

Anesthesia *Resources*



How Anesthesia Helps Facilities Overcome Common Pitfalls in Ambulatory Surgery



Long before the enactment of the Affordable Care Act, developers of ambulatory surgical centers (ASCs) responded to a healthcare need. ASCs emerged as a cost-effective solution for improved access to surgical procedures that could be performed in an outpatient setting.

From the opening of the first facility in 1970, the ASC model grew to more than 5,300 facilities. By 2011, healthcare professionals were performing 23 million surgeries annually in an ambulatory setting.¹ That kind of growth invites scrutiny. Regulatory eyes are on ASCs to ensure the outpatient setting is as safe and efficient as what is required in the hospital environment.

The Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care, Inc. (AAAHC) established standards for promoting patient safety, quality care, and value for ambulatory healthcare. ASCs in compliance with those standards are eligible for a certificate of accreditation through the AAAHC's peer-based accreditation program.

The AAAHC's Accreditation Association Electronic National Evaluation and Information Dataset (AENEID) report identifies deficiencies in complying with AAAHC Standards. Understanding common pitfalls in ambulatory care will help you evaluate areas for improvement in your own facility.

A good place to start is with anesthesia services. Anesthesia professionals contribute to every aspect of care. Their services have a tremendous impact on your facility's clinical, operational, and financial performance.

The following reviews findings from the 2014 AAAHC/AENEID report and examines solutions anesthesia can provide for overcoming common pitfalls in the ambulatory setting.

Credentialing and Privileging of Medical Staff (Governance)

The Governance section of the AAAHC Standards describes the requirements for an accreditable organization's governing body. The intent of the AAAHC's credentialing and privileging standards is to ensure qualified professionals are providing the care for each service offered at your facility.

AAAHC Credentialing/ Privileging Process

CREDENTIALING

1. Set minimum requirements for training, experience, and credentials
2. Develop process to review qualifications
3. Conduct review, assess and validate process

PRIVILEGING

1. Define clinical procedures to be offered
2. Determine provider qualifications for each
3. Develop evaluation process