Coronavirus updates

New COVID-19 resources added about offsite surveys
New resources regarding the offsite survey process have been posted to The Joint Commission's COVID-19 resources webpage. These resources include:

- A Take 5 podcast discussing offsite surveys
- An infographic on offsite survey details
- Videos on the following topics:
  - How Do Surveys Work Virtually?
  - What Are the Benefits of an Offsite Survey?
  - How Do I Prepare My Tech for an Offsite Survey?
  - Your Guide to Offsite Surveys: A Message from Colleagues and Surveyors

View the COVID-19 resources webpage.

New COVID-19 vaccine resources available for consumers
The Joint Commission has developed a new COVID-19 vaccine resources page for consumers to help them make a more informed choice about getting vaccinated.

The resources include:

- A recent episode from The Joint Commission’s podcast, Take 5 with The Joint Commission.
- Fact sheets on general vaccine information and health equity.
- Blog posts addressing The Joint Commission's COVID vaccine advocacy efforts and vaccine hesitancy.
- Links to helpful Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) resources.
- Social media graphics for LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram addressing vaccine misinformation.
- Media coverage related to The Joint Commission's vaccine advocacy.

More resources will be added to the page as they are available. These resources can be shared with patients, other providers, and on other websites if they are credited to The Joint Commission.

Accreditation and certification

New machine learning technology for survey consistency launches
Earlier this year, The Joint Commission launched its Machine Learning for Survey Consistency technology across all its accreditation and certification programs. This new technology continuously analyzes data using artificial intelligence (AI) to identify data relationships and essentially learn from data gathered from years of validated survey and review reports.

Using an expanded data set — including previously vetted and scored findings — Joint Commission field staff now have an advanced capability to conduct keyword or phrase searches for appropriate standards or elements of performance (EPs) to determine how a finding should be scored. As such, machine learning will improve the consistency and accuracy of survey and review findings, while also creating time-saving efficiencies for field staff as they score findings.

Previously, only a small fraction of data was leveraged as “searchable” to associate a finding with a standard or EP. With the new technology, all remaining vetted data are available and searchable — prompting the appropriate standard and EP to appear in the Top 5 of choices more than 80% of the time. The machine learning integration will promote the most consistent and accurate accreditation and certification results for health care organizations.
across all settings. In addition, the efficacy level will improve as the machine learning technology matures with continuous learning from additional data available for analyses.

Joint Commission field staff are currently using the technology, integrated as part of a mobile application, for all types of surveys and reviews — including on-site, off-site and hybrid. Organizations do not need to take any action to have the new technology apply to their upcoming Joint Commission survey or review. (Contact: Kin Lee, klee@jointcommission.org, Emily Wells, ewells@jointcommission.org)

**Now in effect: QAPI revisions for critical access hospitals**

The Joint Commission has revised and added new leadership requirements related to performance improvement to align with a Burden Reduction final rule issued by the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) in September 2019.

This final set of revisions, now in effect, address CMS quality assessment and performance improvement (QAPI) requirements for critical access hospitals. Additionally, Leadership (LD) Standard LD.04.01.01, element of performance (EP) 8 — requiring a critical access hospital to conduct an annual evaluation of its total program, including a review of its services used, a sample of active and closed records, and health care policies — will no longer be required as CMS replaced it with the new QAPI requirements.

View the prepublication standards. (Contact: Laura Smith, lsmith@jointcommission.org)

**Performance measurement**

**Learn more about CY 2021 Direct Data Submission process during May 25 PIQ webinar**

A free Pioneers in Quality webinar focusing on the calendar year (CY) 2021 Direct Data Submission Platform (DDSP) for electronic clinical quality measures (eCQMs) and chart-abstracted measure data is scheduled for May 25. This webinar will offer 1.5 Continuing Education (CE/CEU) credits.

The 90-minute session — starting at 11 a.m. PT / noon MT / 1 p.m. CT / 2 p.m. ET — will address:

- The difference in how performance measurement data is submitted for accreditation versus certification purposes.
- CY 2021 updates and changes to the DDSP for eCQMs and chart-abstracted measures.
- The DDSP onboarding processes and key dates for CY 2021 data submission.
- An overview of the eCQM and chart-abstracted data entry modules.
- Links to available performance measurement resources.

Register.

**Resources**

**Up in the blogosphere with The Joint Commission**

- **Improvement Insights** — Four Steps to Addressing Racism in Health Care: The killings of Black Americans such as George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor, have reminded us of the systemic racism that permeates our society and the institutional biases that Black Americans and other people of color face in relation to policing, the criminal justice system, health and economic opportunity. In the April 2021 issue of *The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety*, four key steps health system leaders should take to identify and eliminate health care disparities are outlined.

- **Ambulatory Buzz** — New Spine Surgery Certification Program: The Joint Commission is excited to offer Advanced Certification for Spine Surgery (ACSS), beginning July 1, writes Helen Larios, Project Director, Clinical, Department of Standards and Survey Methods.

Learn more about Joint Commission Resources' offerings online or call 877-223-6866.