

On the Road to Accreditation: Preparing for Your Site Survey

BY WENDY S. MILLER, BOCO

FACILITY ACCREDITATION VERIFIES THAT YOUR BUSINESS MEETS STANDARDS ESTABLISHED BY THE CENTERS FOR MEDICARE AND MEDICAID SERVICES (CMS). TO BECOME ACCREDITED BY THE BOARD OF CERTIFICATION/ACCREDITATION, INTERNATIONAL (BOC), YOU WILL BEGIN BY COMPLETING AN APPLICATION ATTESTING TO YOUR COMPLIANCE WITH THE BOC FACILITY ACCREDITATION STANDARDS. THESE STANDARDS ENCOMPASS CMS REQUIREMENTS AND INCLUDE ADDITIONAL STANDARDS THAT WE HAVE DETERMINED ESSENTIAL TO PROVIDE QUALITY SERVICE TO PATIENTS AND BENEFICIARIES. YOUR COMPLIANCE WILL BE CONFIRMED BY A BOC REPRESENTATIVE DURING AN UNANNOUNCED VISIT TO YOUR FACILITY, OFTEN REFERRED TO AS A SITE SURVEY.

“We’ve sent in our application and a notice arrived, telling us our site survey will be happening soon! I think I’m ready, but how can I be sure?”

In my more than 20 years in the durable medical equipment and orthotics and prosthetics industries, I have heard this question many times. BOC’s facility accreditation process is designed to be as straightforward as possible, but it does require careful preparation on your part. Below are a few hints based on the most common areas for correction identified by BOC’s facility accreditation site surveyors.

Patient Care

First, make sure it is evident you are looking out for your patients in all you do. There should be a separate patient waiting area and the chairs there should have armrests. In the patients’ rest room, there should be appropriate handrails and don’t forget to check the soap and towel dispensers and make sure they are not empty. Your fitting and consultation tables and chairs must have disposable covers and/or surfaces that are readily disinfected.

Safety

Your lab area should meet Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards, and protective gloves, safety goggles and proper ventilation should be evident. Flammable material should be stored properly, and be ready to show the surveyor your protective equipment and procedures to meet bloodborne and other pathogen control regulations.

Interior Signage

Phone numbers for patient complaints should be on display. BOC accredits all durable medical equipment, prosthetics, orthotics and supplies product categories, and you will need to provide evidence of training, certification and other requirements, depending on the product categories for which you are seeking accreditation. Required licenses, registrations and certificates must be posted in public view.

Facility's Exterior

Help your surveyor find you with a clearly marked sign identifying your facility, which includes your street number and full address. Before your surveyor enters your facility, make sure he or she will see clearly marked handicapped parking spaces and that the wheelchair entrance is well-

marked and in good repair. All entrances, doorways, hallways and public areas must meet Americans with Disabilities Act standards.

Privacy

Patient file cabinets need to lock or be stored in a secure area. Fitting and consultation rooms must assure privacy through the use of curtains, doors or privacy screens. Both the reception area and the business office should be separate from the patient fitting area.

If you can check off every item listed here as "done!" will that guarantee accreditation? No, but this list will help you avoid a lot of the deficiencies that trip up otherwise-prepared sites.

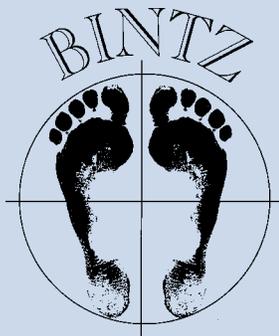
I would be happy to send you BOC's helpful "Personnel requirements for

DMEPOS Product Categories." For that list and/or a free one-page checklist to help you prepare for your site survey, please e-mail me at wendy.miller@bocusa.org. ■



Wendy Miller, BOCO, facility accreditation director of the Board of Certification/Accreditation, International (BOC), has more than 20 years of experience in the DME

and O & P industries. Prior to joining the BOC staff, she served on the board of directors for six years, where she helped create the orthotic fitter and mastectomy fitter programs. She also contributed as a test developer for the BOC Orthotist, COF and CMF exams. Miller spent 16 years of her career working for DMEPOS suppliers and has been a BOC Orthotist since 1994.



COMFORT PRODUCTS

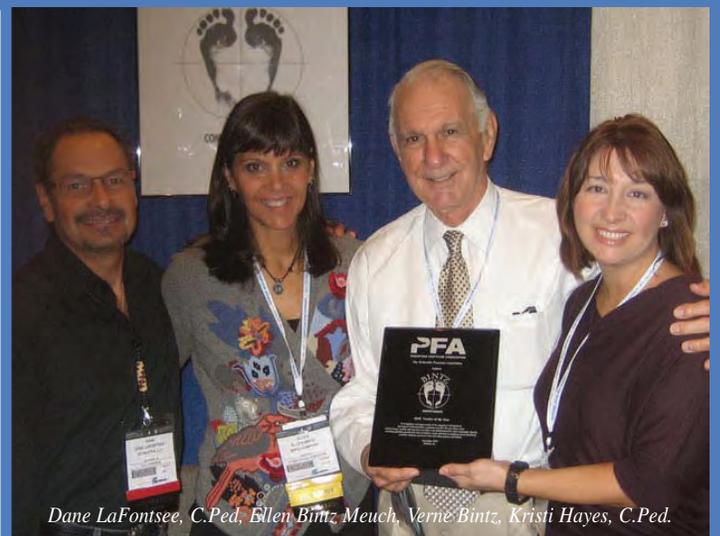
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