



Minimum Patient Volume for Hospices and DSC

When an organization new* to The Joint Commission applies for accreditation or certification, it must have a minimum number of patients or volume of services so that The Joint Commission can conduct a credible survey to assess compliance with its own and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS) requirements as applicable. This article details a change for hospices and a reminder for disease-specific care (DSC) programs.

Eligibility for Hospice Deemed Status

The Joint Commission has approved a change in the minimum number of patients for **hospices seeking Medicare certification** to be eligible for accreditation. In accordance with CMS guidelines, an organization new to The Joint Commission must have served at least five (5) patients, with a minimum of three (3) active patients on service at the time of the initial unannounced survey. This change is **effective immediately**.

* This includes organizations that have either never been surveyed by The Joint Commission or have not been certified by The Joint Commission for at least four months.

Eligibility for DSC Certification

As a reminder, an organization new to The Joint Commission seeking **disease-specific care certification** must have served a minimum number of patients at the time of its Joint Commission on-site review. Specific parameters for DSC include the following:

- DSC Core Program and Primary Stroke Centers: 10 patients served
- Inpatient Diabetes/Chronic Kidney Disease/Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease Centers: 30 patients served
- Lung Volume Reduction Surgery/Ventricular Assist Device: 1 patient served

This requirement, presented originally in the January 2008 issue of *The Joint Commission Perspectives*[®] (pages 4–5), is hereby added to the “General Eligibility Requirements” of “The Joint Commission Certification Process” chapter of the *Disease-Specific Care Certification Manual* (page CERT-2). It replaces the third bullet, “The disease-specific care program(s) must be in full operation (not pilot testing) for a minimum of four months.” The revision will appear in the fall update and 2010 edition of the manual. 