



GUIDELINES FOR MARKETING AND ADVERTISING PHYSICIAN ORGANIZATION CERTIFICATION

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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 Physician Organization Certification are required to follow NCQA's General Guidelines for review and approval of all marketing and advertising materials.

PHYSICIAN ORGANIZATION CERTIFICATION GUIDELINES

- Organizations **must** always indicate which category the Certification applies to (unless all three categories are certified - The three categories are:
 - Credentialing and Recredentialing
 - Quality Management and Improvement
 - Utilization Management
- Organizations that obtain Physician Organization Certification **cannot** use the term "Full Certification". (*NCQA does not examine ALL of the modules and services performed by that organization.*)
- Organizations advertising Certification status should clearly indicate they have achieved Physician Organization Certification (POC).

APPROVED LANGUAGE

Specific Guidelines for organizations Certified in 3 out of 3 Categories:

Organizations that have been certified in all three categories of certification offered by NCQA cannot simply state that they are "NCQA Certified" because NCQA does not examine ALL functions and services performed by that organization. Instead, please use the following language:

- Organization A received NCQA Physician Organization Certification in 3 out of 3 categories.
- Organization A is certified through NCQA's Physician Organization Certification program in 3 out of 3 categories.
- Organization A is certified through NCQA's Physician Organization Certification program for the following activities...
- Organization A is compliant with NCQA Standards for the Certification of Physician Organizations.

Language for Organizations certified for less than 3 categories:

If your organization has received certification for Quality Improvement, Credentialing and Re-Credentialing, or Utilization Management you **must** use one of the following statements within your marketing text or as a footnote.

- An organization **must** clearly state which modules it has received certification for:

Examples:

- Organization A has received Physician Organization Certification for the following functions/activities...
- Organization A has NCQA Physician Organization Certification in Quality Improvement, Credentialing and Re-Credentialing, and Utilization Management (or whichever categories apply).

DESCRIPTIONS OF PHYSICIAN ORGANIZATION CERTIFICATION

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

- PO Certification is a quality assessment program that health plans can use to assess a physician organization's ability to accept delegation for specific categories of NCQA standards.
- PO Certification evaluates a physician organization's ability to meet specific categories of NCQA standards and its capacity to accept delegated responsibilities.
- PO Certification is a voluntary review process.
- PO Certification is a nationally recognized evaluation that health plan and purchasers can use to assess physician organizations. NCQA's Certification evaluates how well a PO manages its clinical and administrative systems in order to continuously improve health care for its members. Certification focuses on the POs role as a delegate, or agent performing a function on behalf of health plan.

- NCQA surveys are rigorous on- and off-site evaluations conducted by a team of physicians and managed care experts. A national oversight committee of physicians analyzes the team's findings and determines certification based on the PO's performance compared to NCQA standards.
- PO Certification reduces duplicative oversight and inefficient gathering of information by organizations.
- PO Certification is governed by the rigorous *Standards and Guidelines for the Certification of Physician Organizations*, developed with the assistance of representatives from the Advisory Group representing physician organizations, employers, managed care organizations and quality experts.

USE OF PHYSICIAN ORGANIZATION CERTIFICATION SEALS

NCQA encourages organizations that have received Physician Organization Certification to display their seals in marketing and advertising materials.

- NCQA issues one seal for organizations that have earned Physician Organization Certification.
- You may access the seals at www.ncqa.org/marketing.aspx .
- Seals are provided in EPS and JPG 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 Certification 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 PO "Certification" can use the following quote from Margaret E. O'Kane, President, in their marketing material.

"Achieving PO Certification from NCQA demonstrates that _____ has the systems, process and personnel in place to continuously improve the quality of care it delivers, and to help health plan clients meet their accreditation goals."

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.