

"Don't Let Disruptive Physicians Hurt Your Accreditation"

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As of Jan. 1, 2009, The Joint Commission will require hospitals seeking accreditation to comply with new standards addressing "intimidating and disruptive behaviors" by workers in a healthcare setting. Hospitals must implement codes of conduct that define "acceptable and disruptive and inappropriate behaviors" as well as a process for "managing disruptive and inappropriate behaviors." Additionally, **The Joint Commission's Medical Staff credentialing process will add interpersonal skills and professionalism to its core competencies.** Hospitals need to take into consideration different employee categories and the fact that they are governed by different bylaws or regulations. Hospitals also should ensure non-physician staff complies with rules set forth by the hospital's human resources department, while employed physicians have employment contracts in place. While specific procedures that take into account each employee category are necessary, experts insist they should be aligned with the regulations governing other staff. Additionally, hospitals should spell out the stages of intervention, who is responsible for disciplinary actions and the safeguards in place to protect those who report disruptive behavior.