

# triangle times

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## CMS renews AAAHC deeming status

In December, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) approved AAAHC as a national accreditation organization for ASCs that request participation in the Medicare program. This **6-year award** was based on a 12-month comprehensive review of AAAHC policies, procedures, processes, documentation, onsite record review, and survey observation evidence which recognizes that

the AAAHC accreditation program continues to satisfy the Medicare Conditions for Coverage for ASCs. AAAHC has consistently held Deemed Status for ASCs since 1996.

"We are pleased that CMS has again placed its confidence in AAAHC and our commitment to assessing an ASC's compliance with the Conditions for Coverage," said Noel M. Adachi, MBA,

president and CEO of AAAHC. "As the nation's largest accrediting body for ambulatory health care, we are committed to supporting ambulatory surgery centers in their efforts to improve and strengthen their quality of care, so that they can continue to deliver quality every day—1,095 days throughout the accreditation cycle and for many more cycles to come." ▲

### Leadership message

#### AAAHC REFLECTS ON THE PAST AND LOOKS FORWARD TO 2019

The AAAHC was founded and the accreditation program launched in 1979. Some of you may know the history. We were created largely to address a gap in health care accreditation services. Several individuals representing different medical associations got together to determine how to self-regulate quality in this space. These individuals and the many who followed and contributed to AAAHC, recognized that ambulatory care centers offer high-quality affordable care and are a convenient, safe alternative to the traditional hospital environment. The fact is, the very existence



Noel M. Adachi, president  
and CEO of AAAHC

of these centers more than 45 years ago was driven by patient demand for more convenient, cost-effective and safe quality care.

....But you know this.

And, the reality is that patients are putting a huge trust in us—you, your organizations, and AAAHC—they are trusting that together we will safely guardian their health through ensuring facility adherence to rigorous, best practice standards of care and safety. AAAHC accreditation demonstrates that your organization has earned this trust.

With nearly a half a century now of standards-making experience, we know that following guidelines helps patients, protects healthcare workers, and lessens the likelihood of legal jeopardy for physicians and organizations like yours who follow guidelines and

protocols. AAAHC accreditation demonstrates your commitment to adhere to high quality standards during *every day of that three-year cycle*—1,095 days and beyond.

During the past 40 years, AAAHC has expanded from just a few accredited facilities to more than 6,100 accredited organizations. We've expanded our offering to better address new developments in the ambulatory space and invested in strengthening our headquarters staff of nearly 70 people and our expert surveyor team of more than 300 professionals. And we are learning to better engage our volunteers, our clients, our medical association partners, and our surveyor teams—all of whom guide and contribute to the design, delivery, and improvement of our programs.

During 2018, the AAAHC experienced a lot of change. We restructured our Board governance. Today, our new

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# Advanced Orthopaedic Certification

## BUILD ON YOUR AAAHC ACCREDITATION AND BE RECOGNIZED

In November 2018, AAAHC launched its Advanced Orthopaedic Certification program. The program is available to AAAHC-accredited organizations that perform total joint replacement and/or complex spine procedures.

In recent years, procedures traditionally performed in hospitals have been shifting to the outpatient setting, including orthopaedic surgeries (see Figure 1).

on patient outcomes across the entire spectrum of care and built on AAAHC accreditation requirements. For organizations, preparing for certification promotes team cohesiveness as staff work together reaching toward a higher level of excellence. The requirements touch on several aspects of the ASC orthopaedic specialty, including provider credentialing and privileging, rigorous prescreening criteria to ensure optimal patient outcomes, and clinical care based on current evidence-based guidelines. The onsite survey, con-

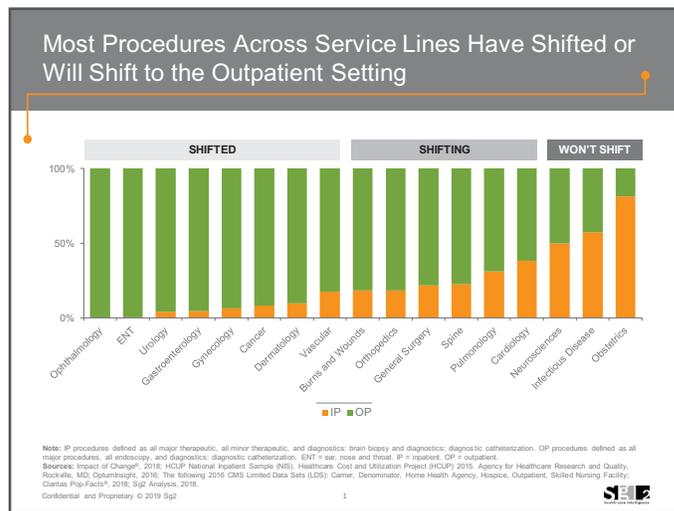


Figure 1: Sg2 LLC, 2018<sup>1</sup>

“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.”

AAAHC Advanced Orthopaedic Certification is for ASC organizations interested in being recognized for demonstrating advanced quality practices in this specialty. Where accreditation demonstrates an organization-wide commitment to ongoing quality improvement, certification is a three-year *specialty program* focused

ducted by a clinical surveyor experienced in the ambulatory orthopaedic setting, provides a comprehensive focus on transitions of care from pre-assessment through discharge and rehabilitation. And, the AAAHC Advanced Orthopaedic Certification program is preferred by payors and differentiates an organization in an increasingly competitive market.

“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.”

Through an onsite survey, AAAHC surveyors assess performance using detailed Standards focused on the

## Key requirements of the Advanced Orthopaedic Certification program:

1. ASCs are in good standing with their AAAHC accreditation when the Application for Certification is initiated.
2. The specialty service has completed a minimum of 20 procedures for each specialty type (total joint replacements, and/or complex spine procedures) within the 12 months prior to submitting an Application for Certification.\*
3. The median number of procedures for each specialty type (total joint replacements, and/or complex spine procedures; includes inpatient and outpatient) performed by surgeons participating in the specialty services is at least 50 prior to the date the Application for Certification is initiated. The median number of at least 50 must be maintained annually.\*

delivery of orthopaedic services. The onsite survey is an educational experience conducted by peer surveyors responsible for reviewing a facility’s operation and sharing best practices. Surveyors identify areas in which a facility is effectively demonstrating quality and compliance to AAAHC Standards and gaps in performance that require corrective action. AAAHC Advanced Orthopaedic Certification Standards include six chapters separated into two areas—leadership effectiveness and care integration.

Interested organizations may visit <https://www.aaahc.org/certification/> to learn more about the AAAHC Advanced Orthopaedic Certification program. To contact our Orthopaedic Certification Team, email: [orthopaedic@aaahc.org](mailto:orthopaedic@aaahc.org) or call 847-853-6060. ▲

\* Eligibility will be reviewed and verified at the time of survey. Ineligibility will result in cancellation of the survey.

<sup>1</sup> Figure 1. Sg2 LLC, 2018 [www.sg2.com](http://www.sg2.com)

## Leadership message

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Board is operating as one cohesive unit. They've stepped up to the challenge of focusing on the strategy necessary to drive change and to drive growth. They tackled development of a vision and strategic plan that will guide priorities and set expectations for the organization. They are making us stronger and ensuring that we effectively leverage the expertise of our volunteers, surveyors, and professional staff—and that we *carefully listen to our clients*. They are making us more vocal and strategically aligned with other organizations that are like minded and from whom we can gain insight, opportunity, and voice. And the new Board is redefining and strengthening our role as a driver in the transformation of health care by advancing quality in ambulatory care.

Our investment in a new Accreditation Management System (AMS) is a key part of our new strategy. Targeted for launch later this year, the new AMS allows us to engage with our accredited organizations more effectively and drive improvements in our quality management tools, processes, and solutions.

We refreshed our *Achieving Accreditation* client education program and are developing plans to supplement this learning opportunity with webinars and other online resources on relevant topics to help our accredited facilities maintain compliance and tackle challenging issues.

As we head into our 40th year, I can reflect proudly on our past, and I'm excited about the increased value you can expect to experience from AAAHC in the future. In 2019, we are poised to take bold steps toward refining and strengthening delivery of our mission and leading the transformation of ambulatory health care by advancing quality through peer-based standards, engaging education, and expert guidance. For us that means:

- Engaging our clients more frequently throughout the accreditation cycle with tools, resources and education that bring meaningful value when you need it



Attendees at the December *Achieving Accreditation* program listen to Dr. Arnaldo Valedon's opening remarks

- Focusing your facility's efforts on robust, evidence-based standards that are relevant and specific to their setting and practice
- Holding accredited clients accountable to implementing Plans of Correction and conducting annual gap assessments
- Strengthening the quality and consistency of our surveyors, and the education they deliver that is so valued by our participants
- Delivering interactive and engaging education conveniently accessible to your providers

Our goal is to make continuous improvement in quality care delivery fully attainable. We want to provide facilities with a solid foundation on which to build and integrate a progressive quality improvement culture into the very fabric of your daily operations.

Guided by our strategic plan and demonstrated through our investments in systems, education, people, and accessible, relevant and valued quality improvement tools, we believe we can better fulfill our mission of advancing and elevating the standard of ambulatory care.

While we believe that the onsite survey is critically important and that is why we continue to invest in surveyor education and tools, the real test of quality mindedness is demonstrated through an organization's—your organization's ongoing investment in learning and improving throughout the accreditation cycle—*1,095 days and more*. And this is where we will be focused during the next few years and beyond. ▲

## Calendar

### Quarterly Conference Schedule

**January 17-18, 2019**  
Ambulatory Surgery Center  
Association (ASCA) Winter  
Conference, Austin

**March 12-16, 2019**  
American Academy of Orthopaedic  
Surgeons (AAOS) 2019 Annual  
Meeting, Las Vegas

**March 27-29, 2019**  
Texas Ambulatory Surgery Center  
Society (TASCS), Austin

### Training and Education

**March 15-16, 2019**  
*Achieving Accreditation*, Tampa

### Recorded webinars

Credentialing and Privileging  
Emergency Drills

Patient Safety: Patient Selection,  
Emergency Equipment, and  
Emergency Preparedness

Peer Review and Internal  
Benchmarking

Safe Injection Practices

2018 Standards Part I of II:  
Core Chapters for  
Non-Medicare surveys

2018 Standards Part II of II:  
Adjunct Chapters for  
Non-Medicare surveys

For more information and to  
register/purchase webinars, please visit  
<http://www.aaahc.org/education/webinars/>

# Innovations in Quality Improvement Award program

In November, the AAAHC Institute for Quality Improvement announced the 2018-2019 Bernard A. Kershner Innovations in Quality Improvement Award program finalists (three from Surgical/Procedural and three from Primary Care).

Developing, implementing, and executing a successful and measurable quality improvement program takes dedication. The six organizations listed below will be honored at the March 2019 *Achieving Accreditation* program in Tampa, Florida and will be presenting posters of their exemplary QI studies.

## SURGICAL/PROCEDURAL

### CSA Surgical Center

Post-Operative Pain Reduction Quality Study: Pre-Operative Administration of Acetaminophen in Patients Undergoing Laparoscopic Cholecystectomy

### Laser Spine Surgery Center of Tampa

ASC Overall Cleanliness

### The Knoxville Ophthalmology ASC

Single Dose Anesthesia Medications: Correction Administration and Narcotic Documentation

## PRIMARY CARE

### American Dental Partners/ Forward Dental

Caries Risk Assessment Quality Improvement Study

### Lac Courte Oreilles Community Health Center

Retinopathy Exams for Diabetic Patients

### University Health Services, Princeton University

Antibiotic Stewardship for Acute Bronchitis: A Multi-Year Quality Improvement Study in University Health Care

AAAHC wishes to thank all organizations that submitted their quality improvement studies. Their hard work and dedication to quality improvement shows their commitment to AAAHC's mission, "improving health care quality through accreditation."

#### Alpine Surgery Center

Number of Times the Door of the OR is Opened/Closed during a Case

**AnMed Enterprises Inc./Upstate Endoscopy, LLC**  
Infection Control/Rapicide Reuse Cycles and Cost

**Beltway Surgery Center- Penn Parkway**  
Post Procedure non-Surgical Site Pain

**Brecksville Surgery Center**  
Side/Site Verification

**Capital City Surgery Center**  
Allergy Documentation Consistency

**Chemawa Indian Health Center**  
EVS Standardization and Improvement Project

**Cleveland Ambulatory Services**  
Endoscopy Wait Times

**Collier Health Services d/b/a Healthcare  
Network of Southwest Florida**  
Integrated Oral Health Screening and Referrals

**Day Surgery and Recovery Center**  
Effectiveness of Exparel in Abdominoplasty

**East Paris Surgical Center**  
Oculoplastic Operating Room Times

**Eastside Endoscopy Center**  
Temperature Acquisition During Admission  
Process in Patients Undergoing Endoscopy

**Endoscopy Center of Inland Empire**  
Patient Satisfaction Rate of Return

**Eye Surgery Center of Augusta, LLC**  
Limit Inflammation and Corneal Edema (L.I.C.E)

**Gastrointestinal Healthcare**  
Colonoscopy Recall Capture Study

**Gerald L. Ignace Indian Health Center, Inc.  
(HRSA)**  
Improving the Health Literacy of Native  
American Patients with Type 2 Diabetes

**Grossnickle Eye Center, Inc**  
Decreasing Patient Driven Factors that have  
the Potential for Adversely Affecting Surgery or  
Surgery Outcomes

**Hidalgo Medical Services**  
Childhood Immunizations

**Jersey Shore Ambulatory Surgery Center**  
ASC Transfers

**Jicarilla Service Unit**  
Transition of Care after Hospitalization

**Laser Spine Institute, LLC**  
Reduction of Day Surgery Cancellations with  
Block Scheduling Implementation

**Minimally Invasive Surgery of Hawaii**  
Patient Satisfaction Survey Distribution  
and Response

#### Pelosi Medical Center

PICO Negative Pressure Wound Therapy System  
for Abdominoplasty

**Penn State University Health Services**  
The Immunization Compliance Project

**Plaza Medical Clinic**  
Pre-Surgery Checklist

**Premise Health Onsite Holdings Corporation**  
PrEP Therapy: A Retrospective Look at  
Engagement and Accessibility to HIV prevention

**Premise Health Onsite Holdings Corporation:  
BeWell Health Centers**  
Depression Screening - Peer Review

**Premise Health Onsite Holdings Corporation:  
SunTrust Riverview Health Center**  
5S Preventative Exam Scheduling Study

**Quad/Med Quality Group, Inc.**  
Introduction of Interdisciplinary Patient Care  
Conferences for Better Control of  
Hemoglobin A1c

**Rickman Family Medical Center**  
Smoking Education

**Saltzman, Tanis, Pittell, Levin & Jacobson, Inc.**  
Decrease Total Visit Time for Shot Only Visits

**Siouxland Community Health Center**  
Medical Supply Inventory Study

**Specialty Surgery Center of CNY**  
Endophthalmitis Study

**Surgery Center of Fairfield County**  
Data Analysis for OSA Protocol Compliance Rate

**Surgery Center of South Central Kansas**  
Recycling Impacts in the ASC

**Susquehanna Surgery Center**  
A Multi-Disciplinary Approach to Hand Off  
Communication of the OR Patient

**The Endoscopy Center**  
Utilizing Channel Check to Monitor Efficacy of  
Manual Cleaning of Olympus Scopes

**The Endoscopy Center**  
A Safer, More Effective Method for Cleaning and  
Disinfecting GI Endoscopic Procedure Rooms

**The Vancouver Clinic Ambulatory  
Surgery Center**  
Use of Electronic Medical Record (EMR)  
Algorithm Capabilities to Determine Surgical Site  
Infection (SSI) Rates (vs. provider self-reporting)

**Three Rivers Endoscopy/  
Sheridan Healthcare of PA**  
Descriptive Evaluation of Phenylephrine and  
Ephedrine Administration in an Ambulatory  
Endoscopic Center

**TRIA Orthopaedic Center**  
Preoperative Staphylococcus aureus Screening  
Program for Total Joint Patients

**UNC - Charlotte, Student Health Center**  
Immunization Compliance Program  
Improvement

**Vaden Health Center**  
Screening for Travel in Febrile Patients in a  
College Health Clinic

**Women's Institute of Cosmetic and Laser  
Surgery**  
Tylenol #3 Versus Norco 5 Postoperatively