

## § 488.3

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### § 488.3 Conditions of participation, conditions for coverage, conditions for certification and long term care requirements.

(a) *Basic rules.* To be approved for participation in, or coverage under, the Medicare program, a prospective provider or supplier must meet the following:

(1) Meet the applicable statutory definitions in section 1138(b), 1819, 1820, 1832(a)(2)(C), 1832(a)(2)(F), 1832(a)(2)(J), 1834(e), 1861, 1881, 1883, 1891, 1913 or 1919 of the Act.

(2) Be in compliance with the applicable conditions, certification requirements, or long term care requirements prescribed in part 405 subparts U or X, part 410 subpart E, part 416, part 418 subpart C, parts 482 through 486, part 491 subpart A, or part 494 of this chapter.

(b) *Special conditions.* The Secretary shall consult with state agencies and national AOs, as applicable, to develop CoP, CfC, conditions for certification and long term care requirements.

(1) The Secretary may, at a state's request, approve health and safety requirements for providers or suppliers in the state that exceed Medicare program requirements.

(2) If a state or political subdivision imposes requirements on institutions (that exceed the Medicare program requirements) as a condition for the purchase of health services under a state Medicaid plan approved under title XIX of the Act, (or if Guam, Puerto Rico, or the Virgin Islands does so under a state plan for Old Age Assistance under title I of the Act, or for Aid to the Aged, Blind, and Disabled under the original title XVI of the Act), the Secretary imposes similar requirements as a condition for payment under Medicare in that state or political subdivision.

[80 FR 29835, May 22, 2015]

### § 488.4 General rules for a CMS-approved accreditation program for providers and suppliers.

(a) The following requirements apply when a national accrediting organization has applied for CMS approval of a provider or supplier accreditation program and CMS has found that the program provides reasonable assurance for

providers or suppliers accredited under the program:

(1) When a provider or supplier demonstrates full compliance with all of the accreditation program requirements of the accrediting organization's CMS-approved accreditation program, the accrediting organization may recommend that CMS grant deemed status to the provider or supplier.

(2) CMS may deem the provider or supplier, excluding kidney transplant centers within a hospital and ESRD facilities, to be in compliance with the applicable Medicare conditions or requirements. The deemed status provider or supplier is subject to validation surveys as provided at § 488.9.

(b) [Reserved]

[80 FR 29835, May 22, 2015]

### § 488.5 Application and re-application procedures for national accrediting organizations.

(a) *Information submitted with application.* A national accrediting organization applying to CMS for approval or re-approval of an accreditation program under § 488.4 must furnish CMS with all of the following information and materials to demonstrate that the program provides reasonable assurance that the entities accredited under the program meet or exceed the applicable Medicare conditions or requirements. This information must include the following:

(1) Documentation that demonstrates the organization meets the definition of a "national accrediting organization" under § 488.1 as it relates to the accreditation program.

(2) The type of provider or supplier accreditation program for which the organization is requesting approval or re-approval.

(3) A detailed crosswalk (in table format) that identifies, for each of the applicable Medicare conditions or requirements, the exact language of the organization's comparable accreditation requirements and standards.

(4) A detailed description of the organization's survey process to confirm that a provider or supplier meets or exceeds the Medicare program requirements. This description must include all of the following information:

(i) Frequency of surveys performed and an agreement by the organization to re-survey every accredited provider or supplier, through unannounced surveys, no later than 36 months after the prior accreditation effective date, including an explanation of how the accrediting organization will maintain the schedule it proposes. If there is a statutorily-mandated survey interval of less than 36 months, the organization must indicate how it will adhere to the statutory schedule.

(ii) Documentation demonstrating the comparability of the organization's survey process and surveyor guidance to those required for state survey agencies conducting federal Medicare surveys for the same provider or supplier type, in accordance with the applicable requirements or conditions of participation or conditions for coverage or certification.

(iii) Copies of the organization's survey forms, guidelines, and instructions to surveyors.

(iv) Documentation demonstrating that the organization's survey reports identify, for each finding of non-compliance with accreditation standards, the comparable Medicare CoP, CfC, conditions for certification, or requirements.

(v) Description of the organization's accreditation survey review process.

(vi) Description of the organization's procedures and timelines for notifying surveyed facilities of non-compliance with the accreditation program's standards.

(vii) Description of the organization's procedures and timelines for monitoring the provider's or supplier's correction of identified non-compliance with the accreditation program's standards.

(viii) A statement acknowledging that, as a condition for CMS approval of a national accrediting organization's accreditation program, the organization agrees to provide CMS with information extracted from each accreditation survey for a specified provider or supplier as part of its data submissions required under paragraph (a)(11)(ii) of this section, a copy of all survey reports and related information for applicants seeking initial participation in Medicare, and, upon request from CMS,

a copy of the most recent accreditation survey for a specified provider or supplier, together with any other information related to the survey as CMS may require (including corrective action plans).

(ix) A statement acknowledging that the accrediting organization will provide timely notification to CMS when an accreditation survey or complaint investigation identifies an immediate jeopardy as that term is defined at § 489.3 of this chapter. Using the format specified by CMS, the accrediting organization must notify CMS within two business days from the date the accrediting organization identifies the immediate jeopardy.

(5) The criteria for determining the size and composition of the organization's survey teams for the type of provider or supplier to be accredited, including variations in team size and composition for individual provider or supplier surveys.

(6) The overall adequacy of the number of the organization's surveyors, including how the organization will increase the size of the survey staff to match growth in the number of accredited facilities while maintaining re-accreditation intervals for existing accredited facilities.

(7) A description of the education and experience requirements surveyors must meet.

(8) A description of the content and frequency of the organization's in-service training it provides to survey personnel.

(9) A description of the organization's evaluation systems used to monitor the performance of individual surveyors and survey teams.

(10) The organization's policies and procedures to avoid conflicts of interest, including the appearance of conflicts of interest, involving individuals who conduct surveys or participate in accreditation decisions.

(11) A description of the organization's data management and analysis system for its surveys and accreditation decisions, including all of the following:

(i) A detailed description of how the organization uses its data to assure the

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compliance of its accreditation program with the Medicare program requirements.

(ii) A statement acknowledging that the organization agrees to submit timely, accurate, and complete data to support CMS's evaluation of the accrediting organization's performance. Data to be submitted includes, but is not limited to, accredited provider or supplier identifying information, survey schedules, survey findings, and notices of accreditation decisions. The organization must submit necessary data according to the instructions and timeframes CMS specifies.

(12) The organization's procedures for responding to, and investigating, complaints against accredited facilities, including policies and procedures regarding referrals when applicable to appropriate licensing bodies and ombudsman programs.

(13) The organization's accreditation status decision-making process, including its policies and procedures for granting, withholding, or removing accreditation status for facilities that fail to meet the accrediting organization's standards or requirements, assignment of less than full accreditation status or other actions taken by the organization in response to non-compliance with its standards and requirements. The organization must furnish the following:

(i) A description of all types and categories of accreditation decisions associated with the program for which approval is sought, including the duration of each.

(ii) A statement acknowledging that the organization agrees to notify CMS (in a manner CMS specifies) of any decision to revoke, withdraw, or revise the accreditation status of a specific deemed status provider or supplier, within three business days from the date the organization takes an action.

(14) A list of all facilities currently accredited by the organization under the program for which CMS approval is sought, including the type and category of accreditation currently held by each provider or supplier, and the expiration date of each provider's or supplier's current accreditation.

(15) A schedule of all surveys expected to be conducted by the organiza-

tion for the accreditation program under review during the 6-month period following submission of the application.

(16) The three most recent audited financial statements of the organization that demonstrate that the organization's staffing, funding, and other resources are adequate to perform the required surveys and related activities.

(17) A statement that it will:

(i) Provide written notification to CMS and to all providers or suppliers accredited under a CMS-approved accreditation program at least 90 calendar days in advance of the effective date of a decision by the organization to voluntarily terminate its CMS-approved accreditation program, including the implications for their deemed status in accordance with § 488.8(g)(2);

(ii) Adhere to the requirements for written notice to its accredited providers or suppliers at § 488.8(e) in the case of an involuntary termination; and

(iii) Include a written statement that if a fully accredited and deemed facility in good standing provides written notification that they wish to voluntarily withdraw from the accrediting organization's CMS-approved accreditation program, the accrediting organization must continue the facility's current accreditation in full force and effect until the effective date of withdrawal identified by the facility or the expiration date of the term of accreditation, whichever comes first.

(18) A statement that it will provide written notification to CMS of any proposed changes in the organization's CMS-approved accreditation program and that it agrees not to implement the proposed changes without prior written notice of continued program approval from CMS except as provided for at § 488.8(b)(2).

(19) A statement that, in response to a written notice from CMS to the organization of a change in the applicable conditions or requirements or in the survey process, the organization will provide CMS with proposed corresponding changes in the organization's requirements for its CMS-approved accreditation program to ensure continued comparability with the CMS conditions or requirements or survey

process. The organization must comply with the following requirements:

(i) The proposed changes must be submitted within 30 calendar days of the date of the written CMS notice to the organization or by a date specified in the notice, whichever is later. CMS will give due consideration to an organization's request for an extension of the deadline.

(ii) The proposed changes will not be implemented without prior written notice of continued program approval from CMS, except as provided for at § 488.8(b)(1)(iv).

(20) A statement acknowledging that, as a condition for CMS's approval of an accreditation program, the organization will agree to permit its surveyors to serve as witnesses in a legal proceeding if CMS takes an adverse action against a provider or supplier on the basis of the organization's accreditation survey findings, and will cooperate with CMS to make surveyors and other staff available when needed.

(21) A statement acknowledging that the organization agrees to make all Medicare cited deficiencies, both standard and condition level, immediate jeopardy situations, and dates of correction, for final accreditation survey reports publicly available on the organization's Web site within 90 days after the survey report is made available to those facilities for the most recent 3 years, on an ongoing basis in a manner specified by CMS. This acknowledgement includes all initial, triennial, full, follow-up, focused, and complaint surveys.

(b) *Additional information needed.* If CMS determines that additional information is necessary to make a determination for approval or denial of the organization's initial application or re-application for CMS's approval of an accreditation program, CMS will notify the organization and afford it an opportunity to provide the additional information.

(c)(1) *Withdrawing an application.* An accrediting organization may withdraw its initial application for CMS's approval of its accreditation program at any time before CMS publishes the final notice described in paragraph (e)(2) of this section.

(2) *Voluntary termination of a CMS-approved accreditation program.* An accrediting organization may voluntarily terminate its CMS-approved accreditation program at any time. The accrediting organization must notify CMS of its decision to voluntarily terminate its approved accreditation program at least 90 calendar days in advance of the effective date of the termination. In accordance with the requirement at § 488.4(a)(17)(i), the accrediting organization must also provide written notice at least 90 days in advance of the effective date of the termination to each of its deemed status providers or suppliers.

(d) *Re-submitting a request.* (1) Except as provided in paragraph (d)(2) of this section, an organization whose request for CMS's approval or re-approval of an accreditation program has been denied may resubmit its application if the organization satisfies all of the following requirements:

(i) Revises its accreditation program to address the issues related to the denial of its previous request.

(ii) Demonstrates that it can provide reasonable assurance.

(iii) Resubmits the application in its entirety.

(2) If an accrediting organization has requested, in accordance with subpart D of this part, a reconsideration of CMS's determination that its request for approval of an accreditation program is denied, it may not submit a new application for approval of an accreditation program for the type of provider or supplier at issue in the reconsideration until the reconsideration is administratively final.

(e) *Public notice and comment.* CMS publishes a notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER when the following conditions are met:

(1) *Proposed notice.* When CMS receives a complete application from a national accrediting organization seeking CMS's approval of an accreditation program, it publishes a proposed notice. The proposed notice identifies the organization and the type of providers or suppliers to be covered by the accreditation program and provides 30 calendar days for the public to submit comments to CMS.

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(2) *Final notice.* When CMS decides to approve or disapprove a national accrediting organization's application, it publishes a final notice within 210 calendar days from the date CMS determines the AO's application was complete, unless the application was for a skilled nursing facility accreditation program. There is no timeframe for publication of a final notice for a national accrediting organization's application for approval of a skilled nursing facility accreditation program. The final notice specifies the basis for the CMS decision.

(i) *Approval or re-approval.* If CMS approves or re-approves the accrediting organization's accreditation program, the final notice describes how the accreditation program provides reasonable assurance. The final notice specifies the effective date and term of the approval (which may not be later than the publication date of the notice and which will not exceed 6 years).

(ii) *Disapproval.* If CMS does not approve the accrediting organization's accreditation program, the final notice describes, except in the case of a skilled nursing facility accreditation program, how the organization fails to provide reasonable assurance. In the case of an application for a skilled nursing facility accreditation program, disapproval may be based on the program's failure to provide reasonable assurance, or on CMS's decision to exercise its discretion in accordance with section 1865(a)(1)(B) of the Act. The final notice specifies the effective date of the decision.

[80 FR 29835, May 22, 2015, as amended at 82 FR 38516, Aug. 14, 2017; 82 FR 46143, Oct. 4, 2017; 83 FR 56631, Nov. 13, 2018]

### **§ 488.6 Providers or suppliers that participate in the Medicaid program under a CMS-approved accreditation program.**

A provider or supplier that has been granted "deemed status" by CMS by virtue of its accreditation from a CMS-approved accreditation program is eligible to participate in the Medicaid program if they are not required under Medicaid regulations to comply with any requirements other than Medicare participation requirements.

[80 FR 29837, May 22, 2015]

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### **§ 488.7 Release and use of accreditation surveys.**

A Medicare participating provider or supplier deemed to meet program requirements in accordance with § 488.4 must authorize its accrediting organization to release to CMS a copy of its most current accreditation survey and any information related to the survey that CMS may require (including, but not limited to, corrective action plans).

(a) CMS may determine that a provider or supplier does not meet the applicable Medicare conditions or requirements on the basis of its own investigation of the accreditation survey or any other information related to the survey.

(b) With the exception of home health agency surveys, general disclosure of an accrediting organization's survey information is prohibited under section 1865(b) of the Act. CMS may publically disclose an accreditation survey and information related to the survey, upon written request, to the extent that the accreditation survey and survey information are related to an enforcement action taken by CMS.

[80 FR 29837, May 22, 2015]

### **§ 488.8 Ongoing review of accrediting organizations.**

(a) *Performance review.* In accordance with section 1875(b) of the Act, CMS evaluates the performance of each CMS-approved accreditation program on an ongoing basis. This review includes, but is not limited to the following:

(1) Review of the organization's survey activity.

(2) Analysis of the results of the validation surveys under § 488.9(a)(1), including the rate of disparity between certifications of the accrediting organization and certifications of the SA.

(3) Review of the organization's continued fulfillment of the requirements in § 488.5(a).

(b) *Comparability review.* CMS assesses the equivalency of an accrediting organization's CMS-approved program requirements to the comparable Medicare requirements if the following conditions exist: