



August 19, 2015

Dear Colleague:

RE: The Joint Commission's 2016 Top Performer Program

The last two years have seen many changes in performance measurement. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has made significant changes to the performance measures in the Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting Program, including retiring a number of chart-based measures. The Joint Commission made many of these same changes to maintain alignment with CMS, and we introduced the Flexible Reporting Option in 2015 to respond to our customers' requests that they be allowed to choose which measure sets to report. The Flexible Reporting Option also allowed hospitals to begin reporting electronic clinical quality measures (eCQMs). The push for eCQMs will accelerate in 2016 when CMS will implement a requirement for hospitals to report at least 4 eCQMs.

The Joint Commission's Top Performer program (TPP) has utilized the results of a fixed set of designated accountability chart-based performance measures to compare performance and determine top hospitals. But now, the retirement of some accountability measures, the heterogeneity of measure sets reported by hospitals, and the fact that performance rates for eCQMs may not be equivalent to performance rates on chart-based measures make it very difficult to compare hospitals and identify top performers.

For these reasons, the Top Performer program, in its current form, will take a pause for 2016 while we reevaluate the program to better fit the evolving national measurement environment. The Joint Commission remains committed to measures that meet our accountability criteria, which greatly increase the likelihood that patient outcomes will improve if hospitals achieve increased performance on the measures we include in the Top Performer program.

In the interim, The Joint Commission will provide a program that continues to support our Top Performers, as well as those hospitals moving towards becoming a Top Performer. The details of this new program will be forthcoming this fall.

What we do know is that the key components of the 2016 programming will include recognition categories, education opportunities, an annual report, and a strong focus on partnering with you to provide the highest level of quality care for patients and their families.

**Note: During this hiatus year, the ORYX flexible reporting options will remain in place with further details forthcoming in early September. Additionally, this hiatus does not affect the announcement of the 2015 Top Performers (based on 2014 ORYX data) scheduled to occur on November 17, 2015.**

Thank you for your commitment to providing safe and effective care. We will continue to keep you informed as to these changes.

For additional questions, please contact the Top Performer Program at:  
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