

## IPSG.2.1

The April issue of JCI Insight identified the top scored measurable elements for the Joint Commission International Accreditation Standards for Hospitals and Academic Medical Centers (AMC), 6<sup>th</sup> edition for surveys conducted in 2018. The frequently cited measurable element that tied for fourth place with QPS.4.1ME1 was IPSG.2.1 ME1 “The hospital has defined critical values for each type of diagnostic test.” A key concept in this measurable element is that a critical value is defined as a variance from normal range that represents a high-risk or life-threatening situation unless some action is taken in a short amount of time. This differs from an abnormal result or value, which is defined as a result that is outside of the expected range for the test but is not an immediate threat. The intent elaborates on the types of diagnostic tests, which includes but is not limited to laboratory tests, including point of care testing (POCT), radiology, nuclear medicine, and ultrasound examinations performed in the department or at bedside, MRI, CAT scans, and cardiac diagnostic testing. Organizations are encouraged to evaluate the types of diagnostic and/or monitoring tests ordered and review the literature for recommendations on the management of critical results in order to define which diagnostic tests to include. Organizations should also consider if tests performed by a licensed independent practitioner need to be included, as action can be taken by the practitioner performing the test.

Examples of actual findings for this measurable element are:

- The hospital had defined critical test values for diagnostic imaging, and laboratory. The hospital indicated they also performed diagnostic tests in audiology, cardiology and neurology. There was no list of critical test values in these departments. The hospital policy had not addressed the critical test results program in the Point of Care testing.
- The hospital had defined critical values for some diagnostic tests; however, had not defined critical values for electroencephalograms, sleep studies, and for the arterial blood gas analysis done in the laboratory and recovery room.
- Critical values were defined for laboratory including point of care, pathology, radiographic examinations; however, the critical values for the following diagnostic test were not defined as required by the standard. The diagnostic tests performed at the bedside, such as portable radiographs, bedside ultrasound, EEG, PFT, ECG, and Echo Cardiograms.
- The hospital had defined critical results for diagnostic tests in radiology and laboratory, and only listed one diagnostic test (electrocardiogram) for cardiology. They performed many additional diagnostic tests in cardiology.
- The hospital had critical result values defined for imaging, laboratory and anatomical pathology; however, no critical result values or reporting processes were provided for cardiology.

In following issues of JCI Insight there will further discussion regarding the International Patient Safety Goals (IPSG), as further data from 2019 has shown that in the first quarter for hospital triennial and initial surveys only 14% of organizations were compliant with all the measurable elements found in this chapter. This is an opportunity for improvement for many JCI organizations.