



Media Contacts:

Hannah Miller
(312) 565-4631; hmillers@lcwa.com

Angela FitzSimmons
(855) 937-2242, ext. 280; AFitzSimmons@achc.org

ACHC Secures Six-Year CMS Deeming Authority Renewal for Hospice and CAH Programs

CARY, N.C. (Feb. 11, 2026) – Accreditation Commission for Health Care (ACHC) has received continued approval from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) as a national accrediting organization for its [hospice](#) and [critical access hospital \(CAH\)](#) programs. This six-year renewal, effective until 2031, is the longest term available. The achievement affirms that ACHC’s accreditation programs meet or exceed Medicare Conditions of Participation (CoPs) for hospice and CAHs.

“Earning continued deeming authority for hospice enables us to continue our work of validating quality for these providers,” said Susan Mills, Senior Program Director for ACHC’s home-based care programs. “Our goal is to empower hospice organizations—through accreditation—to deliver exceptional, multidisciplinary, end of life care that meets the physical, psychosocial, spiritual, and emotional needs of the patient and their family.”

ACHC’s hospice accreditation program supports compassionate, patient-centered care through standards for home-based Hospice Care and Hospice Inpatient Care. Hospice providers may also be eligible to earn additional distinctions in areas such as Age-Friendly Care, Palliative Care, and Telehealth, recognizing programs that go beyond baseline requirements to enhance patient outcomes.

Deeming authority allows ACHC-accredited hospice and CAH programs to demonstrate compliance with Medicare CoPs without undergoing routine state surveys. Instead, ACHC accreditation surveys bring a performance improvement lens to assessment of critical operational and clinical performance standards. With collaboration at the forefront, this approach adds educational value to the organization while ensuring quality and safety.

For critical access hospitals, ACHC provides accreditation tailored to the needs of small facilities that serve patients in communities where access to hospital services is limited. The CAH program emphasizes consistent interpretation of standards, high-quality surveys and collaborative problem-solving to support community-based care.

“At a time when critical access hospitals face increasing regulatory complexity and operational pressures, this renewed deeming authority provides these vital providers with access to a streamlined path to accreditation,” said Deanna Scatena, Program Director for ACHC’s hospital-based accreditation programs. “ACHC focuses on practical application of the standards to maximize excellence in their patient care and safety. We understand how important these organizations are to their communities and we partner with each hospital to make the added value of ACHC accreditation achievable.”

ACHC also offers accreditation and certifications for related hospital services and specialty programs, including Laboratory, Pharmacy, Sleep Lab, Joint Replacement, Stroke Care and Wound Care.

To achieve continued CMS approval, ACHC underwent an extensive evaluation process, which included:

- A comprehensive review of ACHC's accreditation standards to ensure alignment with federal regulations.
- An assessment of ACHC's surveyor training and performance to ensure consistency and effectiveness.
- A comparison of ACHC's accreditation process with CMS survey requirements, including monitoring noncompliance and responding to deficiencies.
- An analysis of ACHC's ability to report survey findings and corrective actions in a timely manner.

With this renewed deeming authority, ACHC will continue to provide hospice and CAH programs with a high-quality, customer-focused accreditation experience. ACHC's accreditation program is designed to promote operational best practices, compliance readiness and continuous performance improvement, ensuring hospice and critical access hospital providers can deliver safe, effective, and compassionate care to patients.

For information about ACHC and its commitment to elevating patient safety and quality of care, visit www.achc.org.

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About ACHC

Accreditation leader ACHC is a nonprofit with 35 years of experience promoting safe, quality patient care. ACHC develops solutions trusted by healthcare providers nationwide and is committed to offering exceptional, personalized service, and a customized, collaborative accreditation experience tailored to individual needs. ACHC focuses on giving providers a positive, educational experience that continually enhances quality of care and business efficiencies.

Learn more about accreditation options from ACHC. For information on programs and accreditation pricing, please email customerservice@achc.org, call (855) 937-2242 or visit www.achc.org.