

Spotlight on Success

Metro Specialty Surgical Center



Located in Jeffersonville, Indiana – right across the Ohio River from Louisville, KY – Metro Specialty Surgery Center is in a highly competitive market with three major hospital systems nearby. Switching accreditation to Joint Commission is one way they chose to stand out. We spoke with Katie Arnold, Administrator at Metro Specialty Surgery Center, to get her take on Joint Commission accreditation and why she switched.

Q: Why did your organization choose to pursue Joint Commission accreditation?

A: When I became the Administrator of Metro Specialty five years ago, I was told that I could decide who we would be accredited by. I had been the clinical manager back when we were accredited by another well-known organization several years earlier. I chose instead to move to The Joint Commission because it's the gold standard in the industry. Its name is more widely recognized by patients. I was also interested in The Joint Commission because of the certifications that they offer like Spine Surgery Certification, which we will be looking into soon.

Q: What were the most noticeable differences from your previous accreditor?

A: Right away I found The Joint Commission to be more user friendly – the people I dealt with genuinely cared about making the whole process easy and predictable. You know, when people in our industry hear the name “Joint Commission” they tend to seize up with anxiety – but we found out that the Joint Commission people I worked with were on my team; they wanted us to succeed, and they were invested in our success. I just loved that.

I also liked the fast turnaround after survey. The other accrediting organization was more elusive about when we would get our results. But The Joint Commission said to expect our results two weeks after survey and that's when we got them.

Our Joint Commission surveyor, Anna, had a very relevant background in our area – something that was missing from our previous surveyor. She was so friendly and knowledgeable that my staff joked, “Can we keep her?”

**Katie Arnold, Administrator at
Metro Specialty Surgery Center**

Q: Let's talk about the survey. How was your onsite review experience?

A: First of all, Brian, our account executive really held my hand through the entire process. He was quick to respond to questions and made me feel like I was his only customer. Then our surveyor, Anna, had a very relevant background in our area – something that was missing from our previous surveyor. She was so friendly and knowledgeable that my staff joked, “Can we keep her?” She was very honest about what to expect from our first survey, and she gave us tips that I still use now and pass along to colleagues.

For example, even though we were pretty solid on infection control, she went through it and provided input on how to do it even better. She suggested ways to make it more visual for surveyors with graphs and charts. The previous surveyor from the other accrediting organization was not as specialized and didn't seem as knowledgeable about the business that we do here.

Q: What organizational advantages or improvements derive from Joint Commission Accreditation?

A: I really like how the results are provided. I think the Joint Commission Survey Analysis for Evaluating Risk™ (SAFER™) Matrix is brilliant. In the past, we would get survey citations and feel sort of inundated, which was hard to sort out. The Joint Commission's approach for identifying and communicating risk levels associated with deficiencies cited during a survey makes it much easier to prioritize what needs to be addressed first.

I think the systems we have in place are more fluid now because I have the accreditation manual and we can easily just look up the standard when we have a question. There's no guesswork anymore; The Joint Commission has an algorithm for everything. It makes us feel more confident. (In fact, I bring my standards manual home to study so often that my kids call me a nerd.)

We placed the Joint Commission Gold Seal of Approval® in our waiting area and we've had a few patients say that they recognize it and that's always a good thing.

Q. What advice would you offer a colleague who is considering switching to Joint Commission Accreditation?

A. Well, Metro Specialty is part of a larger organization that owns/operates more than 150 ambulatory surgical centers – and each administrator is given the freedom to decide which accreditation organization they want to work with. I tell my colleagues who ask my opinion that The Joint Commission is the way to go. They have more rigorous standards, the process is more user-friendly, and it's all laid out for you in the standards manual in a non-intimidating way.

RESULTS



INVESTMENT IN QUALITY

Joint Commission accreditation helps us achieve high quality care



LEARNING BEST PRACTICES

Collaborative surveyors bring new ideas to our organization



STANDARDIZING CARE

Joint Commission standards provide a framework for consistent excellence across our entire continuum of care



IMPROVED REIMBURSEMENT

Financial benefits have included better reimbursement from payors and expanded contracting opportunities

For more information on Joint Commission Ambulatory Care Accreditation, please call (630) 792-5286 or email ahc@jointcommission.org.

