



November 13, 2007

George Baranek, MD  
Medical Director  
Simulation Educational Services  
One Lincoln Center  
18 West 140 Butterfield Road, Suite 1515  
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181

Dear Dr. Baranek:

At your request, I have reviewed the information you provided regarding both distant conference technology (Desk Top Drills) and simulated patient influx drills (SimPat).

In my March 26, 2005 letter to you, I expressed my opinion that distant conferencing does, in fact, meet the then and current standards requirement relative to meet the community aspect of a drill. The intent of the standard in permitting desktop or tabletop exercises is to provide communities an option to get involved in evaluating preparedness without the expense/time commitment of the actual role-playing drill exercise. The components that need to be designed into a distance conferencing tabletop community exercise in order to address The Joint Commission expectations need to include the following:

- the drill, even though it is implemented through telephone and Internet connections, must exercise the emergency response plan for the hospital;
- the drill is relevant to the priority emergencies identified in the hospital's hazard vulnerability analysis (HVA);
- the drill assesses the communication, coordination, and effectiveness of the hospital's and community's command structures;
- the community emergency response agencies are involved in the planning and implementation of the distance tabletop drill;
- the hospital incident command center has two way communication with the appropriate community response agencies throughout the exercise;
- the drill is thoroughly reviewed and critiqued by all involved to identify deficiencies and opportunities for improvement, and
- the drill assesses the communication, coordination, and effectiveness of the hospital's and community's command structures.

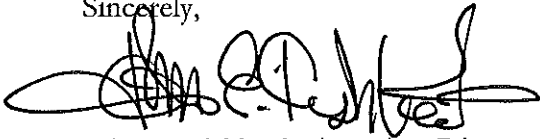
In regards to the "SimPat" or patient influx functional drills, the use of paper patients with partial torso cutouts designed to simulate an influx of patients into the hospital or healthcare facility is deemed compliant with standards of The Joint Commission. The Joint Commission has had a long-standing policy of accepting paper patients as meeting requirements for this standard.

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For the standards that come into effect in January 2008, both Desk Top Drills and SimPat meet the additional requirements of having an assessment by an objective party not involved in the drill, developing a report and gap analysis of the drill, and the development of an action plan to improve performance of the organization.

Nothing I have said represents an endorsement of your products since The Joint Commission neither endorses any specific product or process. The judgment as to whether to purchase your product to facilitate standards compliance must be made by each accredited organization.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John E. Fishbeck". The signature is stylized with a large initial "J" and a long horizontal flourish at the end.

John E. Fishbeck, Associate Director  
Division of Standards and Survey Methods  
The Joint Commission