



The Joint Commission Project

In order to comply with Joint Commission accreditation requirements, hospitals are required to collect and submit performance measure data. With funding from Partnership for Prevention, the Joint Commission has completed the development and testing a new set of tobacco cessation quality standards which would be applicable to all hospitalized patients, 18 years of age or older, with a history of smoking cigarettes any time during the year prior to hospital arrival.

The Joint Commission's current tobacco measures apply only to a narrow patient group and their value is questionable. For example, distribution of a smoking cessation pamphlet to patients prior to discharge has been deemed sufficient to meet the current measure.

New Joint Commission standards would require hospitals to identify all patients who use tobacco and offer them:

- ❖ Counseling
- ❖ Medications
- ❖ Limited follow-up

What would this mean?

- ❖ Increased patient utilization of tobacco cessation treatments
- ❖ Maximized health of patients through improved cessation interventions

The Joint Commission's four proposed measures do not target a specific diagnosis and are broadly applicable to all hospitalized patients 18-years of age and older:

- ❖ **Tobacco use assessment** – all hospitalized inpatients 18-years of age and older will be assessed for tobacco use.
- ❖ **Tobacco use treatment** – all hospitalized inpatients 18-years of age and older will be offered evidence-based counseling to quit and FDA approved cessation medications (unless contra-indicated or for certain populations) during the hospital stay.
- ❖ **Tobacco use treatment at discharge** – all current tobacco users (use within 30 days) 18-years of age and older will be referred to evidence based out-patient counseling and offered a prescription for FDA-approved cessation medications upon discharge.
- ❖ **Tobacco use treatment follow-up** – discharged patients 18-years of age and older identified as current tobacco users will receive one follow-up call within two weeks after hospital discharge to ascertain their tobacco use status.

Hospitalization provides an ideal opportunity to deliver cessation assistance. Partnership for Prevention believes that all hospitalized patients should have the opportunity to be assessed, offered counseling and medications, and have follow-up communication regarding their tobacco use. Medical intervention works to help smokers quit and tobacco treatment is one of the most important actions medical professionals can take for their patients.