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AAAHC Creates New Orthopaedic Certification for ASCs

New program developed in response to industry shift, ASC demand for advanced certification

(Skokie, Ill.) November 2, 2017 – The Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC), an industry leader in patient safety and accreditation excellence, has just developed a new Orthopaedic Certification program for ambulatory surgery centers (ASC) looking to demonstrate their high quality of care and compliance with rigorous industry requirements.

According to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), the demand for joint replacement procedures is expected to grow at an unprecedented rate and become one of the nation’s most common elective procedures.ⁱ While the majority of these are performed in hospital settings, the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons cites more procedures are taking place in the ASC setting in an effort to reduce costs and increase efficiency.

In 2010, researchers estimated seven million Americans had a total hip or knee replacement, and of those, 620,000 individuals underwent both procedures. Experts expect knee replacements alone could reach 3.5 million per year by 2030.ⁱⁱ Researchers attribute the increase in these procedures to the rising incidences of patients with conditions that lead to orthopaedic problems such as obesity and arthritis. Further, the aging population of Baby Boomers looking to maintain active lifestyles is also driving demand.

“Advancements in surgical procedures and prosthetics, coupled with reduced length of stay in hospitals, are leading to more orthopaedic procedures being performed in the outpatient setting,” said Tess Poland, RN, BSN, MSN Senior Vice President, Accreditation Services for AAAHC. “ASCs embody the principles of value-based care by delivering high-quality services at a fraction of the cost of a hospital visit.”

The Orthopaedic Certification program builds off the AAAHC ASC Accreditation offering or accreditation from another organization. After an ASC has achieved overall accreditation, it can acquire the certification to demonstrate excellence in the orthopaedic specialty by meeting specific industry standards. The requirements touch on several aspects of the ASC orthopaedic specialty including:

- Credentialing and privileging of providers
- Rigorous prescreening criteria to ensure optimal patient outcomes
- Clinical care based on current evidence-based guidelines

AAAHC-accredited ASCs requested an orthopaedic certification be developed to create an organized structure toward ensuring high-quality delivery of care and strong patient outcomes in orthopaedic procedures. The certification demonstrates a center’s high-reliability and culture driven to excellence, creating a competitive advantage over other ASCs and providing assurance to patients, referrers and the industry.

“The goal of the certification program is to provide a highly clinical-relevant resource that recognizes centers of specialty excellence,” said Poland. “We plan to extend our certification programs to include more specialties in the future.”

The Orthopaedic Certification program Standards can be found in the *2018 Accreditation Handbook for Ambulatory Health Care*, which includes updated Standards for 2018 and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Emergency Preparedness requirements. To obtain a copy of the 2018 handbook, please visit www.aaahc.org/publications.

About AAAHC

AAAHC (Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care), founded in 1979, is the leader in ambulatory health care accreditation with more than 6,000 organizations accredited. We accredit a wide range of outpatient settings including ambulatory surgery centers, office-based surgery facilities, endoscopy centers, student health centers, medical and dental group practices, community health centers, employer-based health clinics, retail clinics, and Indian health centers, among others.

AAAHC advocates for the provision of high quality health care through the development and adoption of nationally-recognized Standards. We provide a valuable survey experience founded on a collaborative, consultative, educational approach to peer-based, on-site review. The AAAHC Certificate of Accreditation demonstrates an organization's commitment to provide safe, high quality services to its patients. It is recognized by third party payers, medical professional associations, liability insurance companies, state and federal agencies, and the public. For more information on AAAHC please visit www.aaahc.org.

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ⁱ Maradit Kremers H, Larson DR, Crowson CS, et al. Prevalence of Total Hip and Knee Replacement in the United States. *The Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery American volume*. 2015;97(17):1386-1397. doi:10.2106/JBJS.N.01141.

ⁱⁱ Kurtz SM, Lau E, Zhao K, et al. The future burden of hip and knee revisions: U.S. projections from 2005 to 2030. SE-53. Presented at the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons 73rd Annual Meeting. March 22-26, 2006. Chicago.