



NEWS RELEASE

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Media Contact:

Katie Bronk
Corporate Communications
(630) 792-5175
kbronk@jointcommission.org

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Point-of-care ultrasound initiative successful in credentialing emergency physicians

Study in August 2020 issue of The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety

(OAKBROOK TERRACE, Illinois, July 23, 2020) – Point-of-care ultrasound (POCUS) is a valuable tool to help physicians rapidly diagnose conditions at the bedside. As POCUS becomes more widely used, large health care systems are standardizing practice patterns and credentialing physicians in POCUS.

A new study in the August issue of *The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety*, “[Standardizing Point-of-Care Ultrasound Credentialing Across a Large Health Care System](#),” details a multimodal POCUS credentialing initiative for emergency physicians (EPs) at Cleveland Clinic.

The POCUS credentialing initiative was implemented across 11 hospitals in the health care system between January 1, 2017 and July 1, 2018 and included:

- Standardization of POCUS credentialing for all hospitals in the system
- Tiered POCUS credentialing (Basic and Intermediate) for manageable attainment of goals with a required POCUS course
- Automatic privileges for EPs who completed residency of practice-based POCUS pathways prior to employment
- Implementation of a practice-based pathway for competency assessment for non-credentialed physicians

Key factors for implementation included executive administrative support, dedicated POCUS courses, equipment standardization, a robust electronic medical record capable of logging training scans and competency assessment for attainment of privileges.

Through the initiative, 78 out of 106 EPs achieved Intermediate credentialing. The remaining 28 EPs completed the required Basic POCUS course – with 13 EPs completing the initiative to become credentialed. From 2016 to 2018, the number of EPs performing scans increased from 52 to 112, and the number of POCUS scans increased from 928 to 3,007.

“We commend [the study authors] on the successful development of an ambitious credentialing initiative that credentialed a large cohort of emergency physicians in a short period of time,” notes an [accompanying editorial](#). “Replication and expansion of similar initiatives to other EDs, hospital systems and specialties should improve provider competence, medical decision making, revenue capture, and ultimately, the quality and safety of our patient care.”

Also featured in the August issue:

- [A Comparison of Estimated Cost Savings from Potential Reductions in Hospital-Acquired Conditions to Levied Penalties Under the CMS Hospital-Acquired Condition Reduction Program](#) (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan)
- [Enhancing Collaborative Learning for Quality Improvement: Evidence from the Improving Clinical Flow Project, a Breakthrough Series Collaborative with Project ECHO](#) (15 Federally Qualified Health Center sites across United States)
- [The Effect of *Clostridioides difficile* Diagnostic Stewardship Interventions on the Diagnosis of Hospital-Onset *Clostridioides difficile* Infections](#) (University of California, San Diego Health)
- [Lessons Learned from Efforts to Reduce Overuse of Cardiac Telemetry Monitoring](#) (Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Nashville, Tennessee)
- [Communication with Health Care Workers Regarding Health Care–Associated Exposure to Coronavirus 2019: A Checklist to Facilitate Disclosure](#) (Brigham and Women’s Hospital, Boston)
- [Communication with Patients and Families Regarding Health Care–Associated Exposure to Coronavirus 2019: A Checklist to Facilitate Disclosure](#) (Brigham and Women’s Hospital, Boston)

For more information, visit [The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety website](#).

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Note for editors

The article is “[Standardizing Point-of-Care Ultrasound Credentialing Across a Large Health Care System](#)” by Courtney M. Smalley, MD; Baruch S. Fertel, MD, MPA; and Erin Broderick, MD. The article appears in *The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety*, volume 46, number 8 (August 2020), published by Elsevier.

The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety

[The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety](#) (JQPS) is a peer-reviewed journal providing health care professionals with innovative thinking, strategies and practices in improving quality and safety in health care. JQPS is the official journal of [The Joint Commission](#) and [Joint Commission Resources, Inc.](#) Original case studies, program or project reports, reports of new methodologies or the new application of methodologies, research studies, and commentaries on issues and practices are all considered.