

# The Big Five Healthcare Accreditation Organizations – Side by Side Comparison



A side by side comparison of URAC, NCQA, TJC, CARF, and COA



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# The Big Five Healthcare Accreditation Organizations: A Side by Side Comparison

The 5 major healthcare accreditation organizations are:



Accreditation is a process by which an impartial organization will review a company's operations to ensure that the company is conducting business in a manner that is consistent with national standards. Accreditation is a sign of quality and is an important consideration in their decision making.

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## Benefits of accreditation, recognition, and certification include:

- National recognition including recognition by insurance companies as well as other third parties
- May be a condition of reimbursement for certain insurers or other payers
- Commitment to excellence in quality, accountability and patient safety
- Competitive advantage
- Improves risk management and risk reduction
- May fulfill state regulatory requirements
- Provides a framework for creating organizational structure and management
- Provides opportunities for ongoing education and training
- Can provide deeming status for Medicare
- Provides standardization and consistency for processes across the organization
- May reduce liability insurance costs
- Provides assurance the organization is current with healthcare regulations
- Improves customer satisfaction ratings
- Further ensures privacy and confidentiality of protected health information
- Supports continuous quality improvement efforts

Essential to  
Many  
Contracts



Mark of  
Quality For  
Patients



Ensures  
Commitment  
to Quality








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Comparison Element	URAC (Utilization Review Accreditation Commission)	NCQA (National Committee for Quality Assurance)	TJC (The Joint Commission)	CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities)	COA (Council on Accreditation)
Website	<a href="https://www.urac.org/">https://www.urac.org/</a>	<a href="http://www.ncqa.org/HomePage.aspx">http://www.ncqa.org/HomePage.aspx</a>	<a href="http://www.jointcommission.org/">http://www.jointcommission.org/</a>	<a href="http://www.carf.org/Programs/">http://www.carf.org/Programs/</a>	<a href="http://coanet.org/home/">http://coanet.org/home/</a>
Logo					
About	URAC, an independent, nonprofit organization, is well-known as a leader in promoting health care quality through its accreditation, education and measurement programs.	The National Committee for Quality Assurance is a private, 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization dedicated to improving health care quality.	An independent, not-for-profit organization which accredits and certifies more than 19,000 organizations and programs in the United States	An Independent, non-profit accreditor of health and human services.	The Council on Accreditation (COA) is an international, independent, not-for-profit, child- and family-service and behavioral healthcare accrediting organization.
Inception	1980's	1990	1951	1966	1977
Number of Accredited Organizations	600 +	40,000 +	20,000 +	6000+	1800+
Cost	Varies on the type of accreditation – includes accreditation and on-site visit	Varies on the type of accreditation/certification as well as number of practice sites and/or per member per month charges, discounts offered for multiple accreditations / certifications – includes survey fee and processing fee	Varies based upon number of sites and number of visits	Application fee \$995 Site Visit Fee (based on the number of reviewers, the number of days, number of programs being surveyed, how many locations, where the programs are provided, and the size of the programs)	Application fee \$750 Accreditation fee (based on revenue) Site Visit Fee (based on number of reviewers) Maintenance of Accreditation Fee \$400 annually
Accreditation Preparation Period	4-6 months once the application is received	Varies based upon how prepared the organization is in terms of policies and procedures/processes	4-6 months	9-12 months for a new survey and 6-9 months for re-accreditation	Generally 9-16 months from the point a decision is made about accreditation

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Accreditation Granted	2-3 years	3 years for accreditation 2 years for certification 3 years for recognition	3 years except laboratory accreditation which is 2 years, certifications are 2 years	1 or 3 years for most accreditation except CARF-CFCC which is 5 years	4 years except Opioid Treatment Programs which is 3 years
Who do they accredit?	URAC accredits many types of health care organizations. Some accreditations are for the entire organization, and some focus on functional areas of the organization.	NCQA accredits organizations and individuals ranging from health plans including Health Maintenance Organizations(HMOs) and Preferred Provider Organizations(PPOs) to physician networks, medical groups, and individual physicians	TJC accreditations organizations: general, psychiatric, children's and rehabilitation hospitals, critical access hospitals, home care organizations, nursing homes, rehabilitation centers, long term facilities, behavioral health organizations, addictive services, ambulatory care providers, and independent or freestanding clinical laboratories	Health and human service organizations	Human service organizations
Nationwide Acceptance	Some states also "recognize" URAC accreditation, meaning that the accreditation can be used to meet state regulatory requirements instead of separate reporting to the state. A few states require URAC accreditation in order for companies to do certain types of business.	The NCQA seal is a widely recognized symbol of quality.	Joint Commission accreditation and certification is recognized nationwide as a symbol of quality that reflects an organization's commitment to meeting certain performance standards.	CARF International accreditation provides a visible symbol that assures the public of a provider's commitment to continually enhance the quality of services and programs with a focus on the satisfaction of the persons served.	COA accreditation is endorsed and recognized in every state and by a variety of groups including national and international human service organizations.

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Programs	<b>Accreditation</b> Case Management Disease Management Health Call Center Health Utilization Management Independent Review Organization Comprehension Independent Review Organization: Internal Independent Review Organization: External Workers' Compensation Utilization Management Wellness Claims Processing Consumer Education and Support Credentials Verification Organization Health Network Health Plan Medicare Advantage Health Plan Provider Credentialing Health Content Provider Health Web Site HIPAA Privacy HIPAA Security Drug Therapy Management Mail Service Pharmacy Specialty Pharmacy Workers' Compensation and Property and Casualty Pharmacy Benefit Management Abu Dhabi Pharmacy Benefit Management International PCHCH Achievement PCHCH Auditor Certification PCHCH Toolkit Credentialing Support Certification Vendor Certification Core Standards	<b>Accreditation</b> Accountable Care Organizations Health Plan Accreditation Wellness & Health Promotion Case Management Accreditation Managed Behavioral Healthcare Organizations New Health Plans Disease Management Accreditation Accreditation Users Group <b>Certification</b> Credentials Verification Organization Disease Management Certification Health Information Products Utilization Management and Credentialing Physician and Hospital Quality Multicultural Health Care Accreditation Users Group PCMH Content Expert Certification PCMH CAHPS Distinction <b>Recognition</b> Back Pain Recognition Program Diabetes Recognition Program Heart/Stroke Recognition Program Physician Practice Connections Patient Centered Medical Home Government Recognition Initiative Special Needs Plans Structure & Process Measures Special Needs Plans Mode of Care Review Process <i>In process – Patient Centered Specialty Practice Recognition Program</i>	<b>Accreditation</b> Ambulatory Health Care Behavioral Health Care Critical Access Hospitals Home Care Hospitals International Accreditation Laboratory Services Nursing and Rehabilitation Center Office-Based Surgery <b>Certification</b> Advanced Certification Disease-Specific Care Health Care Staffing Services International Certification	<b>Accreditation</b> Aging Services Behavioral Health Business and Services Management Network CARF-CCAC Child and Youth Services DMEPOS Employment and Community Services Medical Rehabilitation One-Stop Career Center Opioid Treatment Program Vision Rehabilitation Services	<b>Accreditation</b> Private Organizations Public Agencies Canadian Organisations After School Programs Networks Hague Accreditation and Approval Military and Family Readiness Programs Child Care Expansion Project

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