Advisory Notices are designed to provide official information relative to Hospital Accreditation, Certification, and Compliance activities. Should you have any questions about the content of this notice, please e-mail dnvclientdropbox@dnvgl.com.

DATE: March 11, 2020
SUBJECT: Clarification of DNV GL Healthcare survey plans in light of COVID-19, for accredited hospitals and critical access hospitals

DISTRIBUTION: All DNV GL Healthcare Accredited or Certified Hospitals, Applicant Hospitals, DNV GL Healthcare Employees, and Interested Parties

APPROVED BY: Patrick Horine, Chief Executive Officer

On March 4, CMS published QSO-20-12-ALL and other guidance documents on controlling the spread of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) in US healthcare facilities and other Medicare-participating programs. In ongoing consultation with the CMS Quality, Safety and Oversight Group (QSO), DNV GL Healthcare has proposed a series of changes to our accreditation surveys and survey process which will allow us to continue with annual and reaccreditation surveys, prioritized complaint surveys, follow-ups, initial accreditations, and special surveys such as changes-of-ownership, facility replacements or service extensions.

CMS has accepted DNV GL’s proposed changes and our surveys are proceeding on schedule. Effective immediately, DNV GL Healthcare surveyors will place increased emphasis on infection risk and emergency preparedness, using enhanced tools and training based on authoritative guidance from CMS and CDC. Survey team assignments and projected time onsite for routine activities will not change. CMS has acknowledged that these surveys will continue to be recognized for purposes of deemed status. As always, accreditation surveys must remain unannounced.

Announced surveys for DNV GL Certification Programs such as Stroke, Cardiac or Orthopaedic service lines, ISO 9001 audits, and Onsite Training Courses will continue on the agreed schedule.

DNV GL Healthcare shares in the CMS commitment to controlling the spread of infectious disease and protecting against all threats to patient health and safety. Our purpose of Safeguarding Life, Property and The Environment extends to protecting hospital staff, contractors, visitors and communities, along with our own surveyors and their families. We must balance the CMS requirement to ensure compliance in accredited hospitals with the guidance of local authorities and individual hospital circumstances when planning surveys.

DNV GL North America has established a crisis team that meets daily to protect our employees and contractors and minimize risks that could affect the health or safety of our teams or our customers. To our knowledge, no DNV GL Healthcare surveyors are affected by COVID-19, however surveyors with fever, respiratory symptoms, or known exposure to COVID-19 will not participate in survey activities.

CMS is also requiring accreditation organizations to consider COVID-19 cases when determining the prioritization of surveys and to ensure surveyors’ preparedness. To facilitate this communication, DNV GL accredited hospitals are asked to report the presence of presumptive-positive or confirmed cases of
COVID-19 to DNV GL via e-mail notification to dnvclientdropbox@dnvgl.com. It is not necessary to provide details of the case(s), and a single notification is adequate to communicate the organization’s status for this purpose.

DNV GL Healthcare participates in daily conferences with CMS and other accreditation organizations to share experience, understand new guidance, and address the implications of these changes for our customers. Conditions and guidance are changing continually, and any additional procedure changes resulting from these calls will be communicated as soon as they can be implemented.

We encourage healthcare organizations to monitor the CDC, CMS QSO Policy & Memos to States and Regions, and enroll in MLN Connects for continually updated information affecting hospitals and healthcare providers.

Additional CMS Memos applicable to COVID-19 in Hospitals & Critical Access Hospitals as of 3/10/2020:
- QSO-20-13-Hospitals Considerations for Patient Triage, Placement and Hospital Discharge
- QSO-20-15-Hospital/CAH EMTALA Requirements and Implications Related to COVID-19
- QSO-20-17-ALL Guidance on PPE supply, isolation, shortages, and industrial respirators

Any questions/ comments can be forwarded to the DNV GL Client Drop Box: DNVclientdropbox@dnvgl.com

Regards,
For DNV GL Healthcare USA, Inc.

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