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by Torrie Cope

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St. Luke's Nampa hospital waiting for accreditation survey

Delay impacts patients with government health insurance

NAMPA — The new St. Luke's hospital in Nampa, which opened just two weeks ago, is still waiting for a survey to receive accreditation by The Joint Commission, a health care accreditation and certification organization.

That is impacting patients covered by government health insurance, including Medicare and Medicaid.

At this time, patients with government health insurance are not eligible to have their procedures at the new hospital covered by insurance, with the exception of the emergency department.

When a new hospital opens with a new license and a new Medicare provider number, there's a gap between when it opens and when that accreditation survey takes place, said Kathy Moore, vice president of acute care services for St. Luke's.

"We're in that gap period right now," she said.

Hospitals have to be open for a period of time before the survey can take place, so it's normal to have this gap, but the delay is longer than they'd like, Moore said.

St. Luke's expects to have the survey done in the first or second week of December, but the survey is unannounced, Moore said.

Patients who need emergency care through the emergency department will not pay more at St. Luke's Nampa than anywhere else during this time, Moore said. But for non-urgent services, such as scheduling a surgery, Medicare will not cover that at the Nampa hospital until the accreditation is in place.

"We're letting patients know they may want to go to a facility that is in network for government payers," Moore said.

The situation does not impact other types of insurance. The hospital is licensed by the state to provide patient care, but is only waiting on the Joint Commission accreditation.

The Joint Commission is an independent, nonprofit organization that accredits 21,000 health care organizations and programs across the country, according to the organization.

The St. Luke's Nampa hospital opened Oct. 30.

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