



Topic Library Item

Prepublication - Diagnostic Imaging Services Requirements: Update; Delayed Implementation

Revised Timeline for Implementation of New and Revised Diagnostic Imaging Standards

May 21, 2014

In January 2014, The Joint Commission published new and revised requirements that address risks associated with diagnostic imaging for **accredited hospitals, critical access hospitals, and ambulatory care** organizations that provide diagnostic imaging services, including those ambulatory organizations that have already achieved Advanced Diagnostic Imaging certification. The changes were intended to be effective July 1, 2014, with additional changes to be phased in by 2015 (see January 2014 *Perspectives*, page 5).

Since that time, we have received significant feedback from key stakeholders both praising the overall effort, and raising concerns about several critical standards. This feedback sheds light on issues that may not have been either identified or sufficiently evaluated during the standards development process. Some of these issues highlighted complexities that require us to engage in further research in order to ensure that the new standards best promote the improvement of quality and safety.

Therefore, we are postponing the July 1, 2014 implementation of the revised diagnostic imaging requirements. The *2014 Update 1 to the Comprehensive Accreditation Manual* for hospitals, critical access hospitals, and ambulatory care will be delayed until early July for customers who purchased the print updates to revert the imaging standards. The goal is to implement the revised standards by July 2015, which will allow for the release of a comprehensive set of requirements, rather than partial sets over 2014 and 2015. When we finalize the 2015 diagnostic imaging requirements, it is expected that the majority of the 2014 proposed requirements will be implemented as currently written. A prepublication version of the final requirements will be posted on our website six months in advance of any identified implementation date.

In order to finalize a single set of standards in 2015, we are collecting additional information about several critical areas of radiation safety. The critical areas include:

- Documentation of the radiation dose.
- Annual equipment performance evaluations by a medical physicist or Magnetic Resonance scientist.
- Minimum qualifications for radiologic technologists who perform computerized tomography (CT) exams. These requirements were to have become effective July 1, 2015. Since this subject is covered in the now postponed revised requirements, this date is also no longer effective.
- Requirements that align with the State of California's CT law.

We value and appreciate the feedback received from imaging professionals, our accredited organizations, and other key stakeholders. The decision to postpone the implementation of these requirements is based on our goal of advancing imaging quality and safety.

Perspectives will be used to keep you informed of progress with these standards.

If you have any questions or feedback please do not hesitate to connect with us at imagesafety@jointcommission.org.

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