



GUIDELINES FOR MARKETING AND ADVERTISING PREFERRED PROVIDER ORGANIZATION ACCREDITATION

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INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on earning NCQA Accreditation, Certification, Recognition, Distinction or other NCQA status! We encourage you to publicize your achievement and have developed the following Marketing and Advertising Guidelines to help you get the most out of your NCQA status. The Guidelines include how to market your achievement, appropriate language to incorporate into your marketing and advertising materials and helpful ideas to get you started.

The guidelines are designed to help NCQA customers to create advertising and marketing materials that reference NCQA status in a clear, factual and accurate manner. They are also designed to protect the integrity of NCQA's programs and allow all participants to benefit from their achievement in a fair and accurate manner.

The Guidelines below are to be used in conjunction with NCQA's General Marketing Guidelines. Organizations that receive Preferred Provider Organization Accreditation are required to follow NCQA's General Guidelines for review and approval of all marketing and advertising materials.

****SPECIAL NOTE: These guidelines are for organizations that already hold this status/designation. This product has been replaced by Health Plan Accreditation (HPA) and all organizations that obtain status in the future should follow the HPA guidelines. For questions, please contact us at marketing@ncqa.org.**

DESCRIPTIONS OF NCQA PREFERRED PROVIDER ORGANIZATION ACCREDITATION PROCESS

The following statements may be used in your marketing and advertising material:

- NCQA PPO Accreditation is a nationally recognized evaluation that purchasers, regulators and consumers can use to assess PPO plans.
- NCQA PPO Accreditation evaluates how well a PPO plan manages all parts of its delivery system -- physicians, hospitals, other providers and administrative services -- in order to continuously improve the quality of care and services provided to its members.
- NCQA PPO Accreditation is a voluntary review process.
- NCQA PPO Accreditation surveys include rigorous on-site and off-site evaluations of 51 standards. A team of physicians and PPO experts conducts accreditation surveys. A national oversight committee of physicians analyzes the team's findings and assigns an accreditation level based on the performance level of each plan being evaluated to NCQA's standards.
- PPO Accreditation involves rigorous review of the key functions PPO plans perform. The review focuses specifically on areas of interest to consumers and employers. Expert surveyors review the PPO plans in the following areas:

- Quality Management and Improvement (QI)
- Utilization Management (UM)
- Credentialing and Recredentialing (CR)
- Enrollees' Rights and Responsibilities (RR)
- Member Connections (MEM)

DESCRIPTIONS OF NCQA PREFERRED PROVIDER ORGANIZATION ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

The following statements may be used in your marketing and advertising material:

- The standards are purposely set high to encourage PPO plans to continuously enhance their quality. No comparable evaluation exists for fee-for-service health care.
- The standards are intended to help organizations achieve the highest level of performance possible, reduce patient risk for untoward outcomes and create an environment of continuous improvement.
- PPO Accreditation standards are publicly reported in two categories:
 - Access and Service*
Do PPO plan members have access to the care and service they need?
 - Qualified Providers*
Does the PPO plan assess each doctor's qualifications and what PPO plan members say about its providers?

PREFERRED PROVIDER ORGANIZATION ACCREDITATION LEVELS

Full Accreditation is granted to those PPO plans that have excellent programs for continuous quality improvement and meet or exceed NCQA's rigorous standards.

One-Year Accreditation is granted to PPO plans that have well-established quality improvement programs and meet most NCQA standards. *(NCQA provides the plans with a specific list of recommendations and reviews the plans again after one year to determine if they have progressed enough to move up to Full Accreditation..)*

USE OF PREFERRED PROVIDER ORGANIZATION ACCREDITATION SEALS

NCQA encourages organizations that have earned Preferred Provider Organization Accreditation to display their seals in marketing and advertising materials.

- Organizations that have been awarded Preferred Provider Organization Accreditation **must** follow all guidelines for the use of seals provided in the NCQA General Advertising Guidelines.

- Preferred Provider Organization Accreditation consists of two levels, each with a separate and distinct seal.
 - Full Accreditation
 - One-Year Accreditation
- Organizations can only display the seal that corresponds to the level of Accreditation they have been awarded.
- You may access the seals at www.ncqa.org/marketing.aspx .
- Seals are provided in EPS and JPEG formats.
- NCQA has updated all program seals effective with the 2008 Accreditation cycle. All organizations, regardless of their place in the review cycle, must use the updated seals on their materials and must cease use of any old seals no later than December 31, 2009. All electronic materials and websites should be updated immediately and all new print materials or reprints should use the new seal as well.
- Organizations should be aware that Accreditation statuses can change which may affect the statement on durable goods (e.g.: a billboard that is no longer accurate will have to be corrected). It is the organization's responsibility to maintain and update accurate marketing materials. Should your status change, you are responsible for updating all promotional items, and **must** cease distribution of all materials with incorrect status information. Updating of website and other distributed materials should take place within 30 days of the status change.

APPROVED QUOTES

Organizations earning PPO Accreditation can use one of the following quotes from Margaret E. O'Kane, President, in their marketing material.

Full Accreditation

"To earn Full Accreditation from NCQA, a PPO must adhere to a rigorous set of requirements designed to keep patients safe and allow them to have access to care and excellent service. It is a significant achievement and we commend any PPO that steps forward to participate in the process."

"A PPO has to provide its members with great service and ready access to care in order to earn NCQA's Full Accreditation. It is a significant achievement that shows that the organization is committed to quality"

"Earning Full Accreditation shows that a PPO is providing access to care and high quality service – it shows that the organization looks after its members' interests."

One-Year Accreditation Quotes

"Achieving One-Year Accreditation from NCQA is a notable achievement. It shows that a PPO is dedicated to quality improvement and accountability and that it is working to meet its members' needs."

COMPLIANCE

Any advertising material or other promotional effort that refers to NCQA status and violates any of the NCQA Marketing and Advertising Guidelines, or which is in any way false or misleading as determined by NCQA, may be grounds for revocation of the organization's status (es).

It is the responsibility of the organization to follow the General Marketing Guidelines as well as the product specific guidelines and conform to all applicable NCQA Marketing and Advertising Guidelines. Failure to do so may jeopardize the organization's status.

NCQA reserves the right to require an organization to withdraw advertising material from distribution immediately or to publish, at the organization's cost, a retraction and/or clarification in connection with any false or misleading statements or any violation of all applicable NCQA Marketing and Advertising Guidelines. Each organization agrees in advance to remedy such violation with the action deemed appropriate by NCQA. In addition, NCQA reserves the right to conduct an audit of an organization's NCQA-related advertising and marketing materials at any time.

Thank you for observing these guidelines, and please don't hesitate to contact us with questions at marketing@ncqa.org.