



# Apollo Hospitals:

Bringing health care of international standards to every individual





For the last 20 years, Apollo Hospitals have been named to the top hospitals list in India by The Week magazine. Seeking and maintaining Joint Commission International (JCI) accreditation has helped them reach this high standard of care and safety in their hospitals in Chennai, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Navi Mumbai, Ahmedabad, New Delhi, Proton Centre, and Kolkata. Each of these Category A multispecialty hospitals operates between 250-750 beds with a staff of at least 1000.

With a mission to bring health care of international standards within the reach of every individual, the leadership at Apollo Hospitals made the strategic decision to seek JCI accreditation. “The Gold Seal of Approval® from JCI is coveted; it puts the hospital on an international map. Also, the JCI standards are more comprehensive and structured than those of other accrediting bodies,” says Gaurav Loria, Group Chief Quality Officer and Senior Vice President Operations.

“Going for accreditation also helps us provide better patient care, improve satisfaction levels, and ensure the safety of patients, staff and visitors.”



#### **Prepared for survey every day**

“I don’t really believe in preparing for the survey,” says Gaurav Loria. “If you are following the standards every day, you should always be ready. I am also a surveyor for JCI, and I can tell when people have changed processes just for the survey. But it’s just putting up a show and, at the end of the day, that doesn’t help anyone.

We have moved away from that culture to maintaining our focus on being survey ready at all times.” Being ready is all about interpreting and understanding the standards, formulating required policies and procedures, modifying, updating medical record templates, identifying areas for improvement, implementing corrective actions promptly and doing internal audits to confirm compliance.



“JCI accreditation standards are evidence-based, objective tools for good governance. We proudly put the JCI Gold Seal of Approval on our business cards, hospital stationery, signage, website, etc. for promotional purposes.”

*Gaurav Loria  
Group Chief Quality Officer  
and Senior Vice President  
Operations*

As often happens, getting buy-in from physicians for following JCI standards strictly could be challenging. Doctors have certain ways of doing things and they can sometimes believe that following JCI standards to the letter is a waste of time. “The best way to motivate doctors to change is to show them documentation that proves how patient outcomes are much safer, with lower infection rates, and how the checks and balances at every step ensure this,” says Loria. From the induction process onward, Apollo sets expectations for physicians so they know what is expected of them. To deal with staff turnover, Apollo also holds trainings more frequently and stresses that everyone needs to “do it the JCI way” every day.

The JCI onsite reviews have always been great educational experiences, according to Loria. He credits the “learning environment” for helping leadership be more responsible for day-to-day functioning of the hospital as well as helping the clinical and non-clinical staff have a better understanding of how their actions impact patient care, satisfaction and safety.



### **The Many Benefits of Accreditation**

While the benefits of JCI accreditation include the overall creation of a safety culture, fewer errors and mistakes, evidence-based reviews and monitoring, improved competitive advantage, international clientele and increased patient satisfaction, the following are a few specifics from the Apollo team:



### **Operational Excellence:**

- Facility Management and Safety (FMS) standards have taught employees about facility safety, especially with chemicals and hazardous materials, as well as disaster preparedness. Mock drills happen regularly and fewer incidents of spillage, fire/ smoke, utility dysfunction, equipment downtime, security threats etc. have occurred, due to increased staff awareness.
- Medication Management & Use (MMU) standards have helped Apollo organize their medication processes, with fewer medication errors and near misses. They believe they avoid many preventable adverse events and can recognize further deterioration in patient condition due to strong monitoring protocols (after medication administration).



**“ We have taken accreditation standards and merged them with our own standards to create Apollo Standards- this is what we live everyday.”**

**Dr K Hari Prasad  
President, Apollo Hospitals**



### Organizational Excellence:

- Staff/doctor credential verification has become the norm at all of Apollo's accredited hospitals. Doctors and nurses are happier and more motivated as they are being monitored, evaluated objectively and rewarded for their clinical results, professional growth and behavior, and not just on their case numbers and volumes. As a result, clinical staff attrition has significantly reduced and staff satisfaction level has jumped up in their annual organizational climate survey.
- A data-driven and risk management approach to continual quality improvement has become habit and a culture of safety has set in. Their staff fearlessly report near misses and potential safety incidents routinely; they analyze and learn from those events. More than 29,000 staff participated in their last safety culture survey and voiced their opinion about improving the culture for patient safety.
- Apollo's overall market reputation, visibility for medical tourism, competitive advantage over other hospitals, and employability at the organization has tremendously improved due to JCI accreditation.



### Improved Patient Experience:

- Patient education is more detailed and relevant with Patient and Family Education (PFE) standards. They have learned better ways to educate patients and families on how to participate in care processes. This has also improved their patients' satisfaction level and their loyalty to Apollo hospitals. Repeat patients and referrals have also increased.
- A process-oriented approach in daily operations and ongoing evaluation of their day-to-day process flows has resulted in lower waiting times, turnaround times, fewer delays, cancellations and postponements, and bottlenecks – leading to higher patient satisfaction.

There's no question that the quality team at Apollo credits JCI for helping them take their safety culture to the next level. "We strongly advise and recommend that other like-minded organizations pursue JCI accreditation," says Dr K. Hari Prasad.

*Dr K Hari Prasad*



"For the past several years, the healthcare system across the world has been challenged by pandemics and an increase in non-communicable & lifestyle diseases. Hence, it is needed to nurture strong resilient patient processes. JCI has helped us build those over the years," says Sangita Reddy, Joint Managing Director, Apollo Hospitals Group.



### **Clinical Excellence:**

- Point of care testing standards have made Apollo staff formulate strict guidelines around how they manage such devices and periodically calibrate them. This has helped them to arrive at diagnosis faster and more accurately.
- Clinical pathways and guidelines have standardized their clinical care delivery at accredited hospitals and have helped them improve clinical quality in terms of length of stay, mortality, complications, etc. Most of their ERs have all critical pathways in place (i.e. Stroke, ACS, trauma, etc.). Clinician engagement has become more robust now with increased interest and ownership.
- Prevention and Control of Infections (PCI) standards provide exceptional guidance, especially for single use device management and proactive infection risk management, transmission precautions, construction/renovation activities, etc. Evidence-based guidelines are now followed for monitoring, identifying and tackling infections.

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