



**NEWS RELEASE  
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**AAAHC Publishes Updated Toolkit on Emergency Drills**

*Educational Resource Available to All Health Care Organizations Can Help Define,  
Strengthen Preparedness Strategies*

(Deerfield, Ill.) July 16, 2023 – Today, the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC) released its updated *Emergency Drills Toolkit*, which educates ambulatory health care organizations on how to prepare before an actual disaster occurs. The toolkit provides guidance on conducting and evaluating emergency drill processes and procedures that help primary care and surgical/procedural organizations meet AAAHC Standards.

Vital to emergency preparedness in the ambulatory setting, emergency drills or simulations can effectively prepare organizations for such emergencies by ingraining appropriate behaviors in all relevant staff. The toolkit also offers insight on the multiple types of emergencies that can occur in the ambulatory health care setting.

“The updated toolkit highlights the three main pillars of emergency preparedness planning – development, performance, and evaluation,” said Julie Lynch, director of the Institute for Quality Improvement at AAAHC. “In an unpredictable environment, it is crucial for all ambulatory organizations to address the many possible emergency scenarios – from natural disasters to sudden staff illness and more. The toolkit further emphasizes the importance of teamwork and evaluation in helping to reduce errors and allow for further improvements.”

**Six Steps to Preparedness**

Key elements of the *Emergency Drills Toolkit* that will help organizations prepare for the worst, include:

1. Highlight the types of risks the drill is intended to address
2. Assess existing internal emergency and disaster preparedness plans
3. Incorporate recommended communications to inform all participants that the drill will be happening
4. Perform the drill as if it were a real-life emergency
5. Evaluate the performance of all team members at the completion of the drill
6. Create and implement a corrective action plan as relevant

During the evaluation process, it is important to document all steps and identify areas of weakness that need improvement to meet specific Standard requirements and boost overall

efficiency. The AAAHC *Emergency Drills Toolkit* provides organizations with a sample checklist and timeline for measuring performance throughout drills.

“In all of our work, we emphasize survey readiness and the importance of following proven processes to ensure both patient and staff safety,” said Noel Adachi, MBA, president and CEO of AAAHC. “The *Emergency Drills Toolkit* uniquely underscores our commitment to *1095 Strong, quality every day* very directly – in short, teams must be prepared to handle unforeseen circumstances at a moment’s notice, and this tool provides them the resources to both build and improve upon their procedures.”

Browse the full line of AAAHC toolkits here: <https://store.aaahc.org/toolkits>. Additional information on AAAHC programs, products, process, client education, history, governance, and surveyors can be found at [aaahc.org](http://aaahc.org).

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### **About AAAHC**

Founded in 1979, AAAHC is the leader in ambulatory health care accreditation, with more than 6,700 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/Tribal 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 peer-based, educational approach to onsite review. The AAAHC Certificate of Accreditation, along with specialized programs including Advanced Orthopaedic Certification and Patient-Centered Medical Home Certification, demonstrates an organization’s commitment to providing safe, high-quality services to its patients—every day of the 1,095-day accreditation cycle. AAAHC Accreditation and Certification Programs are recognized by third-party payors, medical professional associations, liability insurance companies, state and federal agencies, and the public. For more information on AAAHC, please visit [www.aaahc.org](http://www.aaahc.org).