

Hospital inspection offers few surprises

By Andrew Oxford

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The organization responsible for accrediting Holy Cross Hospital conducted its annual surprise inspection of the facility from Feb. 11 to Feb. 15 but administrators said the review revealed few surprises.

Inspectors from DNV GL, an international accrediting organization, determined all issues raised during the previous year's review had been resolved.

The team was comprised of a process and facilities engineer as well as an advanced practice nurse. The inspectors reviewed various facets of the hospital's operations ranging from the physical environment to organizational processes.

This was the hospital's fourth inspection by DNV GL and the first since Holy Cross was awarded ISO9001:2008 certification indicating conformity to international standards for medical practices and operational efficiency.

The 2013 inspection noted 18 areas for improvement referred to as "non-conformities" which included concerns about monitoring of the hospital's energy supply and the absence of administrative involvement in an internal performance improvement committee.

Over the last year, Holy Cross staff began monthly inspections of the hospital's power system in addition to annual checks by a third-party contractor. Administrators also began participating in the performance improvement committee.

It was not immediately clear how many nonconformities were found during the hospital's latest inspection but administrators were confident in the review's outcome.

"This year was the best survey we have ever had," chief operating officer Spencer Hamons told *The Taos News*.

CEO Peter Hofstetter said the inspection demonstrated quality of care remained high following recent cuts.

"[The inspectors] are blind to the finances. They are just looking at how you perform day-today," he said. "It's a validation we are doing all the right things."

Inspectors were complimentary of several measures hospital staff had undertaken since the facility's last review, according to administrators.

In particular, the accrediting body offered plaudits for a program implemented by staff to reduce the risk of patients falling at the facility. The effort has included hourly rounds, bedside reporting and recruiting sitters to monitor patients at risk of falling.

“It’s a huge issue in all hospitals. It’s something we have decreased here but will continue to monitor,” quality officer Linda Chase told *The Taos News* .

Chase said this year’s review noted areas for “fine-tuning” the hospital’s operations, such as formalizing a process by which internal audits can be closed.

The inspections are voluntary but Medicare and Medicaid require accreditation through DNV GL or other similar organizations.

This latest review followed a flawless inspection of the hospital’s food preparation facilities by the New Mexico Environment Department.

Holy Cross also received a favorable report from the College of American Pathologists following a recent inspection of the hospital’s laboratory.

“Just because we are a small hospital in rural New Mexico doesn’t mean we are not held to the same standards as larger facilities in Albuquerque or Los Angeles or New York,” Chase said.