

Accreditation, Regulation, and Certification

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In today's healthcare organizations, the development and implementation of accreditation, regulation, and certification within the clinical realm while keeping up with compliance is a complicated business and a difficult service. Accreditation, regulations, and certifications are the legal and practical terms that establish the level of practice in the field of healthcare. In addition, the standard of care in medical practice is a legal term that describes what degree of care is expected from the care providers and how much care a patient receives in the clinical setting. Furthermore, the standard of practice is all about actual treatment and care that is provided by the practitioners. Based on these terms and measures, medical practice ensures the improvement of patient safety, privacy, and provision of quality care while keeping up with compliance.

Difference between Standard of Care and Standard of Practice

In the field of healthcare, the terms "standard of care" and "standard of practice" are synonymous in their meanings but distinctive in their functions. The former term is a legal concept in the field of nursing that is related to negligence in care whereas the latter term is related to professional conduct. The "Standard of Practice" is a regulatory concept used by statutorily authorized regulators so that nurses or other medical communities can refer to the guidelines determined by each state's nurse practice act for the treatment of a medical condition or a disease (Douglas et al., 2011). In simpler words, "standards of practice" refer to the professional activities for nurses defined under state law that involve what, how, when, where, and why of nursing practice. These standards are important because they direct the professional practice of nursing, outline what should be expected from nurses, and promote practices for self-assessment of nurses and other healthcare providers. On the other hand, the "standards of care" refer to the provision of services that unequivocally define what quality of care is provided in a manner consistent with quality care (King Jr, 1975).

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In medical practice, meeting specific rules and regulations as well as following numerous protocols to warrant the provision of safe and quality care for the patients and prospective environment for the healthcare providers is essential. Standards, rules, and regulations in the field of healthcare are developed, enforced, and implemented by private accreditation agencies, Federal regulatory agencies, and State certification organizations. These agencies and organizations oversee and enforce quality assurance in the field of healthcare according to the required compliance within clinical settings. Accreditation is an external review or evaluation that enforces a healthcare provider

to meet regulations and standards set by an external accreditation organization which helps in improving patient safety and quality of care provided to the vulnerable and unhealthy population. Regulations refer to the rules enforced by certain State and Federal organizations or agencies that must be followed by the medical community. The seal of approval certifying that an individual care provider or a certain organization is meeting the specific standards, rules, and regulations implemented and enforced by the related authorities is what is termed certification (Barghouthi & Imam, 2018). In a nutshell, terms including regulations, accreditation, and certifications are involved with the adherence to standard rules and practices on the individual healthcare practitioner as well as organizational levels.

Classification of an Accrediting Body

Accreditation bodies evaluate the quality and safety of healthcare settings which helps the care organizations to manage policies, protocols, and compliance. The Joint Commission is one of the accrediting bodies in the realm of the healthcare industry which accredits hospitals, nursing homes, behavioral health centers, and other care organizations at the national level of the United States while offering the provision of care on three different levels; primary, secondary, and tertiary (Roberts et al., 1987). These three levels of care encompass various types of healthcare settings and services. These services may include preventive care and routine check-ups in primary healthcare settings, academic medical centers in secondary care settings, and advanced treatments in specialized hospitals in tertiary care settings. The accrediting body of the Joint Commission plays a crucial role in ensuring that these three different levels of care promote patient well-being, meet the highest quality standards, ensure safety, and take an active part in improving the performance as well as outcomes of the overall healthcare system.

Importance of Continuous Readiness in the Healthcare

In the realm of medical practice, the process of continuous readiness involves continuous education, accreditation preparation, staff engagement, and performance improvement while maintaining a safe, high-quality, and proactive patient care environment. This process helps healthcare settings to adapt to the ever-emerging challenges and expectations of the healthcare sector as it enhances the financial performance of the organization, patient outcomes, organizational reputation, and staff retention. In healthcare, continuous readiness allows healthcare organizations to enhance patient outcomes, prepare for accreditation surveys, and improve performance on the parts of both caregivers and organizations.

Conclusion

In the field of medical practice, the processes including accreditation, regulation, and certification are similarly concerned with the operations of the organizations but focused on overseeing the implementation and enforcement of rules, regulations, and standards related to healthcare delivery and specified care practices. These processes are essential for the healthcare field as they govern the organization as well as evaluate an individual's knowledge and execution of the standard practices or principles. Thus, it is evident that the existence of these standardized processes, protocols, and measures is inevitable to ensure the maintenance of high-quality care in the healthcare field.

References

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