



# Visiting Christian Science Nurse Services Accreditation Standards

## INTRODUCTION

The Commission offers accreditation for its member organizations. The primary purpose of member organizations is to provide Christian Science nursing. The purpose of The Commission includes encouragement of member organizations to identify and implement policies and procedures for improving the Christian Science nursing they provide.

The Commission has identified the following standards for specific aspects of the operation of member organizations. These standards are based on and support the theology of Christian Science, which is found in the Bible, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, and other writings of Mary Baker Eddy, especially the *Church Manual* bylaw, "Christian Science Nurse," (Article VIII, Section 31).

The standards are intended to uphold the following:

- Expectation of Christian Science healing
- Loving and appropriate Christian Science nursing care
- Accommodation of individual needs
- Respect for individual dignity

The actions indicated for compliance with these standards are intended to assist each member organization to meet the care needs of patients in a supportive and safe environment. An organization shall be deemed to be in compliance with a standard by meeting each of the actions listed for that standard. The organization may submit alternative evidence, including third-party inspections and/or licensing, to the review team and request consideration of that evidence as compliance with a standard(s).

A Christian Science nursing organization's policies and practices, together with careful oversight, guide and support the organization's staff in providing ethical, skilled, attentive and efficient services.

Accreditation by The Commission is the result of a peer review process. Well-qualified and experienced teams of reviewers conduct on-site visits to assess a member organization's adherence to the standards. An accreditation review team will evaluate an organization's compliance with each of the following standards and will make an accreditation recommendation that is supported by a written report of its findings.

The standards are the foundation of the Commission accreditation process which requires both internal and external evaluations of the extent to which the standards are being met. Organizations seeking initial accreditation or re-accreditation must conduct a self-assessment of their compliance with all of the standards at least every three years. Review teams analyze the most recent self-assessment reports prior to their site visits.

An objective evaluation of the Reviewers' report is made by the Independent Accreditation Audit Committee (IAAC), none of whose members have any affiliation with the organization being accredited. The IAAC audits the information from the review team and makes a recommendation to The Commission board on the appropriate accreditation status. The Commission board makes the final accreditation decision.

## **ACCREDITATION STANDARDS VISITING CHRISTIAN SCIENCE NURSE SERVICES**

### **A. RELIGIOUS**

**A1. Christian Science nursing care is consistent with the theology of Christian Science and with the bylaws of the *Manual of The Mother Church*, especially Article VIII, Section 31, "Christian Science Nurse."**

#### **Actions which satisfy compliance**

A1a) The organization ensures Christian Science nursing is consistent with the theology of Christian Science in the following ways:

- 1) All Patient Care:
  - a. is provided by Christian Science nurses;
  - b. follows current guidelines related to Christian Science nursing issued by the Manager of CS Nursing Activities of The First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, MA
- 2) Policies, Procedures and Records:
  - a. are in accord with the theology of Christian Science;
  - b. affecting Christian Science nursing and Christian Science nurses training/education are reviewed and approved in consultation with Christian Science nurses (at least one who is listed in the current issue of *The Christian Science Journal*);
  - c. are non-condition oriented, unless, and only to the extent, required by law.
- 3) Staffing:
  - a. The organization requires that Executive Director or equivalent, DCSN or equivalent, Christian Science nurses, and Board members:
    - i. are members of The First Church of Christ, Scientist, Boston, MA;
    - ii. are active members of an informal Christian Science group, a *Journal*-listed society or branch Church of Christ, Scientist, or local

- members of The Mother Church;
  - iii. have taken primary class instruction.
  - b. Christian Science nurses in training are expected to have had class instruction by the end of their first year of training. This may be waived if Christian Science nurses are still attending Sunday School.
- 4) The organization:
- a. supports the importance of *Journal*-listing for Christian Science nurses in their employment considerations;
  - b. employs Christian Science nurses who meet the standards of Article VIII, Section 31 of the *Manual of The Mother Church*;
  - c. employs experienced *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurses who:
    - i. supervise all patient care;
    - ii. oversee the Christian Science nursing staff;
    - iii. supervise all instruction, training, mentoring of Christian Science nursing, including in a VCSNS and a Christian Science Nursing Education/Training Program.
- 5) The Board:
- a. is thoroughly oriented to the role of the Christian Science nurse;
  - b. has adopted a policy that all patients using the services:
    - i. are relying exclusively on Christian Science for healing;
    - ii. have engaged a Christian Science practitioner listed in the current edition of *The Christian Science Journal* for regular treatment.

A1b) Patients and their representatives are informed in writing of the following points from the latest edition of *Christian Science Nurse Scope of Services* issued by The First Church of Christ, Scientist, that:

- 1) no medical care is given;
- 2) there is no diagnosing, administering medication, or therapy.

**A2. The Organization's policies and practices are fully supportive of individual patients' prayer and study of Christian Science.**

**Actions which satisfy compliance**

A2a) Patients:

- 1) have a place available for prayer and quiet study;
- 2) are free to decide how and when to study;
- 3) have access to a variety of ways and times to read or hear the Bible Lesson, the Bible, the writings of Mary Baker Eddy, and other authorized literature;
- 4) are given information on how to access Christian Science literature

**A3. The organization demonstrates that Christian Science nursing is a healing ministry.**

**Actions which satisfy compliance**

A3a) The organization gives evidence of Christian Science healing by providing:

- 1) a summary of patients' healings since the last review;
- 2) a summary of employee healings since the last review from their application of a "demonstrable knowledge of Christian Science practice" (*Manual*, p. 49);
- 3) a summary of how the organization encourages and supports Christian Science nurses in demonstrating the healing ministry of Christian Science nursing. For example:
  - a) scheduling which enables Christian Science nurses to join and participate in branch church services, committees, and Sunday School;
  - b) regular metaphysical meetings;
  - c) inspirational talks by Christian Science practitioners;
  - d) any other unique expressions of support.

**A4. In accordance with the *Manual of the Mother Church*, Article VIII, Section 31, "Christian Science Nurse," the organization consistently uses the full title of that office and consistently describes the care given by a Christian Science nurse as "Christian Science nursing."**

**Actions which satisfy compliance:**

- A4a) The organization follows a policy which requires the three words "Christian Science nurse" or "Christian Science nursing" be used:
- 1) as a unit each time;
  - 2) to consistently describe the care given by a Christian Science nurse or nurses;
  - 3) in their full, unabbreviated, and unbroken form in all formal and public communications.

## B. ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE

**B1. The organization is legally established as a not-for-profit entity.**

**Actions which satisfy compliance**

- B1a) The organization:
- 1) has documentation that establishes its compliance with laws and regulations governing its not-for-profit status;
  - 2) files complete and accurate financial and organizational reports as required by law.

**B2. The organization is aware of and complying with all applicable local, state, government and federal laws and regulations.**

**Actions which satisfy compliance**

- B2a) The organization:
- 1) has a process to maintain its compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. (For example email subscriptions for certified public accountant, employment law, IRS, CMS, etc.);
  - 2) maintains records that confirm it is in compliance with all relevant health, sanitation, and safety requirements, including fire and emergency procedures.

**B3. The organization abides by all applicable labor/employment laws and regulations.**

**Actions which satisfy compliance**

B3a) The organization:

- 1) has a process to stay abreast of pertinent state, federal, and government labor/employment (HR) laws and regulations;
- 2) complies with regulations regarding compensation, time off, workers insurance, grievance, background checks and other required provisions and benefits included above;
- 3) maintains current work authorization documents as required by law for each employee.

**B4. Employees and participants in Christian Science nurses training programs are thoroughly oriented to their roles and responsibilities within the organization.**

**Actions which satisfy compliance**

B4a) The organization orients employees and participants in Christian Science nurses training programs to policies applicable to their position.

B4b) The primary duties and responsibilities of each position are in writing, e.g. job descriptions.

B4c) Training is provided as appropriate for all employees, including orientation to Christian Science nursing.

B4d) The organization orients employees and participants in Christian Science Nurses training programs to pertinent organization policies and to buildings, equipment and vehicles, as applicable.

B4e) There is a system in place to regularly evaluate the performance of employees. A record is kept of these evaluations, as required by law.

**B5. The organization refines and improves the quality of its services.**

**Actions which satisfy compliance**

B5a) The organization:

- 1) follows a process that encourages employees to identify ways and means to refine and improve the quality of service;
- 2) conducts and documents regular in-service training with follow-up supervision and evaluation after instruction as appropriate;
- 3) provides in a timely manner any specific training that may be required by government regulations to all employees.

**B6. The organization's fiscal policies and operations are transparent and supportive of**

**financial stability.**

### **Actions which satisfy compliance**

B6a) The organization:

- 1) complies with accepted accounting and auditing practices:
  - a) controls and procedures are documented and in place
  - b) audit (if required by law) is available for review
- 2) has policies in place for:
  - a) conflict of interest;
  - b) financial assistance (impartial and needs based)--
    - i) for Christian Science Nursing care
    - ii) for Christian Science Nurse training
- 3) has procedures in place for:
  - a) communicating changes in cost of services;
  - b) granting benevolence for patients.

**B7. Board members, employees and participants in Christian Science nurses training programs are thoroughly oriented to their ethical obligations.**

### **Actions which satisfy compliance**

B7a) The organization:

- 1) has adopted ethical policies such as confidentiality, conflict of interest, harassment etc.;
- 2) regularly orients /trains board members in their legal, ethical, and fiscal obligations;
- 3) regularly orients /trains employees, CSN trainees, and volunteers in their legal and ethical obligations.

## **C. PATIENT ACCEPTANCE**

**C1. The Organization board has established written policies to guide patient acceptance.**

### **Actions which satisfy compliance**

C1a) The board has established and articulated its policy for serving the Christian Science nursing needs of the community it serves.

C1b) Board policies on acceptance adhere to laws pertaining to cases of infectious diseases and other reportable/notifiable challenges, minors, pregnancy, childbirth and mental challenges.

C1c) A board policy shall be in place to require that all patients complete an application, including contact information for next of kin or the legal representative.

C1d) A written policy for transporting patients complies with applicable laws, and ensures sound judgment and ethics in all cases.

**C2. The Christian Science nurse in charge of the Service follows a systematic process for acceptance of cases.**

## Actions which satisfy compliance

C2a) The Service:

1. responds promptly to calls for Christian Science nursing care;
2. has a system in place to receive, redirect and respond to calls after normal service hours;
3. has written admission information provided to patients and their representatives including:
  - a. current rates and charges
  - b. applying for benevolence
  - c. funding sources
  - d. notice of their rights
  - e. how to file a grievance
  - f. *Christian Science Nurse Scope of Services*
4. has policies that are written, accessible, and familiar to the visiting Christian Science nurse(s).

## D. CHRISTIAN SCIENCE NURSING RESPONSIBILITIES, EDUCATION, AND DEVELOPMENT

**D1. The Service employs qualified Christian Science nurses to provide high quality of care.**

### Actions which satisfy compliance

D1a) The Service ensures that Christian Science nurses are available to assist patients with all care needs by:

1. following an employment process which verifies their skills and experience;
2. providing training to achieve and maintain the required level of expertise in ethics, judgment and skills for care;
3. giving a thorough orientation to patient care policies and procedures, and other pertinent Service policies.

**D2. The Service ensures effective supervision of Christian Science nursing.**

### Actions which satisfy compliance

D2a) The Service ensures effective supervision of Christian Science nurses and nursing care by:

1. employing at least one experienced Christian Science nurse advertising in *The Christian Science Journal* who has oversight of patient care;
2. requiring a *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurse should visit any new case;
3. requiring the initial visit and all direct care be given by a *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurse for all cases involving the care of minors;
4. following a regular system of evaluation of all Christian Science nurses who provide care, including keeping records.

**D3. The Service refines and improves the quality of care provided.**

### Actions which satisfy compliance

D3a) The Service refines and improves the quality of care by:

1. identifying ways and means to improve the quality of service;
2. providing prompt, thorough orientation/induction to employees as required by government regulations;
3. documenting any required continuing education and professional development.

## E. PATIENT CARE

### **E1. The Service ensures that patients receive prompt and continued attention regarding their individual care needs.**

#### **Actions which satisfy compliance**

E1a) Patients receive prompt and continued attention regarding their individual care needs by:

1. regular assessment of care needs by a *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurse;
2. providing a system to ensure continuity of care.

E1b) The Service has a process for:

1. regular assessment of a Christian Science nurse's ability to provide proper care for each case;
2. maintaining patient documentation sufficient for legal requirements, third party review and other purposes. (These records are stored and maintained as required by law.)

### **E2. The Service's policies and procedures uphold and respect patients' rights.**

#### **Actions which satisfy compliance**

E2a) The Service informs patients in writing of their rights as per their state and local governments, including but not limited to:

1. dignity;
2. safety;
3. confidentiality;
4. well-being;
5. choice of care;
6. advance directives;
7. participation in planning their care.

### **E3. The Service provides appropriate equipment for Christian Science nurses providing care to patients.**

#### **Actions which satisfy compliance**

E3a) The Service provides:

1. up-to-date, clean, and well maintained equipment and supplies;
2. a process to ensure staff is current with new or improved products suitable for providing care;
3. transportation for the Christian Science Nurse by one or more of the following:
  - a. maintaining a service vehicle in good condition;
  - b. having policies for using a personal vehicle;



c. providing for other transportation.

## Definitions:

**Appropriate skill and experience:** “Appropriate” means the Christian Science nurses can provide proper care to the patients.

**“Establish” in C1 and C1a:** This means policies, whether initiated by or approved by the Board, are considered established by the Board.

**Qualified:** Having the experience and skill.

**Policy:** In each case when a policy is referred to as part of an action to comply with a standard, the policy must be in written form.

## Explanations:

1. **Core Standards:** Sections A through C of these standards shall be considered the core standards for visiting Christian Science nurses services.

2. **Substantial Compliance:** Substantial compliance is evident when an activity or result is fulfilling most of what the standard requires; any areas of weakness or non-compliance are not jeopardizing the success of the activity.

3. **Evidence of Compliance:** An organization shall be deemed to be in compliance with a standard by meeting each of the actions listed for that standard. The organization may submit alternative evidence, including third-party inspections and/or licensing, to the review team and request consideration of that evidence as compliance with a standard(s).

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