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- + Innovations Center
- + Marketing and Planning Leadership Council
- + Nursing Executive Center
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- Staffing/Operations
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- IC Teleconferences
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- Finance Watch
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Daily Briefing

JCAHO implements unannounced hospital inspection policy

03/06/2006

Although **JCAHO** historically has notified hospitals several months before a review, the health care accrediting organization in January began making the routine surveys “pop-quiz” events in hopes of collecting more accurate data and preventing facilities from skewing their results with last-minute preparations, the *Nashville Business Journal* reports. Because hospitals are generally surveyed every three years, JCAHO officials say some facilities “ramp up about six months to a year before the triennial survey date,” which could allow some “things [to] slip prior to that ramp-up date.” However, under the new policy, hospitals are notified the day of the survey, with some inspections taking place “at least nine months ahead of providers’ anniversary dates.” Inspectors examine documentation and walk the hospital floors to inspect patient charts to determine how patients with “extensive hospitalization” have “matriculated through the hospital.” By reviewing records and speaking with hospital workers, JCAHO hopes to determine if there is “appropriate communication between the various departments treating patients.” A partner at a Brentwood, Tenn.-based consulting firm says that requiring hospitals to be ready for an inspection at all times will drive facilities to “provide better care” on a more consistent basis because a bad review “could imperil [their] financial future” (Moore, 3/3).

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