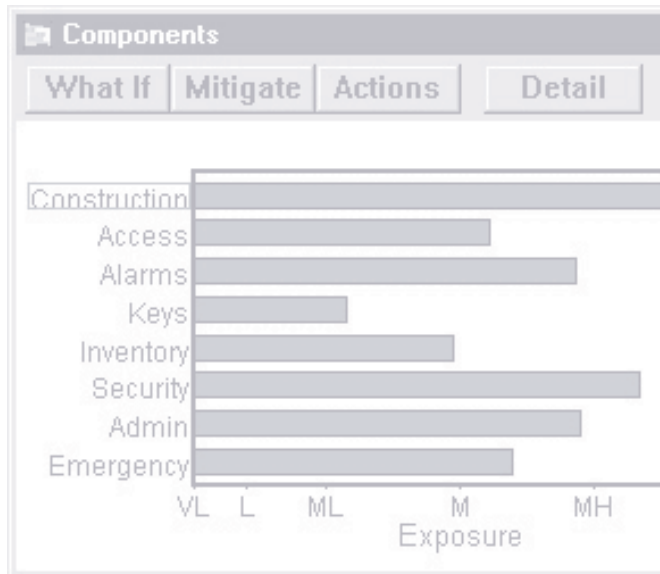


# 3

## Avoid The 3 Most Common Mistakes When Preparing For Your JCAHO Inspection!



## Why Is JCAHO Accreditation Important?

The periodic accreditation inspection performed by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospital Organizations (JCAHO) always generates a lot of management attention. While management is successful in communicating their anxiety about having a successful inspection they are not always successful in communicating why.

The reason for their anxiety is that a *hospital can't qualify to serve Medicare and Medicaid patients without an accreditation*. Failing to qualify would create a serious financial burden for most hospitals because such a large share of hospital business comes from those sources.

# Accreditation

***What would happen to your hospital if you lost this much business?***

Average Hospital	Medicare and Medicaid Patient Revenues
Columbia HCA Corporation	42%
Tenet Healthcare Corporation	46%

For example, the average hospital in the Columbia HCA Healthcare organization received 42% of revenues from these sources in 1995 and for the average hospital in the Tenet Healthcare organization the amount was 46%. To put that in more personal terms, try to ***imagine what it would be like to wake up one morning only to find that your paycheck had been cut nearly in half!*** That would probably get your attention.

The addition of security requirements to JCAHO accreditation acknowledges the increasing importance with which the public views security in the hospital environment. Many of those responsible for security are wondering how the JCAHO will interpret the new security guidelines.



# Three Mistakes to Avoid When Preparing For Your JCAHO Inspection.

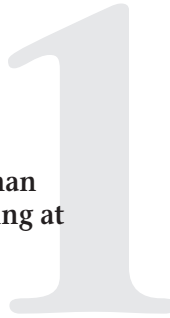
The eight security requirements of the JCAHO are not difficult to meet but do seem designed to determine whether security is an afterthought or an important part of your hospital's activities. That leads to

## Mistake #1

**Forgetting that good security is more than just responding to incidents. It is working at prevention.**

Being able to take care of incidents is still important because no matter how hard you try, there still will be security problems. However, working at prevention of incidents requires embedding security within the fabric of hospital operations.

Having security policies and procedures that no one but the security department knows about or knows how to implement makes it obvious to an inspector just how important security is. Education and awareness of all employees of how they contribute to the success of a security program is a key element of preventive security.



But education and awareness are just two of many elements which build good security. Achieving the right balance of all the elements requires a knowledge of how they contribute to your hospital's specific needs. That leads to

## **Mistake #2**

### **Having an inadequate security plan.**

Every good security plan has four elements. First, the plan must identify areas of weakness. No one likes to admit that they aren't perfect but it is always the case that there is room for improvement.

Second, the plan must identify specifically how the areas of weakness can be improved. While there are many ways that improvements can be made, it is important to formulate sensible approaches that have a high chance for being successful.

Third, the plan must layout a method for implementing the improvements. Prioritizing the improvements so that you can show incremental but steady progress toward achieving better security is important.

Fourth, the plan must have a way of measuring success. Good intentions are admirable but it is really results that count. You should be able to demonstrate that you are getting results.

It is better to know all your security weaknesses than to have an inspector find them. This is best accomplished by performing a detailed security survey.

Once you know your weaknesses you can identify ways that they can be improved. This helps you focus on changes to your policies, procedures, equipment, and/or operations which are candidates for implementation.

Laying out a method for making the improvements requires deciding which improvements to make first and how fast to make them.

# Results

Finally, keeping track of how you are doing ensures that your plan has teeth and demonstrates to the inspector that you are not just “checking the requirement box”. That leads to

### Mistake #3

#### **Having inadequate backup documentation to demonstrate that your security program is serious and ongoing.**

Can you show the inspector your survey results and be confident that they adequately address all your potential vulnerabilities? Will the inspector be able to find your written policies and procedures and determine whether they are up to date? Can you show the inspector your training materials and test results?

While some inspectors try to find something wrong no matter how good a program you have, most will realize that ***a well organized and prepared response is an indication of the same qualities in all aspects of your operations.***

So to avoid the three major mistakes ask yourself these questions: 1) Do you have the right attitude toward security, 2) Do you have the right elements of a security program, and 3) Can you prove it?

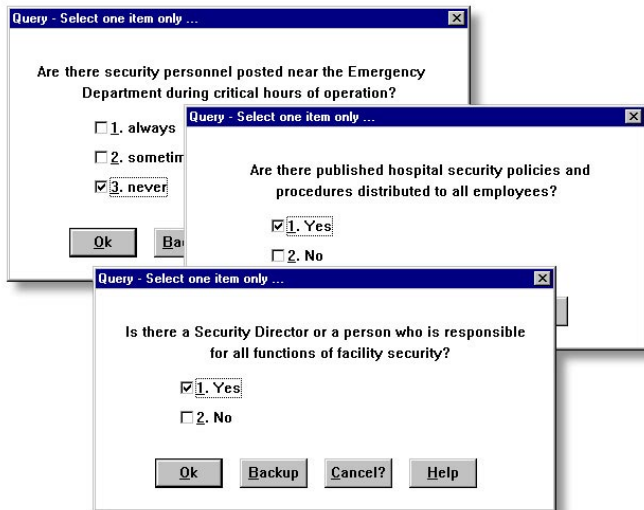
## One Way to Get Prepared

AKELA's SASSy (Security Analysis Support System) software has been designed to help meet the requirements of JCAHO accreditation. SASSy can't by itself change how security is viewed at a hospital, but it can help show how security affects the entire organization and may be able to gain security respect at a new level.

SASSy's expert system *performs a detailed security survey* just like an outside consultant would, but it creates a "living document" of your security operations which evolves as your hospital changes. It makes sure that nothing is overlooked.

# SASSy

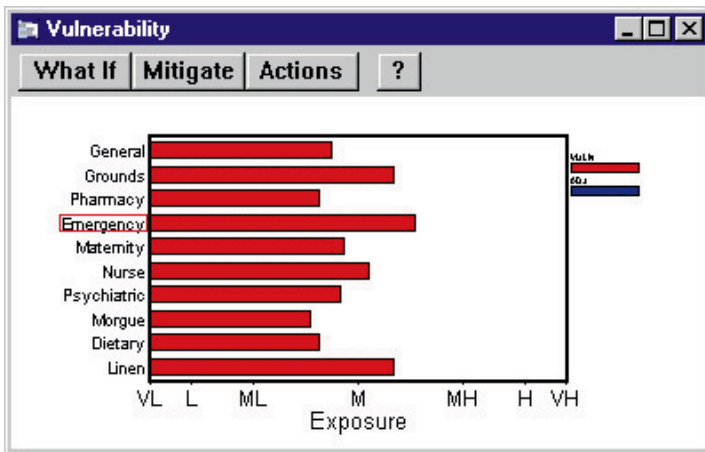
*SASSy will guide you step-by-step making sure you ask the right questions*



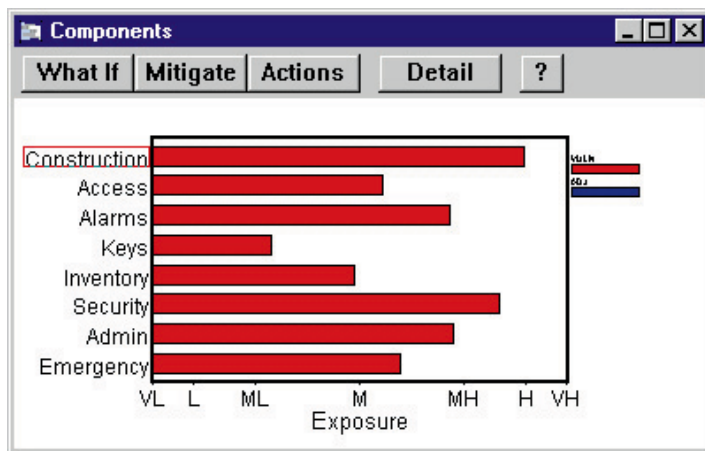
*SASSy helps make sure nothing is overlooked*

Areas	Components
<b>General Facilities</b>	<b>Design and Construction</b>
Facility Grounds	Access Controls
Pharmacy	Alarm Systems
Emergency Department	Key Controls
Maternity and Nursery Department	Inventory Controls
Nurse Stations	Security Force Personnel and Policy
Psychiatric Department	Administration and Operations
Morgue	Emergency Preparedness and Response
Dietary Department	
Linen/Laundry Department	

SASSy shows where your hospital is most vulnerable and which specific security components are weakest. This helps you decide where to begin your efforts.



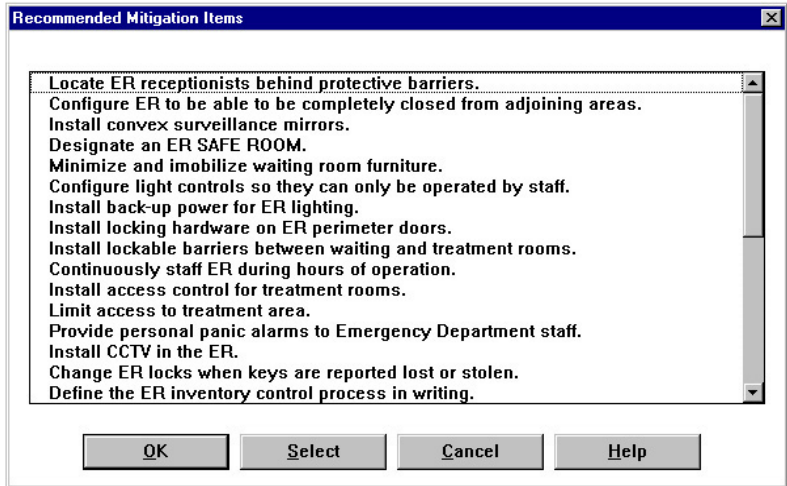
SASSy shows which hospital areas are most vulnerable



SASSy shows which components of security are weakest

SASSy also *recommends methods for reducing vulnerabilities*. It shows how implementing recommended improvements changes the vulnerabilities. This lets you see which improvements have the most effect and helps you decide what improvements to make first.

*SASSy recommends specific methods for improving security*



Finally, SASSy's reports and charts provide a way of keeping track of how implementation actions affect the overall level of security at your hospital and of showing the results of your efforts.

SASSy has recently been used to prepare for a JCAHO inspection by Mike Rousseau, Director of Maintenance for Marian Medical Center, a small hospital in Santa Maria, California. This is what he had to say about the experience.

“Our Safety committee met with the inspector and each of us had to describe what we had done. When it was my turn I opened up the notebook that had SASSy’s color charts and reports and began to flip through the pages describing what I had done. After a few minutes the inspector reached over, closed the notebook, and said ‘I’ve seen enough’.”

Asked what he had learned from the process Rousseau said that using SASSy had resulted in *“using a much lower level of effort for preparation”, “making sure we didn’t overlook items we might otherwise have”, and “opening up some eyes around here”* about the impact of security.

In summary, SASSy can help avoid the three common mistakes in preparing for a JCAHO inspection. It can demonstrate that security is an important part of hospital operations, it forms the basis of a solid security plan, and its graphical and written documentation help prove it.

Being prepared for the JCAHO is both important and stressful. Let SASSy help you reduce that stress and give you confidence that you will be prepared.

For a FREE trial demonstration of SASSy please call us at 805-683-6414 or visit our site on the World Wide Web at [www.akelainc.com](http://www.akelainc.com).



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