



Testimony

WAC 246-919-601 - Safe and Effective Analgesia and Anesthesia Administration
Medical Quality Assurance Commission - WA State Department of Health
June 3, 2010

Good evening members of the Commission, my name is Sr. Sharon Park, and I am here to testify on behalf of the Catholic Bishops of the State of Washington in regard to WAC 246-919-601.

Accreditation is a process for greater public recognition to institutions that meet governmentally acceptable standards of quality. The purpose of accrediting medical facilities is to ensure that the health and safety of those who are being treated is protected. Patients should be assured that the accreditation is meaningful, that the professionals who are providing the service are licensed and capable of safely serving patients, and that the facility is fully equipped and properly maintained.

The Mission of the Joint Commission states it this way: *To continuously improve health care for the public, in collaboration with other stakeholders, by evaluating health care organizations and inspiring them to excel in providing safe and effective care of the highest quality and value.*

Section (5) (e) of the proposed WAC 246-919-601 raises some questions, especially about one type of facility doing what amounts to self-accreditation. To allow a facility to obtain a “stamp of approval” from its own organization injects a totally new concept into the meaning of accreditation. The public needs objective, outside inquiry of abortion service providers in order to ensure compliance with actual standards.

Because the WAC deals with office based anesthesia/sedation, and not a specific procedure, why would the anesthesia for one type of procedure, namely “abortions and abortion related services” require separate accreditation/certification organizations?

In regards to patient safety, how reasonable is it to have an organization provide its own accreditation? It certainly appears to create a potential conflict of interest. Moreover, does it also set a precedent for allowing other facilities to self-accredit?

In raising these questions the Washington State Catholic Conference requests that the Quality Medical Assurance Commission require the facilities listed in (5) (e) be accredited by an independent accrediting body.

Thank you.