

Survey Analysis for Evaluating Risk (SAFER) Matrix™ FAQs

1. Why are we changing our process?
 - a. As time has gone on, The Joint Commission's scoring processes have slowly become more and more complex, resulting in several layers of identifying impact of a finding to an organization based on which standard and element of performance the finding is cited under. These layers include, but are not limited to, Indirect vs. Direct, A vs. C, and risk categories. Because of this complexity, and the focus of Project Refresh to simplify processes, research began in the beginning of 2015 to determine a better process to identify the potential impact of a finding to patient safety and quality. This analysis included research across several industries to determine best practices to potentially implement within the regulatory healthcare realm.
 - b. In addition, this model seeks to provide healthcare organizations with the information necessary to prioritize resources and focus corrective action plans in areas that are in most need of compliance activities and interventions through providing a visual, at an aggregate level, of areas of non-compliance through scope and severity of the deficiencies cited.

2. What is the Survey Analysis for Evaluating Risk (SAFER) Matrix?
 - a. In the new SAFER matrix™, findings are evaluated to determine the likelihood the issue has to harm a patient, visitor, or staff member (low, moderate, and high) in addition to the scope of the issue within the organization (limited, pattern, widespread) and are illustrated through a visual matrix. This determination is completed by surveyor(s) onsite and will result in the standard, EP being noted within the matrix below.

		Immediate Threat to Life (a threat that represents immediate risk or may potentially have serious adverse effects on the health of the patient, resident, or individual served)		
Likelihood to Harm a Patient/Staff/Visitor	HIGH			
	MODERATE			
	LOW			
		LIMITED	PATTERN	WIDESPREAD
		Scope		

- b. As the risk of a finding rises, then the placement of the standard, EP moves from the bottom left corner (lowest risk level) to the upper right (highest risk level). The Immediate Threat to Health and Safety process remains the same, and if cited during survey, will be placed in the Immediate Threat to Health and Safety Row located at the top of the matrix.
 - c. Placement of finding will be determined by surveyor(s) while onsite and will be based upon the risk of the finding itself, not the pre-designation of the standard, EP (A vs C or Indirect vs Direct) under which the finding resides. As a result, the same standard, EP for one organization can be placed in a different area of the matrix than for another organization.
3. How will surveyors use the SAFER matrix during a survey?
 - a. During the survey, surveyors will be placing the standard, EP under which a finding is noted onto the SAFER matrix. This placement is determined by the likelihood the finding has to harm a patient, staff, or visitors and scope of the finding within the organization. This results in the actual findings driving the placement of the standard, EP on the SAFER matrix and not the pre-designation of A vs C or Indirect vs Direct EPs.
 4. Will the Risk Designations (R) and Document Requirements (D) within ICM still exist?
 - a. Yes, these two icons will still exist as they both serve a value-added purpose.

5. What will the follow up process look like?
 - a. Instead of having two separate Evidence of Standards Compliance (ESC) forms, one due 45 days after survey and one due 60 days after survey, there will now only be one ESC form. This will result in all findings noted within the survey report having corrective actions be submitted within one ESC due 60 days after the final survey report is received.
 - b. Also, for those findings of a higher risk level (those in the dark orange and red areas of the SAFER matrix), two additional fields will be required within the ESC to provide a more detailed description of the organization's sustainment of compliance plan. These two areas will be surrounding Leadership Involvement and Preventive Analysis. These findings will also be provided to surveyors for possible review the following onsite surveys, up until the next full triennial survey occurs.
 - c. Below is a grid illustrating which boxes will require which level of follow up.

<u>SAFER Matrix Placement</u>	<u>Required Follow-Up Activity</u>
<u>LOW / LIMITED</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 day Evidence of Standards Compliance (ESC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ESC will include Who, What, When, and How sections
<u>MODERATE / LIMITED,</u> <u>LOW / PATTERN,</u> <u>LOW / WIDESPREAD</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 day Evidence of Standards Compliance (ESC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ESC will include Who, What, When, and How sections
<u>MODERATE/PATTERN,</u> <u>MODERATE/WIDESPREAD</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 day Evidence of Standards Compliance (ESC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ESC will include Who, What, When, and How sections • ESC will also include two additional areas surrounding Leadership Involvement and Preventive Analysis • Finding will be highlighted for potential review by surveyors on subsequent onsite surveys up to and including the next full triennial survey
<u>HIGH/LIMITED,</u> <u>HIGH/PATTERN,</u> <u>HIGH/WIDESPREAD</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 day Evidence of Standards Compliance (ESC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ESC will include Who, What, When, and How sections • ESC will also include two additional areas surrounding Leadership Involvement and Preventive Analysis • Finding will be highlighted for potential review by surveyors on subsequent onsite surveys up to and including the next full triennial survey

6. Does the SAFER matrix tie to a decision?
 - a. The SAFER matrix is meant to be utilized as a tool in the survey process to illustrate potential risk areas at the organization. It will not be used in isolation to drive or determine if certain decision rules will be applied.
 - b. Also, the SAFER matrix will not impact the process utilized onsite to determine a Condition Level Deficiency or the declaration of an Immediate Threat to Health and Safety.

7. For deemed organizations, will the placement of a finding within the SAFER matrix influence if the finding will be scored as a Condition or a Standard Level Deficiency?
 - a. No, the placement of a finding within the SAFER matrix will not determine if a Condition Level Deficiency is called. The determination of a Condition Level Deficiency will follow the current process established by CMS of looking at manner (occurrence/frequency of the issue) and degree (gravity of the issue) of the finding(s) being observed during the survey.

8. What is going away?
 - a. 45-day ESC
 - b. Measure of Success
 - c. Opportunities for Improvement section of the report
 - d. A vs C categories of EPs
 - e. Direct vs Indirect EPs

9. What if my organization receives an onsite survey in 2016 and a Measure of Success (MOS) is required, but my MOS is due in 2017?
 - a. The Measure of Success requirement will be eliminated for all accreditation and certification organizations effective January 1, 2017.
 - b. Please note, for organizations that have an MOS **due in 2016**, they will still be required to submit the MOS.
 - c. However, for organizations that have an MOS that is **due on or after 1/1/17**:
 - i. On 1/1/17 all open MOS's will be closed out in our system., resulting in organizations NOT being required to submit the MOS.
 - ii. The MOS tool will stay open on your Extranet site through the end of 2016 if you wish to enter and "save" data, print it off, etc. for your own internal improvement efforts. However, organizations will not be required to "submit" this data and the MOS will officially close on 1/1/17.
 - iii. The Joint Commission still encourages organizations to continue to monitor the effectiveness of their corrective actions through future measurement as it pertains to each organization.

10. Will ICM be updated to include the SAFER matrix?
 - a. ICM will be updated to incorporate the SAFER matrix's scoring methodology in January of 2017.
 - b. AMP will also be updated with these changes as well.
 - c. Please note, the ICM and AMP tools will be updated with the SAFER matrix to allow for organizations to identify SAFER designations of Likelihood to Harm and Scope throughout the self-assessment process. However, this designation will be optional and will not be required in order to submit the ICM. In addition, the Plan of Action section of the ICM will remain the same as it is today.

11. Who does this change apply to?

- a. Starting June 6, 2016, the process will be implemented for Deemed Psychiatric Hospitals (tailored and non-tailored) only.
 - b. For all other programs (including both accreditation and certification), the SAFER matrix will be implemented January 1, 2017.
12. What are the published materials available regarding the SAFER matrix?
- a. *Perspectives* Article sent to all organizations – May Issue – Published April 19th (approximately)
 - b. *JCO* sent to all organizations – May 4, 2016
 - c. *Perspectives* article provided to all organizations – October Issue