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Post-pandemic vendor credentialing has been elevated to a compliance standard

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Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, hospitals and their staff have worked diligently to implement policies issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as well as state and local governments. The measures put in place—wearing masks, maintaining at least six feet of physical distance from others, avoiding crowds, proper hand hygiene, cleaning, and disinfection—have been aimed at slowing the rate of infection and preserving public health. Furthermore, healthcare providers must comply with additional requirements for infection prevention and control practices, such as active screening of all visitors for COVID-19 symptoms before entering a facility, as well as maintaining a record of all screened visitors.

One of the outcomes of COVID-19 is that infection prevention and control practices have been thrust into the limelight. Healthcare providers are under a more watchful eye from federal and state governments. They must demonstrate compliance with a growing number of mandates or risk significant fines. And even more interesting, they feel pressure from the general public to affirm that safety protocols are followed.

This focus on safety and infection control will not recede with the virus; rather, it will become another new post-pandemic normal. In collaboration with GHX, Orbees Medical recently surveyed more than 80 provider organizations and found that nearly 93% of respondents believe compliance controls will increase as a result of the pandemic. Further, both providers and suppliers expect greater enforcement of policies and requirements than in the past.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, hospitals were concerned about the growing complexity and volume of regulations. It's estimated that health systems, hospitals, and post-acute care providers spend more than \$39 billion annually on nonclinical regulatory compliance.^[1] The swell of regulations coupled with the anticipation of future outbreaks is pressuring compliance officers to rethink old processes and develop a more automated, standardized approach to manage credentialing and compliance.

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