

**ACE**

Accreditation for Cardiovascular Excellence

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ACE Board Chair and Chief Medical Officer**

In the time since its inception, ACE has made significant progress in its ongoing effort to promote best practices and encourage the highest quality invasive cardiovascular care. Our work has only just begun with the successful launch of ACE's website and online application process for carotid artery stenting (CAS). In addition to providing continuous oversight to applicants in the CAS program, I am pleased to announce that ACE is preparing to offer accreditation to recognize quality for all invasive cardiac and endovascular procedures.

We chose CAS as the first area of accreditation to provide a rigorous, third party review process in response to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) mandate that all facilities performing these procedures be accredited. At present, ACE accreditation offers a voluntary way for your facility to demonstrate its commitment to the best possible patient care by meeting the highest standards of quality set by your peers in invasive and interventional labs. When CMS opens the coverage decision for carotid stenting, ACE will apply for official status as an accrediting body for CMS and in the interim we are discussing options with other payers.

Coming Soon—PCI Accreditations and More

While it's true that the only mandate at this time is to accredit facilities that perform carotid stenting, given the current state of healthcare reform, more mandates can be expected. With a solid foundation already in place for accreditation of CAS facilities, ACE is perfectly positioned to build upon that structure and experience to apply the same independent oversight and standards of excellence to programs that perform other cardiovascular procedures, including cardiac catheterization, angiography, structural heart disease intervention (adult and congenital), percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI), and non carotid endovascular procedures.

With the help of its Board of Directors, ACE is already working with experts in cardiac and endovascular care to develop the standards and expectations for these new accreditation offerings and to determine the necessary data for accomplishing this goal. Because the volume and complexity of PCI procedures requires a more extensive and ongoing oversight process, ACE will make some modifications to the process established for carotid artery stenting. These adjustments will include a critical review of standards for independent quality assurance and peer review as well as a more robust process for ongoing evaluation. It is anticipated that these programs will be operational by early 2011.



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Continued Commitment to Highest Quality Patient Care

With or without mandates for accreditation, ACE is committed to helping you and your facility provide the best quality care for patients. We do that by offering accreditation but also by taking steps to ensure that everyone understands the need for a thorough review by doctors who actually perform the procedures. Our country's current focus on healthcare reform provides an excellent opportunity to share the standards and processes our profession has established and constantly improves to support delivery of optimal care and to identify and fix problems as efficiently as possible.

To this end, ACE is reaching out and, in many cases, collaborating with federal and state policy makers to offer ACE accreditation as a significant step toward addressing concerns raised by patients and the press about quality of care. By proactively meeting with policymakers to discuss performance standards and review processes for catheterization labs, including guidelines, adherence to appropriate use criteria, and optimal peer-review processes, and by offering pilot programs in new areas of accreditation, ACE is taking a collaborative role in developing standards and processes that will go a long way toward putting patients at ease.

Patients want reassurance that all endovascular procedures are necessary, are performed the way they should be, and are performed in a facility with the right systems in place to make sure the outcomes are as good as they can be. Legislators are looking for ways to show their constituents that physicians are delivering the appropriate treatment. ACE offers the formal, objective, and independent evaluation and monitoring of your facility that can indicate to patients and the health care community at large that it meets the highest possible standards for safety and efficiency.

Please join us in our effort to provide quality in all areas of cardiovascular care. We look forward to working with you throughout the CAS accreditation process and other areas of accreditation in the future.

Bonnie H. Weiner MD MSEC MBA