Cardiovascular Center of Excellence

Accreditation Eligibility Verification

Accreditation provided by American Heart Association® in collaboration with American College of Cardiology
Table of Contents
Introduction .................................................................................................................................................. 4
Mission Statement ........................................................................................................................................ 4
Benefits of Cardiovascular Center of Excellence Accreditation .............................................................. 4
  Population Health Community Leaders .................................................................................................. 4
  Public Awareness ..................................................................................................................................... 4
  Structured Care ....................................................................................................................................... 5
  Quality Improvement Data for Effective Decision Making ..................................................................... 5
  Recruiting ................................................................................................................................................. 5
  Benefits for Patients and Community ..................................................................................................... 5
  Value to Payers ....................................................................................................................................... 6
Program Overview ........................................................................................................................................ 6
  Key Terms ............................................................................................................................................... 6
  CVCOE Accreditation Standards Overview ........................................................................................... 7
    Cornerstone Requirements ...................................................................................................................... 7
    Capstone Line Item Criteria ................................................................................................................... 7
Eligibility ........................................................................................................................................................ 8
  General Eligibility Requirements ............................................................................................................. 8
  Limited Introductory Offering ................................................................................................................... 8
  Duration of Accreditation .......................................................................................................................... 9
Application Procedure .................................................................................................................................. 9
Creating Your Web Portal Account .......................................................................................................... 10
Appendix A: Checklist ............................................................................................................................... 11
  Eligibility Information Checklist ........................................................................................................... 12
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Introduction
The American Heart Association in collaboration with the American College of Cardiology introduces the Cardiovascular Center of Excellence accreditation. Accreditation by the American Heart Association and the American College of Cardiology demonstrates a hospital’s commitment to providing a high-quality, multidisciplinary cardiovascular System of Care where the patient is at the center of all decision making.

The Cardiovascular Center of Excellence (CVCOE) accreditation builds upon the ACC’s suite of cardiac accreditation services which is nationally recognized as having established process and performance standards demonstrating quality cardiovascular care. These standards set the framework for the CVCOE to provide a Systems of Care approach for high-quality, evidence-based, guideline driven, patient-centered care including access to a broad scope of cardiovascular care services required to diagnose, treat, rehabilitate, support, and educate cardiovascular patients.

Mission Statement
The mission of the Cardiovascular Center of Excellence accreditation is to improve the outcomes of patients with cardiovascular disease and optimize patient and caregiver experiences by forging partnerships with high-quality healthcare institutions to incorporate best practices founded on established evidence-based cardiovascular treatment guidelines and by fostering Systems of Care collaboration.

Benefits of Cardiovascular Center of Excellence Accreditation

Population Health Community Leaders
Hospitals are becoming increasingly accountable as leaders in their community to improve the population health. The Cardiovascular Center of Excellence accreditation uses a model for Systems of Care where the hospital is the driver of change in their community. CVCOE accreditation contains readymade tools to assist hospitals in improving the overall health of their community which links to the hospital’s fiscal stability.

Public Awareness
Hospitals with Cardiovascular Center of Excellence Accreditation receive public recognition of commitment to high quality care. Accredited programs gain local and national exposure through AHA’s marketing efforts and the ‘Find an Accredited Cardiovascular Center Near You’ tool, ensuring providers the accredited hospitals demonstrate adherence to national benchmarks.
Structured Care
CVCOE accreditation offers cardiovascular programs a Systems of Care model to ensure best practices and evidence-based medicine are implemented in a standardized fashion for the delivery of cohesive, standardized, consistent, multidisciplinary model of cardiovascular care. The standards require facilities to create meaningful processes from the community to the home where the patient is always the center of focus.

Quality Improvement Data for Effective Decision Making
AHA/ACC’s quality improvement registries provide facilities de-identified patient level data in an aggregate form to use for quality improvement, administrative resources and research. The reported measures are directly linked to current guidelines for the care of the cardiovascular patient. Using the CVCOE’s Systems of Care approach along with the collected quality data, hospitals can rapidly convert data into pro-active decision making for their cardiovascular community care programs. Access and integration across the AHA and ACC registries allows the accredited facility to:

- Monitor and report outcomes
- Determine patterns of care
- Identify disparities in care
- Design internal and external process and quality improvement initiatives
- Build public health programs
- Evaluate effectiveness of rapid cycle improvement initiatives
- Improve the overall quality of their population’s health
- Link program to fiscal responsibility

Recruiting
CVCOE Accreditation will serve as a recruitment tool for physicians and other medical professionals by demonstrating the institution’s mission of quality.

Benefits for Patients and Community
Facilities earning Cardiovascular Center of Excellence accreditation can claim the following benefits to communities they serve:

- **Care Decisions**: Promotes increased participation in care decisions by patients and family members.
- **Quality Treatment**: Demonstrates accredited programs are dedicating resources to provide quality treatment and supportive care services to cardiovascular patients.
- **Recommended Treatments**: Guarantees patients access to important components of treatment recommended by the American Heart Association and the American College of Cardiology.
- **Standards of Care**: Verifies standards of care created by reputable national organizations.
- **Multidisciplinary Teams**: Ensures a multidisciplinary cardiovascular team is involved in the planning and coordination of cardiovascular patient care.
- **Clinical Research**: Informs about clinical research studies and trial options.
- **Cardiac Prevention**: Collaborates with communities to provide cardiac prevention and educational events.
- **Quality Care**: Shows dedication to quality cardiovascular care that is available close to home.
Value to Payers
The AHA/ACC Cardiovascular Center of Excellence accreditation demonstrates the following:

- **Best Practices**: Provides external validation the accredited facility is performing at the highest level with adherence to best practices and the latest evidence-based medicine.
- **Commitment to Quality**: Demonstrates a commitment to quality for patients, providers, payers, and policymakers.
- **Optimal Treatments**: Focuses on a System of Care approach ensuring optimal treatment and outcomes across the entire system of care.
- **Care Assessment Information**: Meets the requirements of payers and insurers to provide necessary information for the internal assessment of quality care.
- **Quality Improvement**: Improves quality, care coordination, and compliance with national care guidelines.

Program Overview

Key Terms
The following terms are used to describe the accreditation requirements and materials:

- **Capstone**: the over-arching comprehensive accreditation also referred to as Cardiovascular Center of Excellence accreditation administered by AHA.
- **Cornerstones**: the pillar accreditations, some with multiple designations, which are the components in the eligibility requirements for CVCOE accreditation administered by ACC.

The illustration below shows how the Cornerstones support the Cardiovascular Center of Excellence accreditation.
CVCOE Accreditation Standards Overview

Accreditation Standards are split into two sections:

1. **Cornerstone Requirements**: the ACC requirements for each Cornerstone accreditation.
2. **Capstone Standards**: the AHA requirements specifically addressing the Cardiovascular Center of Excellence accreditation.

**Cornerstone Requirements**

Each hospital must have **three of the four Cornerstone accreditations**, or be in the process of obtaining the accreditations to be eligible to apply for the Cardiovascular Center of Excellence accreditation. **Chest Pain Center** is a mandatory cornerstone. In addition, the hospital must have or be working toward two (2) of the following accreditations: **Heart Failure, Atrial Fibrillation** or **Cardiac Cath Lab**.

**Capstone Line Item Criteria**

The additional CVCOE accreditation requirements focus on the following three areas:

a. **Governance**
b. **Systems of Care**
c. **Clinical Quality**

**CVCOE Site Survey**

Hospital Site Survey will be scheduled when the Desk Survey is completed.
Eligibility

General Eligibility Requirements
Hospitals are eligible to apply for Cardiovascular Center of Excellence accreditation by meeting the following general prerequisites:

- **Located within the US**: Hospital is within the United States; or any of its territories; or operated by the US government, or operated under a charter of the US Congress
- **Required Cornerstone Accreditations**: Hospitals must have the minimum required/optional ACC/AHA branded cardiac cornerstone accreditations. This requirement may be waived when hospitals apply during the limited introductory period. See [Limited Introductory Offering](#) for additional information.
- **Participating Hospital Agreement**: Hospital agrees to the terms described in the Participating Hospital Agreement

In addition to the general eligibility requirements outlined above, the hospital’s cardiac service line programs, individually and collectively, must meet the standards described in the [Program Overview](#) section.

Limited Introductory Offering
To encourage early adoption of the Cardiovascular Center of Excellence’s accreditation a limited introductory offering is available for hospitals that;

1. Have current required/optional accreditations (certifications) from a non-ACC accrediting body; or
2. Do not have any current required/optional accreditations (certifications) from ACC/AHA or another accrediting body.

These hospitals must be able to demonstrate substantial equivalency in the interim prior to obtaining the required/optional cornerstone accreditations from ACC/AHA. This option allows for hospitals with stellar programs the ability to apply and become an accredited Cardiovascular Center of Excellence.

To carefully assess hospitals’ readiness to apply for the Cardiovascular Center of Excellence accreditation, the AHA Survey team conducts a Readiness Assessment during the initial application process. The assessment determines the hospital’s reasonable likelihood of success in meeting the equivalency of standardized guideline driven cardiovascular care delivery. Upon successful completion of the Readiness Assessment hospitals can proceed with the full application, survey and CVCOE accreditation review.
The Readiness Assessment requires a deposit from the hospital indicating their commitment to CVCOE accreditation. When successful, hospitals entering CVCOE accreditation through this pathway are accredited on a contingency basis and required to secure the necessary cornerstone accreditations by ACC/AHA prior to renewal to maintain their CVCOE accreditation.

At the time of CVCOE renewal, all ACC/AHA branded cornerstone accreditations must be completed and in good standing before the CVCOE accreditation is renewed. We encourage hospitals who have not received all or any of the cornerstone accreditations to pursue the ACC/AHA branded cardiac service line area specific accreditations.

Duration of Accreditation
Accreditation is active for three years from the date the accreditation is awarded or renewed.

Application Procedure

1. **Eligibility Verification:** Download the Eligibility Verification document from the American Heart Association Accreditation website: [http://www.heart.org/cardiacaccreditation](http://www.heart.org/cardiacaccreditation)
2. **Eligibility Information:** Review the eligibility information on the website and in the downloaded eligibility document.
3. **Create Account:** Enter initial hospital information in the fields provided on the American Heart Association’s Accreditation Web Portal. See the Create Your Account section for instructions on creating your account.
4. **Log In Information:** The AHA Representative reviews the initial account information to determine eligibility. The AHA Rep sends the following information to the hospital’s primary contact, if the hospital meets eligibility requirements.
   a. Standards manual
   b. Readiness Assessment Guide, if applicable
5. **Online Application:** The hospital completes and submits the online application via the American Heart Association’s Web Portal.
6. **Readiness Assessment:** Hospitals that do not currently hold their required ACC/AHA cornerstones will be required to demonstrate their ability for accreditation success during a Readiness Assessment. After the hospital successfully completes the assessment, they may continue in the application process.
7. **Participating Hospital Agreement:** The hospital receives a Participating Hospital Agreement to sign via the e-Sign application.
8. **Completed Participating Hospital Agreement:** The hospital submits their completed agreement form using the e-Sign application. Applications will expire one year from the date received by the AHA, unless notified otherwise by AHA.
9. **Invoice Process:** The invoice process begins when the Participating Hospital Agreement is fully executed.
10. **Payment:** Once payment is received, the application survey process begins.
11. **Submit Supporting Documentation:** Any documentation supporting the standards found in the Standards Manual may be uploaded using the AHA Web Portal.
12. **Desk Survey:** The AHA Representative reviews the hospital supporting documentation to determine if the pre-site review requirements are fulfilled. If there are any questions, the AHA Representative schedules a call, on a mutually agreed upon date, to resolve documentation questions.

13. **Initial Survey Preparation:** If all outstanding questions are resolved during the conference call, the AHA Representative completes the initial survey preparation.

14. **On-Site Survey Scheduled:** The AHA Representative contacts the hospital’s primary contact to schedule the on-site review. The hospital receives advance notice of the on-site review.

### Postponing or Canceling Survey:

In the event the hospital desires to postpone or cancel a scheduled survey, the hospital must provide a 30-day advance notice giving the reason for the request.

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**Creating Your Web Portal Account**

1. Click the **Create Account** link at the top of the screen.

2. Enter the following information in the form provided:
   - **Hospital Primary Contact**
   - **Alternative Contact**
   - **Hospital ID information**

3. Complete the form and click the **Create Account** button at the bottom of the screen.

You will receive an email confirmation of your account request submission.

If approved, the Primary Contact will receive an e-mail confirming access to the portal, the CVCOE Standards, and the Readiness Assessment Guide, if applicable. This process will be completed within three business days.
Appendix A: Checklist
Eligibility Information Checklist

Use this sheet to collect the information needed to create your hospital’s online account.

☐ **Read** through the Eligibility requirements, to verify your hospital is eligible for the accreditation.

☐ **Hospital Primary Contact** Information for the accreditation process contact person.

  ☐ First Name ________________________________________________________
  ☐ Last Name ________________________________________________________
  ☐ Title _____________________________________________________________
  ☐ Email ____________________________________________________________
  ☐ Telephone Number ☐ Extension _________________________________
  ☐ Cell Phone _________________________________
  ☐ Password _________________________________

☐ **Alternative Contact** Information for someone if the primary contact person is unavailable.

  ☐ First Name ________________________________________________________
  ☐ Last Name ________________________________________________________
  ☐ Title _____________________________________________________________
  ☐ Email ____________________________________________________________
  ☐ Telephone Number ☐ Extension _________________________________
  ☐ Cell Phone _________________________________

☐ **Hospital Information** needed to validate the eligibility status.

  ☐ American Hospital Association ID # ________________________________
  ☐ Hospital Name ____________________________________________________
  ☐ Address __________________________________________________________
  ☐ City ☐ State ☐ Zip ________________________________________________

☐ Complete and click the Create Account button to submit the form online.