

Introduction

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 Guidelines for Advertising and Marketing (www.ncqa.org/NCQAGuidelines).

Marketing and Advertising Materials

Advertising and other promotional materials can be used to publicize your Quality Compass results. You can use a variety of materials to show plan achievement. Below is a list of items to consider:

- Print: newsletter, magazine advertisements, directories, brochures.
- Electronic Media: website, social media and email
- Press Releases
- TV/Radio Promotion
- Letters to employers
- Mugs, T-shirts, pens and other miscellaneous items

Guidelines for Advertising and Marketing Quality Compass Results

Below are guidelines to help you correctly communicate your results as specified in your **Quality Compass license agreement**:

- Organizations must advertise precisely which HEDIS® or CAHPS® measures the Quality Compass result reflects.
- Organizations are required to use "rate" or "results" in reference to the Quality Compass data, not "rank" or "ranking."
- Organizations can make competitive comparisons of Quality Compass results, in the same geographic market, provided that an average or percentile appears in the comparison (i.e., national, regional, or state for that particular measure(s)).
- The following footnote **MUST APPEAR** in any material that cites Quality Compass as a source of HEDIS and/or CAHPS data:
 - *The source for data contained in this publication is Quality Compass® [year of version referenced] (e.g. Quality Compass® 2018) and is used with the permission of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). Quality Compass [year of version referenced] includes certain*

CAHPS data. Any data display, analysis, interpretation, or conclusion based on these data is solely that of the authors, and NCQA specifically disclaims responsibility for any such display, analysis, interpretation, or conclusion. Quality Compass is a registered trademark of NCQA. CAHPS® is a registered trademark of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).

Recommended Language

Organizations may use the following statements, alone or in combination with other language, to identify or describe NCQA, the accreditation process or their accreditation status.

Descriptions of NCQA

Please use one of the statements below should you choose to describe NCQA. It is not mandatory that these statements be included in your marketing piece.

- NCQA is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to improving health care quality.
- NCQA is an independent, not-for-profit organization dedicated to assessing and reporting on the quality of managed care plans, managed behavioral healthcare organizations, preferred provider organizations, new health plans, physician organizations, credentials verification organizations, disease management programs and other health-related programs.
- NCQA accredits and certifies a wide range of health care organizations and manages the evolution of HEDIS®, the performance measurement tool used by more than 90 percent of the nation's health plans.
- NCQA's website (ncqa.org) contains information to help consumers, employers and others make more informed health care choices.
- NCQA is governed by a Board of Directors that includes employers, consumer and labor representatives, health plans, quality experts, policy makers and representatives from organized medicine.
- Consumers can easily access organizations' NCQA statuses and other information on health care quality on NCQA's website at www.ncqa.org, or by calling NCQA Customer Support at (888) 275-7585.
- NCQA's mission is to improve the quality of health care.

Descriptions of Quality Compass

- Quality Compass® is NCQA's comprehensive national database of health plans' HEDIS® and CAHPS® results.
- Quality Compass contains plan-specific, comparative and descriptive information on the performance of hundreds of managed care organizations, providing benefits managers, health plans, consultants, the media, and others with the ability to conduct a detailed market analysis.
- Quality Compass is designed to provide benefits managers, health plans, consultants, the media, and others with access to comprehensive information about health plan quality and performance.

Quality Compass Embargo

Organizations may publicize or disseminate their own HEDIS data results without restriction. However, the HEDIS results of other health plans, national and regional averages and all other information included in Quality Compass 2018 are

embargoed for use in advertising or marketing, or in any other broadcast public communications until October 1, 2018 for Quality Compass 2018: Commercial data and October 8, 2018 for Quality Compass 2018: Medicaid data.

NCQA Trademarks

Quality Compass®

Quality Compass® is a registered trademark of NCQA. The registered trademark symbol should be applied directly after the word “Compass.” The organization need only apply the trademark to the first reference of the term “Quality Compass” within the written material. At the bottom of the page where the registered trademark first appears there should be a footnote which states “Quality Compass® is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).”

HEDIS®

Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) is a registered trademark of NCQA. The registered trademark symbol should be applied directly after the word “HEDIS.” The organization need only apply the trademark to the first reference of the term “HEDIS” within the written material. At the bottom of the page where the registered trademark first appears there should be a footnote which states “HEDIS® is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).”

CAHPS®

Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS®) is a registered trademark of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). The registered trademark symbol should be applied directly after the word “CAHPS®.” The organization need only apply the trademark to the first reference of the term “CAHPS” within the written material. At the bottom of the page where the trademark first appears there should be a footnote which states “CAHPS® is a registered trademark of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).”

How to Describe Your NCQA Status in a Press Release

All of the preceding rules apply to press releases.

Organizations are welcome to create their own press releases mentioning Quality Compass data. Your press release must include a description of Quality Compass from the guidelines and the NCQA boiler plate:

NCQA is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to improving health care quality. NCQA accredits and certifies a wide range of health care organizations. It also recognizes clinicians and practices in key areas of performance. NCQA’s Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) is the most widely used performance measurement tool in health care. NCQA’s website (ncqa.org) contains information to help consumers, employers and others make more-informed health care choices. NCQA can be found online at ncqa.org, on Twitter [@ncqa](https://twitter.com/ncqa), on Facebook at facebook.com/NCQA.org/ and on LinkedIn at linkedin.com/company/ncqa.

Submit questions related to press releases through [My NCQA](#).

Compliance

It is the responsibility of the organization to follow and conform to all applicable NCQA Marketing and Advertising Guidelines. The information referencing your NCQA status or product must be accurate and not misleading. Only the organization that obtained the NCQA status can advertise such status and use the corresponding seal. The organizations’

affiliates, including delegated entities, contractors and partners, are not allowed to use the NCQA status and seal. Failure to comply with these guidelines may jeopardize the organization's NCQA status.

In addition, NCQA will conduct periodic audits of customers' marketing and advertising materials at any time to ensure that marketing materials are true, not misleading, and that the organization's NCQA status is represented correctly. Failure to participate in the NCQA audit or refuse to comply with NCQA's request to address inaccuracies in information related to NCQA, NCQA status and/or product in your marketing and/or advertising materials constitutes a violation of NCQA's advertising guidelines and may result in, at NCQA's discretion, a revocation of an organization's NCQA status(es).

Organizations must maintain all copies of their marketing and advertising materials referencing NCQA status(es) and/or product(s) released or used in the past six months.

NCQA reserves the right to require an organization to withdraw their advertising materials 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.

Special Situations

NCQA realizes that these guidelines may not address all potential marketing and advertising materials. In such instances, organizations should contact the NCQA Marketing department through [My NCQA](#) to discuss the proposed marketing/advertising activity and associated marketing and/or advertising materials to achieve outcomes consistent with the spirit of these guidelines.

NCQA will respond to complaints regarding inaccurate and/or misleading advertising materials by our customers and their affiliates. Such complaints could initiate an audit of an organization's materials outside of the regular audit process.