

COVID-19 Webinar for Disease-Specific Care Certification

# Q&A With The Joint Commission

July 13, 2021

# Panel

**Diane Cullen, MSN, MBA, RN, CIC**  
Associate Director  
Standards Interpretation Group  
The Joint Commission

**Maura Naddy, MSN, RNC-OB**  
Associate Director  
Standards Interpretation Group  
The Joint Commission

**Jackie Tallman**  
Associate Director of Accreditation  
The Joint Commission

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

**Robin Voss, RN, MHA, TNCC-I**  
Field Director Disease-Specific Care  
Accreditation and Certification Operations  
The Joint Commission

# Environment of Care and Life Safety

# Pre-Submitted Questions

What should we expect during onsite survey for Environment of Care/Life Safety? If we have modifications due to the pandemic, how will that be scored?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

What sorts of environmental controls will surveyors be looking for to prevent disease? For example: Plexiglas shields between workstations, ventilation changes, etc.

# Pre-Submitted Questions

How will the learnings from the pandemic effect future building code (i.e., air flow requirements?)

# Pre-Submitted Questions

The Joint Commission requires positive air flow in ORs. COVID recommendations say we should have negative airflow to reduce possible viral load being pushed out into facility. Any recommendations on this subject?

# Infection Control Practices



# Pre-Submitted Questions

Do cloth masks prevent COVID-19 transmission?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Do powered air-purifying respirators (PAPRs) provide better protection against COVID-19 than an N95 respirator?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

If the patient is tested for COVID and is negative, can they stop wearing a mask?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Do vaccinated staff still need to wear masks in non-clinical spaces of a healthcare facility?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

How should patients be transported to procedural areas if they have COVID-19? What should the patient wear and what should the employee wear?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Will surveyors come to facilities that are on contingency capacity status for PPE due to PPE shortages?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

If a patient is fully vaccinated but tests positive for COVID-19 is isolation still required? If yes, for how long?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

If a patient tests negative but they clearly have COVID-19 symptoms, do we retest?  
What is the time interval? Can we stop isolation?



# Pre-Submitted Questions

Are there any new recommendations to combat the delta strain ?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

If an asymptomatic patient is re-tested for COVID-19 greater than 90 days from initial onset of COVID and is positive, is isolation required?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Is entry way screening required for patients, visitors and staff or can they be phased out?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Is there any update to survey process because of the OSHA emergency temporary standard (ETS) for protecting healthcare workers from COVID-19?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

What is the most common IC standard scored during the PHE?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

What kind of documents do we need to have available for surveyor review to show COVID-19 compliance? Will there be a change in emphasis on surveying infection control?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Will reviewers be understanding if infection control department is behind on "normal operations" such as having policies reviewed for this year and action plans formally typed up?

# Infection Prevention References

## CDC

- **Diagnostic Testing:**
  - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/faq.html#Testing,-Diagnosis,-and-Notification>
  - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/testing/diagnostic-testing.html>
  - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/lab/faqs.html#Interpreting-Results-of-Diagnostic-Tests>
- **Discontinuing Isolation:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-hospitalized-patients.html>
- **General Infection Prevention:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html>
- **N95 Respirators:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/n95-other-respirators.html>
- **PAPR:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/powered-air-purifying-respirators-strategy.html#:~:text=Most%20PAPR%20components%20can%20be,resistance%20perspective%20than%20other%20respirators.>
- **Variants:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/variant-info.html#Concern>

## FDA: Diagnostic Testing

- <https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/letters-health-care-providers/genetic-variants-sars-cov-2-may-lead-false-negative-results-molecular-tests-detection-sars-cov-2>

## OSHA Emergency Temporary Standard :

- <https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/ets>



# Recovery and The Joint Commission

# The Joint Commission return to review activity

- In addition to conducting accreditation surveys and certification reviews, 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 onsite review process.

# Your questions

You have had a number of questions about our certification review process:

- Will my review be onsite or offsite?
- What will that review process look like, any differences?
- What type of instruction have you provided your reviewers?
- What will the reviewers focus on?

# Offsite (Virtual) Review

- **Offsite (virtual) review**– for all recertification programs and initial core programs
- Organizations will be contacted via a Qualtrics survey to indicate that their program is ready to be scheduled.
- Offsite 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-review
- An Offsite Review Dry Run Resource Document is now available to support customers with links to videos to walk through the technology.

# Onsite Review Activity

- Review activity in low risk areas – only for Initial Advanced programs, Medication Compounding, and Integrated Care Certification
- 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 reviews are past their due dates, CMS is also aware – we will conduct those reviews when we are able to do so.
- Prioritizing initials and past due organizations.

# What instructions have been provided to our field staff ?

- 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 they are required to wear a mask/face covering
- **Required to wear a mask on reviews and follow the organizations' guidelines. The organization will provide the PPE to the reviewer as required by their policy.**
- Practice physical distancing
- Practice good hand hygiene
- Follow CDC guidelines

# What has changed about the review process?

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

- 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 unless everyone in the car is vaccinated

# Review 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 review
- 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 review



# What will be the focus of review activities?

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

- The focus of our review will not be the timeframe of the public health emergency but the current situation within your organization.

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Will education requirements for PSC be waived for physicians due to the pandemic? OR is there any grace for staff annual education/competencies.

# Pre-Submitted Questions

How many weeks/months are the disease specific surveys behind? We are in the window for our stroke survey already and wanted to know how much notice we will we have.

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Will all virtual re-certifications result in an 18 month onsite visit shortening their certification window?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

For stroke, can you clarify what is required for stroke log?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Is The Joint Commission doing virtual reviews?  
If so, under what conditions?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

In addition to the Qualtrics contact will there be any additional communication from our account representative prior to a DSC review since these are staying virtual at present?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

What is the current process for Disease Specific recertification?



# Pre-Submitted Questions

Will The Joint Commission force us to have a stroke survey when our COVID numbers are so high?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

How delayed are DSC surveys? We are past our window for Primary Stroke by 2 months.

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Interested in what exactly is needed prior to DSC Stroke recertification review especially if virtual.

# Pre-Submitted Questions

How far behind are recertifications?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Will the entire re-certification survey be virtual?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

When will we be notified of when our virtual survey will be?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Are there any specific documentation requirements related to the pandemic that we need to be aware of?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

What changes do you see for the future for DSC with respect to COVID-19?



# Pre-Submitted Questions

I am curious how COVID-19 has impacted on-site DSC recertification surveys for 2021 now that vaccines have been widely administered, and COVID positive rates are falling.

# Pre-Submitted Questions

How should our organizations plan for current "windows" with the virtual surveys through the end of they year?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Have there been any changes in assessment requirements for post-thrombolytic stroke patients?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Will re-certifications be virtual or on site?  
Does the organization get to select their preference?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

What can we expect regarding advanced certification surveys?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Will the hospital contact receive a readiness call prior to the survey? What is the timeframe for the survey after the call?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Is there comparative data to share on virtual vs. onsite surveys? What are the top 3 biggest challenges with virtual surveys so far? What are organizations' feedback on virtual surveys and can you share?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

If we are outside our scheduling window for our recertification visit, does The Joint Commission send a new window? Are we allowed to update our days that we prefer The Joint Commission not come?



# Pre-Submitted Questions

Can we please get specific details on exactly how to prepare for a virtual survey.

# Pre-Submitted Questions

What are the new treatment options for stroke patients with COVID-19?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

What is the outlook for continuing virtual DSCs in the fall/winter? Are there any updated planning tools/resources for virtual surveys?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Will The Joint Commission focus on months with surge and high hospital census?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

Does the disease specific survey happen in one day?

# Pre-Submitted Questions

If the patient has a stroke, then later gets COVID and dies from the infection, how is 90-day mRS to be scored?

# COVID-19 resources

Accreditation & Certification ▾

Standards ▾

Measurement ▾

Performance Improvement ▾

Resources ▾

About Us ▾

## What Your Organization Needs to Know About the Coronavirus

Trusted Guidance. Trusted Resources.

 [View resources](#)

# 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

