

Guidelines for Seeking CoC-Pediatric Specialty Accreditation

The Commission on Cancer (CoC) provides two opportunities for accreditation for pediatric services: Pediatric Cancer Program (PCP) and Pediatric Specialty Accreditation (CoC-PS). These guidelines will assist in the evaluation of which is the appropriate program before seeking accreditation.

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Why Seek Pediatric Specialty Accreditation?

As a CoC-accredited site, you know how accreditation strengthens your program. Pediatric Specialty Accreditation (CoC-PS) provides recognition of your unique care and services provided within the larger cancer program and demonstrates your support of the advancement of quality care for pediatric patients with cancer.

The decision to seek accreditation requires thoughtful leadership by pediatric physician specialists and other health care providers, senior leadership/C-suite, CoC Program Administrator, and CoC Committee Chair.

Web-based education and in-person workshops will be offered to educate you about the standards and reporting tools, best practices to support compliance with the standards, and tips and techniques for preparing for the site visit.

Resources to assist in recording and tracking cancer program activity for select standards in between and in preparation for site visits are available.

After achieving accreditation, your marketing department will be able to highlight your accreditation in its marketing promotions, showcasing the care you provide to this special population. Once accredited, your pediatric cancer program is also promoted to the public through the American College of Surgeons [Find a CoC Accredited Program](#) tool.

Accreditation Eligibility: Pediatric Cancer Program vs. Pediatric Specialty

A site is eligible for pediatric accreditation if it provides care to children and adolescents under the age of 18 and offers a full range of diagnostic and therapeutic services for pediatric patients either on-site or by referral. A site that cares only for adolescents and older is not eligible.

When a CoC-accredited site provides pediatric services in addition to adult services, the accreditation designation is Pediatric Specialty Accreditation (also known as CoC-PS).

For a hospital solely dedicated to pediatric patients (with a focus on those under age 18), that hospital would be eligible for CoC accreditation as a Pediatric Cancer Program (PCP).

For all CoC programs, the site visit will require compliance with the standards for a full calendar year before the site visit. Therefore, planning for accreditation may take at least 18 months.

A hospital in a CoC-accredited network may seek CoC-PS; however, the accreditation is awarded only at the individual hospital level, not the network level. That individual hospital must apply for the CoC-PS accreditation separate from its participation in the network accreditation.

Application Process

Programs seeking CoC-PS accreditation will follow the process described on the [Apply Now](#) webpage.

Programs adding the CoC-PS accreditation to its existing CoC accreditation will use the same Quality Portal (QPort) login to manage the pediatric accreditation. The primary contact for the adult program will be able to add additional users for CoC-PS.

Resources to Support the Pediatric Specialty Accreditation Journey

Resources are available to assist in the journey to seek and maintain accreditation. The primary resource is the manual, *Optimal Resources for Cancer Care (2020 Standards)*. The manual provides an overview of the process, definitions and requirements for accreditation standards, and how the standards will be assessed during the site visit. The section “Specifications by Category” describes any modifications to the standards for the pediatric programs. If a standard is not referenced in the Specifications by Category for PCPs and CoC-PS, PCPs must meet the standard as written. CoC-PS programs do not need to demonstrate compliance with standards not referenced in the Specifications by Category as compliance with those requirements are reviewed during the affiliated adult CoC site visit.

As a CoC-accredited site, you have access to QPort Resources, including a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) resource specific to the pediatric cancer programs.

Access is also provided through individual sign-up to the CANSWER Forum online community to ask questions, search topics, and connect with cancer program colleagues across the country to share best practices.

Additionally, CoC staff provide support by responding to questions emailed to CoC@facs.org.

Cancer Liaison Physicians (Standard 2.2)

The Cancer Liaison Physician (CLP) provides important leadership in CoC-PS accreditation activities. As a program for pediatric care, the CLP must be a pediatric specialist and focused on the pediatric accreditation program. Therefore, the CLP for the adult program cannot serve in this role.

Committee Requirements (Standards 2.1, 2.3, 2.4)

The site determines the appropriate method for meeting the committee requirements. For example, the requirements may be met through the cancer committee for the CoC site or a separate committee for CoC-PS accreditation. If the committee is for only the CoC-PS, the standards do not require it to submit its minutes to the adult CoC committee.

Whether the committee directly overseeing the CoC-PS is the CoC cancer committee or a subcommittee, it must include the following specialties:

- Pediatric surgical specialist
- Pediatric hematology/oncology
- Pediatric radiology
- Pediatric pathology
- Pediatric Oncology Nurse

National Cancer Database (NCDB) Requirements

Because your CoC-PS accreditation is tied to your adult CoC accreditation, there are no additional NCDB data submission requirements associated with the CoC-PS accreditation.

Ready to Seek Accreditation?

Once the decision to seek accreditation has been made, it is suggested that both leadership and staff familiarize themselves with the resources outlined in the earlier section, Resources to Support the Pediatric Specialty Accreditation Journey. Establishing the pediatric cancer committee and beginning its activities will provide the structure needed to move forward.

As you plan for the site visit, keep in mind that one full calendar year of compliance is necessary. In most cases, the site visit for CoC-PS will occur at the same time as your adult CoC accreditation visit. After submitting the application, you will provide possible dates for a site visit; keep in mind that these dates will need to coordinate with the adult CoC site visit dates.

For additional information, review the New Program Checklist described on the [Apply Now](#) webpage.