

# The Joint Commission DSC Update

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## Executive Director

Earlier this year, The Joint Commission's Disease-Specific Care Certification Program achieved a milestone goal — certifying more than 1,000 disease-specific care programs in 731 organizations in all 50 states, plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Of this total, 57 percent are primary stroke centers, 13 percent are joint replacement programs and 6 percent are cardiac care programs.

*It was a cause for celebration, but there was no time to rest on our laurels. We were too busy launching the Advanced Certification Program in Heart Failure. Working closely with the American Heart Association, we designed the program to recognize hospitals that support better quality of care and outcomes for heart failure patients (see article on this page).*

*It is gratifying to note that we reached the goal of certifying 1,000 organizations in a challenging economic environment. This is a strong indicator that our customers recognize that Joint Commission certification provides an important framework for excellent patient care. If you have thoughts on service improvements we might implement, please send an e-mail to me at [jrange@jointcommission.org](mailto:jrange@jointcommission.org). I look forward to hearing from you.*

Jean Range, R.N., M.S., CPHQ



## First advanced certification in heart failure care awarded

Advocate Christ Medical Center, Oak Lawn, Ill., recently became the first organization to be certified under The Joint Commission's new Disease-Specific Care [Advanced Certification Program in Heart Failure](#), according to Jean Range, M.S., R.N., CPHQ, executive director, Disease-Specific Care Certification.



Marc A. Silver, M.D.

"This certification provides an important way for hospitals to distinguish themselves, and more importantly, it raises the bar for heart failure care nationwide," says Range. "Achievement of certification signifies that the services at Advocate Christ Medical Center meet the critical elements to achieve long-term success in improving patient outcomes."

"Our goal is to excel in providing care and outcomes for the patients and families who suffer from heart failure," says Marc A. Silver, M.D., director of the Heart Failure Institute, Advocate Christ Medical Center. "Joint Commission certification provides the matrix to support our efforts to meet the unique and specialized needs of these patients."

Developed in collaboration with the American Heart Association, the Advanced Certification Program in Heart Failure promotes successful efforts in heart failure management through:

- A standardized method of delivering or coordinating care
- Implementation of evidence-based clinical practice guidelines
- A secure and timely system for sharing information across settings and providers
- A comprehensive performance improvement program
- Clinical practices which support patient self-management

For more information about the Advanced Certification Program in Heart Failure, call (630) 792-5291 or e-mail Jean Range at [dscinfo@jointcommission.org](mailto:dscinfo@jointcommission.org).

## E-pay is E-Z for customers

Beginning in mid-December, The Joint Commission is offering customers the option to pay their deposit, annual fee or on-site fee electronically via The Joint Commission Connect extranet site. The new process enables customers to easily process and track payments, have greater control over when payment is made, and reduce processing time while increasing accuracy.

To access the new payment option, current customers with a login and password should navigate to the "Invoice" page of the "Subscription Billing" site and select the "Pay Now" button to process their payment. New customers can pay their deposit by clicking the "Pay My Deposit" link on the "What's Due" section of the extranet home page. If you have difficulty navigating the site, please call (630) 792-5026 or e-mail [payments@jointcommission.org](mailto:payments@jointcommission.org).

## Stroke awareness initiatives debut

Health care professionals can tap into a wealth of materials on stroke prevention and education available from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS). Look for:

- The new NINDS Web site, [www.stroke.nih.gov](http://www.stroke.nih.gov). There you'll find brochures, public service announcements, videos, posters and a [Know Stroke Community Education Kit](#) on stroke prevention, treatment and rehabilitation. Feel free to link to this site on your organization's Web site.
- "[Stroke Strikes Fast. You Should Too. Call 9-1-1](#)," the new stroke education campaign. Use the message on Web sites, promotional materials, or in any other appropriate venue.
- The [Know Stroke Facebook](#) page. Become a fan and reach out to the worldwide community with information and resources about stroke, share stories and ideas on the wall or discussion board, and learn about campaign activities.



## 2010 performance measure reminder

Effective January 1, 2010, all certified primary stroke centers should use the *Specifications Manual for National Hospital Inpatient Quality Measures, Version 3.0c* to collect stroke measure data. The specifications manual is updated twice a year on April 1 and October 1, as needed, by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. To access version 3.0c or future version 3.1, which is effective April 1, 2010 through September 30, 2010 (the upcoming version of the specifications is always posted six months prior to implementation so programs can view the changes before they are implemented), visit [The Joint Commission Web site](#).

## Government recognition of certification

As of December 1, 2009, nine states currently require or recognize The Joint Commission's Primary Stroke Center Certification for designation as a primary stroke center. These include Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Rhode Island and Texas. Legislative actions in progress include:

- Virginia and Missouri are in the process of developing regulations for the designation of primary stroke centers.
- Indiana and South Carolina are discussing the development of a statewide stroke response system.
- Pennsylvania introduced legislation aimed at expanding the commonwealth's stroke program.

For more information, contact [Jen Hoppe](#), associate director, State Relations.

## See you there!

DSC program staff members attend meetings and conventions throughout the year. In 2010, see us at:

- International Stroke Conference/American Stroke Association, San Antonio, Texas, Feb. 24-25
- American Case Management Association, San Antonio, Texas, April 8-11
- American Association of Heart Failure Nurses, Orlando, Fla., June 24-26
- American Association of Diabetes Educators, San Antonio, Texas, Aug. 4-6
- Heart Failure Society of America, San Diego, Calif., Sept 12-15
- American Association of Hip and Knee Surgeons, Dallas, Texas, Nov. 5-7

## Resources

### Publications

#### **New! 2010 Disease-Specific Care Certification Manual**

This edition includes updated standards and elements of performance for delivering or facilitating clinical care, supporting self-management, program management, and clinical information management. Order code: DSCC10, \$125

#### **Clinical Improvement Action Guide**

In microsystem thinking, the quality and value of care produced by a large health system can be no better than the services generated by the small systems of which it is composed. This book explains how to integrate clinical microsystems and practice-based learning into your organization. Order code: AG200, \$75

#### **Addressing Patients' Health Literacy Needs**

Examines the health literacy crisis in the United States. Provides techniques and suggestions for assessing and improving the health literacy of patients and bridging the communication gap between physicians and patients. Order code: APHL08, \$99

To order, go to the [Joint Commission Resources Web site](#) or call (877) 223-6866.

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