



Specific Accreditation Criteria

Sleep Disorders Services

**Accreditation of a service operating with
off-site supervision**

December 2023

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Accreditation of a service with off-site supervision

Introduction

It is recognised that a sleep disorders service may operate in a non-metropolitan location where the requirements of the *ASA Standard for Sleep Disorders Services* for on-site presence of the Medical Director and Scientist/Technologist in Charge and the requirements of *NATA Specific Accreditation Criteria: Sleep Disorders Services, Accreditation of 'Branch' Services* are not met.

This document details the criteria a service operating in non-metropolitan situations must meet in order to fulfil the accreditation criteria.

The rationale for the criteria is that 'off-site supervision' may be appropriate under certain arrangements with consideration to geographic location, availability of technology and accessibility, and communication of the non-metropolitan site with the Medical Director and Scientist/Technologist in Charge. Consideration to such arrangements may allow the continuation of sleep services in non-metropolitan locations that may otherwise cease.

Definitions

'Off-site supervision' is defined as a facility operating with clinical and technical supervision that is provided by a Medical Director and Scientist/Technologist in Charge who are primarily not onsite.

Non-metropolitan is defined as any area which excludes major cities as per the ASGS Remoteness Areas:

<http://www.doctorconnect.gov.au/locator>

Eligibility criteria for Sleep Disorders Services

The following criteria must be satisfied for a service to be accredited as an 'off-site supervision' service:

- the Medical Director and Scientist/Technologist in Charge must be identified and a formal agreement with the non-metropolitan service established;
- all accreditation (and regulatory) requirements must be satisfied with the exception of Clauses 5.1.2 (b) & (c) of the ASA Standards, however, training and experience criteria must still be met;
- circumstances for which on-site requirements (Clause 5.1.2 (b) & (c)) are unable to be met must be established and verified by the Sleep Disorders Services Accreditation Advisory Committee;
- the 'off-site supervision' arrangement must be clearly documented;
- a supervising Scientist/Technologist (on-site) must be appointed to the service;
- the service must not meet the criteria as a branch service as defined in the *NATA Specific Accreditation Criteria: Sleep Disorders Services, Accreditation of Multi-site Services*.

In general, remote supervision as described in this document is not supported for Paediatric services. However it may be considered on a case-by-case basis so long as the following criteria are met:

- safety issues relevant to paediatric services in the event of an emergency (such as availability of on-site resuscitation for children) must have been addressed;
- quality standards of the service must meet all the required paediatric criteria;
- there must be availability of an on-call paediatric physician at the site during performance of studies;
- competence in the interpretation of raw study data for paediatric patients must be demonstrated;
- overnight CO₂ monitoring must be available.

Off-site supervision requirements - Medical Director

For a service where 'off-site supervision' is established as appropriate, the following requirements must be fulfilled by the Medical Director of the service:

- adequate clinical/medical governance of the service must be demonstrated (refer to Appendix A);
- face to face (onsite) visits must be conducted on a quarterly basis (a minimum of 16 hours per year), which must occur during normal operating hours of the off-site laboratory;
- regular minuted formal contact (at minimum monthly) with the Scientist/Technologist in Charge, supervising Scientist/Technologist and service staff on-site via videoconference or teleconference or in person;
- be available at all operating times to staff on-site by telephone or electronically for medical and/or clinical advice and/or consultation;
- during a leave of absence an appropriately qualified back up must be nominated.

Off-site supervision requirements - Scientist / Technologist in Charge

For a service where 'off-site supervision' is established as appropriate the following requirements must be fulfilled by the Scientist/Technologist in Charge of the service:

- adequate technical supervision of the service must be demonstrated;
- face to face (on-site) visits must be conducted on a quarterly basis (a minimum of 16 hours per year), which must occur during normal operating hours of the off-site laboratory;
- regular minuted formal contact (at minimum fortnightly) with supervising Scientist/Technologist and service staff on-site via videoconference, teleconference or in person;
- be available at all operating times to staff on-site by telephone or electronically for technical advice or consultation;
- during a leave of absence an appropriately qualified deputy must be nominated.

Assessment process

The usual assessment processes, defined in the *NATA Procedures for Accreditation* will apply in assessing services operating under 'off-site supervision'.

The 'off-site supervision' service must satisfy all relevant *ASA/NATA Accreditation Criteria*.

The initial assessment will include an assessment of the site at which the 'off-site supervision' service operates with the Medical Director and Scientist/Technologist in Charge present.

Surveillance program

The service's capability for appropriate clinical and technical supervision to be maintained remotely will be reviewed every assessment cycle (for information on the assessment cycle refer to Section 2 of the *NATA Procedures for Accreditation* document).

If, at a visit to an 'off-site supervision' service, it becomes evident that there is a lack of supervision and/or control of the clinical and technical supervision of the service, the scope of accreditation will be reviewed and may be suspended. This review may include additional visits.

Any additional visits to 'off-site supervision' services will incur costs in accordance with NATA's Fee Schedule current at the time.

Description of 'off-site supervision' services in the scope of accreditation

The 'off-site supervision' services scope of accreditation will detail that 'off-site supervision' is in place.

Appendix A (Normative)

Supervisory activities must include at least the following:

- provide input for the annual performance review of on-site staff;
- documented review of all internal quality control and proficiency testing program activities;
- documented evidence of staff meetings and supervisory contacts;
- documented evidence of liaison with users of the service including with clinical referrers;
- documented review of incidents, complaints and corrective actions.

References

This section lists publications referenced in this document. The year of publication is not included as it is expected that only current versions of the references shall be used.

Standards

ASA Standard for Sleep Disorders Services

NATA publications

ASA/NATA Accreditation Criteria (NAC) package for Sleep Disorders Services

NATA Procedures for Accreditation

Specific Accreditation Criteria Sleep Disorders Services, Accreditation of Multi-site Services

Amendment Table

The table below provides a summary of changes made to the document with this issue.

Section or Clause	Amendment
Eligibility criteria References	Updated reference to criteria document.
All	Security Classification Label added