

New Team on the Block

A new team of **surveyors** that is! On September 26, 2008 the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) provided deemed status to a new accreditation process for the first time in more than 30 years creating another option for healthcare entities choosing to be accredited. There are now 3 accreditation firms available for healthcare organizations to choose from. The Joint Commission (TJC), the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) and now DNV Healthcare's National Integrated Accreditation for Healthcare Organizations program (NIAHO). Providing organizations with 3 options for accreditation should be good for the hospitals, and ultimately the patients served.

The NIAHO accreditation process integrates the nationally recognized ISO 9001 Quality Management System with the Medicare Conditions of Participation, making it the first and only hospital accreditation program that **REQUIRES** continual quality improvement. Incorporating ISO 9001 in to the accreditation process creates a culture of self policing your operations like never before.

Survey teams consist of clinicians, generalists, and life safety specialists. All NIAHO surveyors have been cross-trained as ISO 9001 Lead Auditors. Surveyors visit accredited hospitals annually to ensure progress.

The NIAHO piece of the equation simplifies the process of adhering to the CMS Conditions of Participation (COP). The standards are not loaded with fluff, so to speak, allowing the organization to focus on meeting the COP standards while minimizing the opportunity for "Gray Areas" from surveyors.

For several years I have been a part (as a surveyor) of the "proving" portion of DNV Healthcare's process to become "deemed" and have seen the accreditation program in action. Feel free to contact TSIG Consulting, Inc. for any questions you may have. If you'd like preparation assistance, etc. we'd be glad to assist.

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