

SafeCare standards re-accredited by ISQua

Issued by [COHSASA](#)

10 Mar 2017

In sub-Saharan Africa, many healthcare clinics do not have the resources to provide safe and effective care - resources such as a consistent supply of medication or the infrastructure to keep patient records safe and secure. [SafeCare](#) provides these clinics an option to improve care for their patients with quality improvement standards they can comply with even under restricted conditions.



SafeCare standards cover a full range of clinical services and management functions, as well as infrastructural aspects and ancillary services—for example, kitchen, cleaning and laundry services. This enables a holistic view of all the components required for safe and efficient provision of healthcare services.

The third edition of SafeCare standards has been re-accredited by the International Society for Quality in Health Care (ISQua). ISQua is a global organisation responsible for assessing the standards of organisations that set the benchmarks in healthcare safety and quality.

SafeCare is a multinational nonprofit foundation and a collaboration of [PharmAccess](#) in the Netherlands; [Joint Commission International](#) (JCI) in the United States; and the [Council for Health Service Accreditation of Southern Africa \(COHSASA\)](#) in South Africa. Currently, 1,899 clinics in five sub-Saharan countries, with an average of 2.2 million patient visits each month, are participating in the SafeCare quality improvement program.

Most importantly, 78% of clinics that participate in the SafeCare program have shown improvement in compliance with the SafeCare standards on a follow-up visit.

The re-accreditation by ISQua recognises the quality of the updated standards, which ISQua first approved in 2013. The standards have been revised since then to incorporate knowledge learned from the healthcare providers implementing them in the field – as well as clarify the scoring methodology.

SafeCare's standards are the only ISQua-accredited clinical standards tailor-made for resource-restricted settings. The SafeCare standards and certification methodology combines the respective knowledge, expertise, skills, tools and experience of all three member organisations – to issue a graded "Certificate of Improvement" to different categories of healthcare facilities ranging from nurse-driven health clinics to district hospitals.

"Maintaining ISQua accreditation for the standards is integral to the quality of the SafeCare brand," said Nicole Spieker, Director of Quality at PharmAccess. "It provides validation for patients, healthcare providers, governments, and donors in the level of care provided at SafeCare certified organisations. These standards have resulted in better quality care for millions of patients across the African continent."

Paula Wilson, president and CEO, Joint Commission International, said, "All people deserve quality healthcare, and ISQua's re-accreditation of the SafeCare standards is a clear recognition of SafeCare's focus on continuous improvement. Regardless of a healthcare organisation's resource situation, we want them to meet the standards that can help them improve quality and protect their patients from harm."

"The SafeCare standards enable clinics in resource poor settings to begin their quality journey with small steps and aspire to ultimately achieving accreditation," said Jacqui Stewart, CEO, Council for Health Service Accreditation of Southern Africa.

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The Council for Health Service Accreditation of Southern Africa (COHSASA), a not-for-profit organisation in Cape Town, South Africa, assists a wide range of healthcare facilities to meet and maintain quality standards.

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