

Acquiring Accreditation FAQ: AAAHC Survey Information

Q. Who performs the accreditation surveys?

A. Accreditation Association surveyors are volunteer physicians, dentists, podiatrists, pharmacists, nurses and administrators who are actively involved in ambulatory health care. Only experienced professionals who meet stringent recruitment qualifications are selected in a rigorous application process. Training programs for new surveyors are held regularly to ensure an adequate number of surveyors to meet the survey volume.

Q. What does the Accreditation Association look for when surveying an ambulatory health care organization?

A. When surveying an organization, AAAHC observes patient care during a procedure or surgery; reviews an organization's procedural manuals, charts, personnel files, and other records; and speaks with patients, physicians and office personnel to ensure the organization meets the AAAHC's standards for quality health care.

Q. How long does a survey take?

A. Depending on the organization's type, size and range of services offered, a survey can take from one to a few days to complete, and may be performed by one or more surveyors.

Q. What is the fee for the accreditation survey?

A. The fee for an accreditation survey ranges from around \$4,000 for an office-based practice to several thousand dollars for a bigger practice where several types of procedures are performed.

Q. What happens after the on-site survey?

A. Accreditation Association staff members review the survey report, surveyor recommendations, including the survey team's overall recommendation regarding accreditation, and any other relevant information, and make an independent recommendation to the Accreditation Committee of the AAAHC. The Accreditation Committee, active AAAHC surveyors who are board and non-board members, review each survey report and surveyor and staff recommendations before making a final decision.

Q. What happens if an organization does not succeed in meeting the AAAHC standards and is deferred or denied accreditation?

A. An organization that is not granted accreditation may apply for another survey.



Q. How long does accreditation last?

A. AAAHC awards an organization accreditation for three years when it concludes that the organization is in substantial compliance with the standards, and the committee has no reservations about the organization's commitment to continue providing high-quality care. The AAAHC awards an organization accreditation for one year when a portion of the organization's operations are acceptable but other areas need to be addressed and the organization requires sufficient time to achieve compliance. A six-month term of accreditation is awarded when an organization is in substantial compliance with the standards but is not eligible for a three year term because it does not meet certain requirements, e.g., the organization has not been operating for six months.

Q. How is accreditation maintained?

A. Organizations must undergo full, regular surveys at least once every three years.

Q. How many organizations have received AAAHC accreditation?

A. The Accreditation Association currently accredits more than 3,600 organizations.