



# 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. Organization policies and practices are in accord with the theology of Christian Science.

A1b. Board members are thoroughly oriented to the role of the Christian Science nurse.

A1c. The organization demonstrates support for the importance of *Journal* listing for Christian Science nurses in their staffing considerations.

A1d. Policies and procedures that impact the Christian Science nursing activity and/or Christian Science nurses training/education are reviewed and approved in consultation with Christian Science nurses, at least one whose card is in the current edition of *The Christian Science Journal*.

A1e. The Executive Director, or equivalent, Christian Science nurses, and Board members are members of The First Church of Christ, Scientist, Boston, Mass., active members of a Journal-listed society or branch Church of Christ, Scientist, or local members of The Mother Church, and have had primary class instruction. Christian Science nurses during their first year of training or who are preparing for primary class instruction, or who are in Sunday School, may be exempted from the primary class instruction requirement.

A1f. The organization designates, according to programs offered, an experienced

Christian Science nurse whose card appears in the current edition of The Christian Science Journal to supervise all patient care, oversee the Christian Science nursing staff, and supervise all instruction of Christian Science nursing (Director of Christian Science Nursing, Director of Visiting Christian Science Nursing Services, Director of Christian Science Nurses Training Program (or comparable title)).

A1g. The organization employs Christian Science nurses who meet the standards of Article VIII, Section 31 of the *Church Manual*. All patient care is provided by Christian Science nurses.

A1h. Instruction in Christian Science nursing is based on and consistent with the theology of Christian Science and the requirements in the *Manual of The Mother Church*, Article VIII, Section 31, "Christian Science Nurse."

A1i. The organization is aware of current guidelines related to Christian Science nursing issued by The First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, Mass.

A1j. The board has adopted a policy that only patients relying on Christian Science for healing can be accepted. As a general rule the patients will receive treatment from a Christian Science practitioner listed in the current edition of *The Christian Science Journal*.

A1k. Patients and their representatives are informed in writing that no medical care is given, including diagnosing, administering medication, drugs or therapy, and informed in writing of what is and is not included in Christian Science nursing care, such as stated in the most recent publication of The Mother Church regarding the "Christian Science Nurse Scope of Services".

A1l. For both patient care and instruction in Christian Science nursing, Christian Science nursing records are non-condition oriented, unless, and only to the extent, required by law.

## **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 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 appropriate for Christian Science study and practice. (This action does not apply to services not affiliated with a Christian Science nursing facility.)

A2b. All patients have a place available for prayer and quiet study. (This action does not apply to services not affiliated with a Christian Science nursing facility.)

A2c. Patients are free to decide how and when to study. (This action does not apply to services not affiliated with a Christian Science nursing facility.)

A2d. In home settings, the organization shall have information to share with the patient for access to Christian Science literature.

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

### **Actions which satisfy compliance**

A3a. A summary of recent patient healings.

A3b. A summary of healing outcomes from the staff's application of a "demonstrable knowledge of Christian Science practice" (*Manual of The Mother Church*, Article VIII, Sect. 31).



A3c. Examples in which the organization encouraged and supported the staff in demonstrating that Christian Science nursing is a healing ministry.

**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 that the three words “Christian Science nurse (or nursing)” be used as a unit. The organization uses the full, unabbreviated, and unbroken terms “Christian Science nurse” and “Christian Science nursing” in all of its formal and/or public communications.

A4b. The organization is aware of current guidelines related to Christian Science nursing communications issued by The First Church of Christ Scientist, in Boston, Massachusetts.

## B. ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE

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

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

B1a. The organization has obtained and maintains its not-for-profit status.

B1b. The organization has documentation that establishes its compliance with laws and regulations governing its not-for-profit status.

B1c. The organization 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 has a process to maintain its compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

B2b. The organization 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 has a process to stay abreast of pertinent state, federal, and government labor/employment laws and regulations.

B3b. The organization complies with regulations regarding compensation, time off, workers insurance, grievance, background checks and other required provisions and benefits.

B3c. Current work authorization document(s) as required by law are on file 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 evaluate regularly 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 follows a process that encourages staff to identify ways and means to refine and improve the quality of service.

B5b. The organization conducts and documents regular in-service training with appropriate follow-up supervision and evaluation after instruction is given.

B5c. If specific training is required by government regulations, it is provided in a timely manner to new, temporary, and regular employees.

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

**Actions which satisfy compliance**

B6a. Proper controls and procedures are in place to monitor and safeguard the organization's financial resources.

B6b. The board has adopted a conflict of interest policy.

B6c. The organization complies with accepted accounting and auditing practices.

B6d. The organization conducts and makes available, as required by law, an annual audit or financial review.

B6e. Patients and their representatives are informed of imminent increases in charges in a timely manner.

B6f. The organization has a financial assistance policy to serve those relying on Christian Science for healing who are unable to pay for all or part of their care.

B6g. If the organization offers financial assistance for Christian Science nurses training, it is given impartially based on individual program participant needs and circumstances and in accord with a written policy. (This action does not apply to services not affiliated with a Christian Science nursing facility.)

B6h. When benevolence is offered, it is given impartially based on individual patient needs and circumstances.

**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 board has adopted ethical policies including but not limited to confidentiality, conflict of interest, and harassment.

B7b. Training is provided regularly in the organization's ethical policies including but not limited to confidentiality, conflict of interest, and harassment.

B7c. Board members are thoroughly oriented to their legal, ethical, and fiscal obligations.



## C. PATIENT ACCEPTANCE

### **C1. The 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 is established that addresses transporting of patients in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations; and ethics and sound judgment.

### **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 responds promptly to calls for Christian Science nursing care.

C2b. The Service has a system in place to receive and respond to calls 24 hours a day, seven days a week, through voicemail, pager, and/or cell phone.

C2c. Service policies related to patients are written, readily available and familiar to those implementing them.

### **C3. Patients shall be informed of Service policies.**

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

C3a. Upon acceptance, Service policies related to patients are available to patients and their representatives.

C3b. Patients and their representatives are informed in writing of current rates and charges, and benevolence that may be available.

C3c. A statement of patients' rights and the Service's grievance procedure is made available to patients.

## 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 a Christian Science nursing staff of appropriate skill and experience is available to assist patients with their care needs.

D1b. Additional training and other assistance is provided for Christian Science nurses to achieve and maintain the required level of expertise in ethics, judgment, and skills for care.

D1c. Christian Science nurses are given a thorough orientation to Christian Science nursing 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 has at least one experienced Christian Science nurse advertising in *The Christian Science Journal* providing supervision of the Service and oversight of patient care.

D2b. A *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurse should make the initial visit to any new case.

D2c. A *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurse must make the initial visit and provide direct oversight of all cases involving the care of children.

D2d. There is a system in place to evaluate regularly the performance of those providing care. A record is kept of these evaluations.

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

#### Actions which satisfy compliance

D3a. The Service follows a process that encourages the Christian Science nursing staff and those receiving care to identify ways and means to refine and improve the quality of service to patients.

D3b. If training is required by government regulations, it is provided in a timely manner to new, temporary, and regular employees.

D3c. The Service requires and documents regular continuing education.



## E. PATIENT CARE

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

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

E1a. Individual patient care needs are regularly assessed by a Christian Science nurse whose card appears in current edition of *The Christian Science Journal*.

E1b. A system is in place to ensure continuity of patient care.

E1c. The Service/organization has a process to determine that Christian Science nurses have the demonstrated ability to provide proper care to patients.

E1d. Patient documentation is 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. Patients are informed in writing of their right to dignity, safety, confidentiality, well being, and choice of care.

E2b. Patients shall be informed of the right to formulate advance directives.

E2c. Service staff members are informed in writing of patients' rights to dignity, safety, confidentiality and well-being.

E2d. Patients can participate 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 up-to-date, clean, and well maintained equipment and supplies for staff use in the service.

E3b. The Service has a process to ensure staff is current with new or improved products suitable for providing Christian Science nursing care.

E3c. A vehicle in good condition shall be maintained by the Service or appropriate arrangements and policies are in place for use of a personal vehicle or 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 E of these standards shall be considered the core standards for visiting Christian Science nurse 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).