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Conferences & Exhibits

National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC)
Aug 27–29

California Ambulatory Surgery Association (CASA)
Sep 13–15

Ohio Association of Ambulatory Surgery Centers (OAASC)
Sep 19–20

Becker's ASC Business and Operations of ASCs
Oct 26–28

IHI Forum — Institute for Healthcare Improvement
Dec 10–13

1095 Learn

Achieving Accreditation
• Virtual, Sep 18–20
• Onsite, Dec 7–8 (Las Vegas)

To learn the latest, please visit our website.

Safe + Sound Week: Join the Movement

Led by Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Safe + Sound Week, a nationwide initiative aimed at improving workplace safety, provides resources on mental health and well-being.

The May issue of *Triangle Times Today* focused on how AAAHC Standards promote a total systems approach to safety. Building on that foundation and key to worker mental health and well-being is a safe environment, where staff have the training and support to deliver safe patient care. According to the Surgeon General, the *Framework for Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being* is built on five elements.

1. **Protection from harm.** A safe work environment protects workers from harm. AAAHC risk management Standards aim to identify and mitigate occupational hazards, physical violence, and psychological harm. Prioritizing physical and psychological safety includes normalizing and supporting mental health and operationalizing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

2. **Connection and community.** The pandemic created a connection crisis resulting in lonely workers and quiet quitting. Human beings long for social support and belonging. Collaborating and working towards a shared goal builds connection, community, inclusion, and belonging. In addition, AAAHC Administration Standards support connection and community through written personnel policies. When established and implemented, these policies facilitate attainment of the mission, goals, and objectives of the organization.

3. **Work-life harmony.** Work is a subset of life. Maintaining a healthy separation between personal life and work is key to gaining work-life harmony.

4. **Mattering at work.** People want to know that they are valued and that they are making a difference. AAAHC Standards recognize the importance of workers through the Administration Standards which require organizations to have written policies that describe incentives and rewards. Engaging workers with decisions and demonstrating gratitude and recognition are two ways that reinforce the human need of dignity and meaning.

5. **Opportunity for growth.** Along with personal value, workers seek purpose and growth opportunities in the workplace. This can be facilitated through compliance with AAAHC Standards which require periodic appraisals and competency programs that seek to provide feedback, identify training needs, and explore career pathways or opportunities to grow within the organization.

When workers feel safe and have meaningful connections and when they feel they matter and have opportunity for growth, they are more engaged and committed. The Surgeon Generals Framework for Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being provides a pathway forward to guide organizations as they navigate the new normal, from mental illness, siloed environments, and high turnover rates. Ensuring a safe work environment that supports mental health and well-being is an organizational imperative.

AAAHC seeks to proactively identify and manage workplace hazards before they cause injury or illness, thus improving sustainability and the bottom line. And AAAHC is among the businesses that have taken the pledge for Safe + Sound Week. We have joined the movement, and we encourage you to take the pledge to support the safety of America's workers. **Join us.**

A NEWSLETTER OF THE ACCREDITATION ASSOCIATION FOR AMBULATORY HEALTH CARE, INC.

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v42 Q&A, Part VI

This month, AAAHC continues our ongoing series of v42 AAAHC Standards Q&A focusing on workplace mental health and well-being.

What components should be considered when completing a workplace assessment on mental health and well-being?

The first essential of mental health and well-being in the workplace is protection from harm. AAAHC addresses this topic in several standards starting with an annual safety risk assessment designed to keep your facility, patients, and employees safe in the workplace. Once hazards are identified, the workplace can conduct a series of scenario-based drills such as dangerous intruder and code blue drills to help employees feel more comfortable in their roles and environment. The risk assessment should also be part of the larger emergency preparedness plan that evaluates several areas of risk for your organization. Along with physical safety, consider psychological safety and how your organization normalizes and supports mental health and operationalizes diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

How do AAAHC Standards address opportunity for growth?

AAAHC Administration Standards address the opportunity for growth through annual training, evaluation, and incentives and rewards. AAAHC Standards require that employees are trained within 30 days of employment, and that training is provided annually thereafter. There is also a requirement that training is provided when a need is identified. The Standards also call for periodic appraisals and current competence.

Does AAAHC have any standards that address how to make employees feel they matter at work?

This includes engaging workers in decisions, building a culture of recognition, and connecting the individual work with the organizational mission. Reflected in the governing body Standards, the governing body is responsible for establishing strategic direction and supporting its accomplishment by determining the mission goals and objectives of the organization. Leaders drive the direction and set the culture of an organization, through verbal and non-verbal communication, which can impact workers perception of value, engagement and retention. Measuring performance and honoring contributions of workers are also addressed in Administration Standards.

How do AAAHC Standards address connection and community for employees in the workplace?

AAAHC Standards direct the governing body to be responsible for ensuring effective communication throughout the organization. This includes communication of scope of services, policies and procedures, quality and risk management activities.

What resources are available to learn more about workplace mental health and well-being?

Framework for Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being published by the Office of the Surgeon General.

National Plan for Health Workforce Well-Being published by the National Academy of Medicine.

Total Worker Health approach developed by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).

How do we join the movement and take the pledge?

Visit OSHA's Safe + Sound webpage: **osha.gov/safeandsoundweek**

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