



National Health Council

1730 M Street NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20036-4561 ■ 202-785-3910 ■ www.nationalhealthcouncil.org ■ info@nhcouncil.org

NHC Membership Application for Voluntary Health Agencies

Created by and for patient organizations 100 years ago, the National Health Council (NHC) brings diverse organizations together to forge consensus and drive patient-centered health policy. We promote increased access to affordable, high-value, sustainable health care. Made up of more than 140 national health-related organizations and businesses, the NHC's core membership includes the nation's leading patient organizations, referred to as voluntary health organizations). VHA's form the core of NHC's governance structure and are critical to mission delivery. Other important and valued members include health-related associations and nonprofit organizations including the provider, research, and family caregiver communities; and businesses representing biopharmaceutical, device, diagnostic, generic, and payer organizations.

Voluntary health agencies (VHAs) are defined as 501(c)(3) organizations composed of individuals, both lay and professional, or of associations of both lay and professional individuals, voluntarily and democratically organized. Their mission is to combat a particular disease, disability, or group of diseases and disabilities, or to improve and protect the health of a particular group of people. They receive a substantial amount of financial support from voluntary contributions from the public at large. They engage in programs, such as research, education, advocacy, and service to individuals and communities.

Please tell us more about your organization so we can work together to put patients first.

Organization Name: _____

Year Organization was Founded: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Chief Executive Officer: _____

Email & Phone: _____

Assistant (if applicable): _____

Email & Phone: _____

Chief Financial Officer: _____

Email & Phone: _____

Reason for Joining: _____



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Standards of Excellence Certification Program® Minimum Standards Questions

The NHC requires that its member voluntary health organizations (VHAs) comply with the Standards of Excellence Certification Program®. These standards represent the highest bar of transparency and accountability in the sector. By adhering to these standards, NHC and its members are able to represent the experience of patients and caregivers and be respected as experts and understood to operate with integrity.

The 38 Standards cover the areas of governance, human resources, programs, fundraising, finance, accounting and reporting, and evaluation. In addition, there are 11 minimum Standards that all patient advocacy organizations must meet before they can apply for membership. The chart below can be used as a guide to determine which of the 11 minimum standards your organization meets upon submission of this application. NHC encourages potential members who do not believe they have met these minimum standards to move forward with the application. Staff will provide guidance as needed to bring the membership application into compliance.

When completing this table, mark as TRUE any area that is currently reflected by your organization. Add notes of clarification as necessary.

| Standard | Current Status |
|--|----------------------------|
| Standard 1: The organization's governance documents state that: a) its primary purpose is health-related and national in scope; b) there is a procedure for governing the organization; c) the organization conforms with applicable state and federal law regarding the filing of governance documents; d) the organization has been in operation for no less than three years; and e) relationships with any affiliated organizations using the same name and logo are codified in a written agreement. | a) b) c) d) e) |
| GOVERNANCE | |
| Standard 3: The Board has a minimum of eight members. | |
| Standard 4: The organization's bylaws specify term limits for Board members. | |
| Standard 9: Board members may not receive compensation for their Board service other than reimbursement for reasonable expenses incurred to fulfill their Board duties. Board members may be directly or indirectly compensated by the organization for other services, subject to review and approval by the governing Board and provided that a substantial majority of the Board remains independent. | |
| HUMAN RESOURCES | |
| Standard 17: The organization employs a chief staff executive either directly or through outsourced management. | |
| PROGRAMS | |
| Standard 18: The organization is engaged in any one or more of the following programs: research, professional education, public education and health promotion, health services, community services, advocacy, or social action. | |
| Standard 19: The organization spends at least 65 percent of annual expenses for program services. | |
| FINANCE | |
| Standard 24: The organization demonstrates a broad base of public support in its funding sources by: 1) maintaining its section 501(c)(3) public charity status in accordance with the requirements of the Internal Revenue Code and Treasury regulations and 2) developing a Board-approved gift acceptance policy that must cover: a) a requirement for | 1) 2) |



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| mission-related benefit, independence and control, consistency, and balance (consistent with Standard 32); b) types of acceptable donations (i.e., property, stock); c) types of acceptable donors (i.e., individual, foundation); d) criteria for refusal; and e) process and operating procedures for evaluating gifts. * | |
| FUNDRAISING | |
| Standard 26: The organization does not enter into agreements with organizations or individuals to raise funds on a commission or percentage basis. | |
| ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING | |
| Standard 34: The organization ordinarily spends no more than 35 percent of its public support income on fundraising. | |
| Standard 36: The organization has an audit of national office operations performed annually by an independent certified public accountant. | |

** Organizations that lack a gift acceptance policy can be accepted, provided that they commit to adopt such a policy within 6 months of approval.*

Please link to or submit the following with your application:

- Annual Report
- Articles of Incorporation
- Audited Financial Statements
- Bylaws