Control Policy Requirements for further information
Pre-Submitted Questions

Can you address co-horting of patients? Is it appropriate to cohort visitors if they test negative?
Pre-Submitted Questions

Do we need to wear an N95 respirator for routine respiratory treatments in the hospital/acute setting?


Which Procedures are considered aerosol generating procedures in healthcare settings?


Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19
Pre-Submitted Questions

If we only have one COVID positive patient, can staff care for both COVID and non-COVID patients? How should PPE be used when caring for these patients?
Pre-Submitted Questions

Is there any evidence that patients infected with COVID-19 have cycles of shedding viral material, causing positive and negative test result cycles?

Search term positive
Pre-Submitted Questions

What are the latest infection control measures for COVID-19?

Pre-Submitted Questions

CMS is requiring employees of nursing homes\skilled nursing facilities be tested. Who is included in this testing requirement? Can you provide guidance on how this testing should be done?

Pre-Submitted Questions

Please explain the process regarding the government supplying POC instruments to LTC facilities. Do they need a CLIA waived license?
Pre-Submitted Questions

To what extent are you looking for validation studies on instrumentation and/or test kits implemented in a laboratory with an 1135 waiver?
Pre-Submitted Questions

Please speak to the QC and IQCP requirements for tests under Emergency Use Authorization.
Pre-Submitted Questions

Is FDA authorization needed if planning to do COVID testing as in-house test if the manufacturer of the machine was already approved for EUA?
Pre-Submitted Questions

Do labs have to inform The Joint Commission if they start testing for anti-SARS-CoV-2 antibodies and PCR antigen testing?
Pre-Submitted Questions

What is the status of saliva testing?
Pre-Submitted Questions

What should we do for competency for collection of swabs?
Pre-Submitted Questions

How does validation compare to proficiency? Do we need both?
Pre-Submitted Questions

Do we need to implement IQCP for instruments that were released as FDA emergency?
Pre-Submitted Questions

Are ICQPs not necessary for COVID testing, due to the EUA? Also, what will change as far as test validation once the EUA is lifted for COVID testing and how can we prepare for that?
Pre-Submitted Questions

How could we transition from a CLIA waived facility to moderate complexity?
Pre-Submitted Questions

What documentation should be kept to support/reflect changes that occurred during the pandemic? (waivers, policy, etc.)
Pre-Submitted Questions

By chance, have you heard of any updates to extending the EUAs on COVID testing? Especially since some expire in October.
Pre-Submitted Questions

Will the regulatory compliance expectations for the EUA tests change once they are no longer considered EUA?
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.
Pre-Submitted Questions

Please clarify what are the “prescriptive requirements of alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) dispensers” that are being waived?
The Joint Commission Return to Survey Activity

- In addition to conducting accreditation surveys, we have been advocating for the safety and wellbeing of healthcare workers at the highest levels of policy making.
- We want to assure you that we want to work together to reduce your risk and ours during the on-site survey process.
Your questions

You have had a number of questions about our return to survey:
- How or when will we get a survey?
- What will that survey process look like, any differences?
- What type of instruction have you provided your surveyors?
- What will the surveyors focus on?
When and how will survey activity resume?

- Survey activity has started in low risk areas – includes all programs
- Low risk criteria
  - Number of COVID-19 cases are lower and less impact to organizations
  - The # cases/thousand population and new cases within the county
  - Determination that our staff can travel to that area safely and find appropriate accommodations.
- In addition, your AE will contact you to determine your readiness.
- We are aware that surveys are past their due dates, we will conduct those surveys when we are able.
- Prioritized initials and past due organizations. We will also be looking for organizations due in the next few months that meet the low risk criteria and are currently ready for survey.
What instructions have been provided to surveyors?

- Do not travel if you are sick
- Do not travel if you have been in close contact with known or suspected COVID-19 patients
- When traveling you are required to wear a mask/face covering
- You are required to wear a mask on survey and follow the organization’s guidelines. The organization will provide the PPE to the surveyor as required by their policy.
- Practice physical distancing
- Practice good hand hygiene
- Follow CDC guidelines
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/review:

- Limiting the number of individuals in group sessions
- Using audio or videoconferencing could be incorporated to safely expand the number of attendees for sessions
- Using masks will be a routine practice
- Maximizing 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.
Survey/Review process - continued

- We will NOT enter an at risk or confirmed COVID-19 room. We will not visit a unit with any confirmed COVID-19 patients.
- 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)
- Limit 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 discussion with you about the impact of the current pandemic and your organization’s response.
- We will discuss both Infection Control and Emergency Management.
Additional information

- 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

- **Virtual surveys** – early surveys and initial surveys have occurred in some programs in Nursing Care Centers

- Virtual event is a combination of:
  - Secure Zoom technology for the survey and facility review
  - Use of a secure SharePoint site for document upload to review pre survey
  - Initial surveys conducted virtually will have a follow-up survey on-site.
  - Organization is contacted to verify ability and willingness to participate
COVID-19 resources

What Your Organization Needs to Know About the Coronavirus

Trusted Guidance. Trusted Resources.

View resources
Pre-Submitted Questions

Will The Joint Commission lab survey be virtual or onsite at this time?

Have the formats for virtual surveys been defined yet?

What is the update on the survey schedule and process for sites with pending surveys?
Pre-Submitted Questions

Our lab survey is likely to be 9-12 months later than due. Would we expect surveyors to review documentation since the previous survey even though it may be 3 years?
Pre-Submitted Questions

Should we expect the survey to be longer or shorter?
Pre-Submitted Questions

What conditions must be met related to COVID-19 before a survey will occur in a specific area or state?
Important Laboratory Event You Don’t Want to Miss

Complimentary Virtual Laboratory Roundtable

**Dates:** October 29, 2020 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. CST & October 30, 2020 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. CST

- Gain valuable lessons learned from the public health crisis and practical strategies on how laboratories can strive for high quality performance while co-existing with COVID-19

- The agenda features a keynote from Dr. Blair Holladay, CEO, American Society for Clinical Pathology, speakers from the CDC, perspectives from a Joint Commission-accredited customer, laboratory experts, Joint Commission surveyors and the laboratory accreditation team!

**Register Now !**
Thank You

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

- COVID Resources
  - https://www.jointcommission.org/covid-19/
- Standards Interpretation
  - https://www.jointcommission.org/standards/standard-faqs/