



Next Steps to Success: Distinguish Your Center with Accreditation

■ LAUREL STOIMENOFF, PT, CHC

As on-demand healthcare continues to grow, accreditation from the Urgent Care Association of America can differentiate you from the pack. UCAOA's is the only accreditation that recognizes and requires a distinct urgent care scope of services.

UCAOA also offers certification, either exclusively or for those on the path toward accreditation. Certification is based solely on the scope of services. UCAOA has recently expanded its certification options to recognize the seasonal-, rural- and occupational medicine-focused urgent care centers.

Centers meeting criteria for accreditation are dually recognized as Certified and Accredited.

Why Pursue UCAOA Accreditation?

When accreditation standards become routine practice, centers benefit from unanticipated efficiencies; including staff in the values of quality and safety may foster more engaged, customer-focused employees. Similarly, achieving accreditation requires teamwork that generates a sense of pride and accomplishment.

Examples of key quality and safety procedures required to achieve accreditation include:

- Verification of patient identity before providing care
- Precautions to prevent medical errors
- An overarching quality plan
- An infection control and prevention plan
- Demonstration of integrated care processes

In addition, accreditation demonstrates that centers have achieved excellence in eight critical areas:

1. Patient care processes
2. Patient privacy/rights/responsibilities

3. Scope of care
4. Physical environment
5. Health record management
6. Quality improvement
7. Governance
8. Human resources

UCAOA Accreditation is a trustworthy “seal of approval” for patients armed with mobile devices—and instant access to patient reviews. Accredited centers undergo site surveys to ensure they meet established and defined standards, giving patients the confidence that the center has demonstrated its commitment to excellence. Accredited centers market their achievement to payers and networks, as well as prospective referral sources such as pharmacists, physicians, school nurses, employers, and risk managers.

Members have told us some health plans require accreditation for new urgent care centers. With more intending to do the same, applications for accreditation are on the rise.

Medical malpractice insurance carriers are recognizing UCAOA Accreditation for its impact on quality and safety, with some offering organizations a risk management credit of 2.5% to 15% once accreditation is attained.

Not Ready to Commit? Consider UCAOA Certification

While it is most cost-effective to pursue certification at the same time as accreditation, the UCAOA Certified Urgent Care program can be a first step toward accreditation. It affirms the urgent care center's scope of practice meets UCAOA criteria for easy access and scope of services. In one state, certification allows the urgent care center to receive higher reimbursement through the state's workers' compensation fee schedule.

UCAOA is proud of the centers who have attained certification and accreditation. There are many ways to demonstrate a commitment to quality and safety, but we can assure you these individuals are doing their part to raise the bar! ■



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