



July, 2009

## CONNECTION

### In The News: AAAHC Explores International Accreditation Opportunities

As part of AAAHC strategic planning initiative, titled "Accreditation 2020," the Accreditation Association has been looking further into international accreditation. An International Accreditation Task Force, chaired by John Olsen, MD, FACHE, has been formed to help provide direction to AAAHC. John Olsen, John Burke, Executive Director & CEO, and Jim Pavletich, Senior Director & Chief Operating Officer, traveled to Costa Rica in May 2009 and were excited to find a strong interest in the desire for accreditation of Costa Rican facilities.



The Accreditation Association is currently scheduling a series of consultative surveys for late August in Costa Rica and will be using the findings from these surveys to refine future steps.

### In the News: AAAHC now offering Medical Home Accreditation

One major addition to the 2009 *Accreditation Handbook for Ambulatory Health Care* was the inclusion of a chapter containing standards for the Medical Home. The AAAHC defines a Medical Home as a patient-centered, physician-directed center that offers a comprehensive, accessible, continuous and organized approach to practice. The foundation of a Medical Home is the relationship between the patient, his/her family, as appropriate, and the Medical Home. As used in the standards, a Medical Home is the primary point of care for the patient.



Organizations seeking to be accredited as a Medical Home must designate this on their Application for Survey. Organizations seeking their initial accreditation and those previously accredited meeting the above requirements are encouraged to apply. For more information on the Medical Home, please see Chapter 27 of the 2009 Accreditation Handbook for Ambulatory Health Care or call 847/853.6060.

### AAAHC Public Comment Period: August 17-September 14, 2009

The Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC) is seeking public comment for proposed revisions to its standards for 2010. Interested parties, such as AAAHC-accredited organizations, surveyors, member organizations, medical specialty groups, regulatory agencies and the public at large are asked to review and provide comments on the proposed revisions.



In addition to other edits throughout the publications, the most prominent proposed change for 2010 is the inclusion of a new core chapter 7. Chapter 7 will be titled Infection Control and Prevention and Safety for the new edition. There will be two subchapters: subchapter I, Infection Control and Prevention, and subchapter II, Safety. As Chapter 7 will be a core chapter, it will be applicable to all organizations seeking accreditation

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#### Upcoming Educational Opportunities!

The AAAHC *Achieving Accreditation* educational programs are an in-depth and interactive way to learn more about the accreditation process. For more information, please [click here](#) or email [education@aaahc.org](mailto:education@aaahc.org).

#### Upcoming dates/locations:

- September 11-12, 2009  
Chicago/Rosemont, IL
- December 4-5, 2009  
Las Vegas, NV
- March 19-20, 2010  
Tampa, FL
- June 11-12, 2010  
Seattle, WA

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be applicable to an organization seeking accreditation.

Details of the proposed revisions to the standards and how to submit comments will be posted on the Accreditation Association Web site at [www.aaahc.org](http://www.aaahc.org) as the date draws closer. Those wishing to submit comments should include suggested text changes, where appropriate, and specific comments regarding the rationale behind suggested changes. Suggestions should be sent to Michon Villanueva, Assistant Director, Accreditation Services by email at [mwillanueva@aaahc.org](mailto:mwillanueva@aaahc.org) or fax at: 847-853-9028.

## Ask the Expert

**Q.** Does AAHC have a stand on allergy bands? We currently write out all the allergies on the patient's red arm band (sometimes two bands are needed). One of our nurses was recently at a local hospital where the red arm band just has ALLERGY printed on it and that tells everyone to check the allergies. It makes everyone go to the list and read through it. Does AAAHC have an opinion on the usage of a red arm band already stamped ALLERGY?



**A.** The presence, absence and update of patient allergies and sensitivities are verified at each patient encounter and documented in the patient's clinical records. Additionally consistent communication with staff and providers is to be maintained throughout the patient's stay. The standards regarding patient allergies are written in a way to allow accredited organizations to determine the policy that works best for them, and to then abide by the policy. Please refer to AAAHC standards 2009 1.G, 3.B.3, 4.E.4, 6.J, 10.I.E, and 10.I.U.

At survey, your organization's written policies regarding allergies will be reviewed, and steps will be taken to observe that the actual practice matches the policy. Implementation of processes to ensure patient safety including identification and communication of allergies is required, but it is left to the organization to determine how that is best done within their unique patient care setting. AAAHC would encourage you to carefully review your organization's policy in light of its patient population and services provided. A review of nationally recognized guidelines might also be in order to benchmark your existing policy.

There has been a lot of research on this topic, with many solutions proposed that are compliant with the AAAHC standards. A simple internet search will bring up many different allergy policies that organizations have put in place and could serve as good ideas to incorporate into your policies, procedures and everyday use.

— Answered by Gayle C. Lowe  
RN, BSM, AAAHC Surveyor

## Awards and Accomplishments

The Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care would like to extend a congratulations to Frank Chapman, MBA for being recognized by Becker's ASC Review in their "[170 People to Know in the ASC Industry](#)" article. Mr. Chapman is the COO of Asheville Gastroenterology Associates in Asheville, NC, is a past president of the Medical Group Management Association Gastroenterology Administrators Assembly and currently sits on the MGMA Patient Safety and Quality Committee. He is also an active AAAHC Surveyor and serves on the AAAHC Governing Board.



In addition, Carl W. Soderstrom, MD, has been recognized as "Practitioner of the Year" by the [Chicago Dermatological Society](#). Soderstrom Skin Institute provides skin care in six locations in Illinois and Iowa, including Peoria Ambulatory Surgery Center, an AAAHC-accredited facility.



## FOR YOU

AAAHC recommends that organizations sign up for The Food and Drug Administration Medwatch Newsletter. The newsletter focuses on recalls, safety alerts, market withdrawals and public health advisories and is a great way for accredited organizations to stay on top of health related news. For a complimentary subscription, please click [here](#).



## 2008 Non-Clinical Cataract, Colonoscopy and Knee Arthroscopy Study Reports, and Asthma Management in College Health released

The Institute for Quality Improvement recently released *the 2008 Non-Clinical Cataract Extraction with Lens Insertion, Colonoscopy, and Knee Arthroscopy with Meniscectomy Study Reports* as well as *Asthma Management in College Health*. If you were a participant in any of these studies, you should have received your reports.



The AAAHC Institute study reports are available in PDF and CD-ROM formats. If you would like to purchase any of them to compare your own organization on the benchmarking and performance and measures, they may be ordered online at [www.aaahciqi.org](http://www.aaahciqi.org).

## Register for 2009 Clinical and Non-Clinical Studies — Continuous Data Collection and Faster Feedback

The AAAHC Institute for Quality Improvement has changed the data collection and results reporting formats for the benchmarking and performance measurement studies. The new formats are more compatible with quality improvement (QI) principles, allow for continuous data collection and real-time results reporting, and offer:



- Faster feedback and easier comparisons of your organization's performance against overall study performance
- The opportunity to make adjustments to your organizational practices during the study time period

For the 2009 Institute studies, you will be able to submit data from July through December 2009. Data are submitted via a secure online survey format. The AAAHC Institute 2009 studies open are Clinical or Non-Clinical:

- *Cataract Extraction with Lens Insertion*
- *Colonoscopy*
- *Knee Arthroscopy with Meniscectomy*

Beginning in 2010, organizations will have the opportunity to sign up for six-month subscription periods, i.e. January-June and July-December.

The study subscription fees will be the same: \$400 for accredited organizations; \$500 for non-accredited organizations. Each 6-month subscription can be added thereafter for \$200 (\$250 for non-accredited)

In 2010, study topics will most likely include:

- *Asthma Management in College Health*
- *Myringotomy with Tympanostomy Tube Insertion (Clinical)*
- *Liposuction (Clinical)*

Your participation in AAAHC Institute benchmarking studies is a way to fulfill AAAHC Standard 5.II.B which focuses on quality

improvement and national benchmarking. You can find more information on, or register for, the studies at the AAAHC Institute website [www.aaahciqi.org](http://www.aaahciqi.org) or contact Anita Kneifel at 847-853-6078. The deadline for registration is Friday, September 19, 2009.

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If you have questions, comments or want to share your surveyor experiences with us, contact Alison Solway at [asolway@aaahc.org](mailto:asolway@aaahc.org).

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