



National Association of EMS Physicians®

Position Statement Guidance Plan

APPROVED: Board of Directors, October 2016

AUDIENCE: NAEMSP membership

PURPOSE: Define and implement a structure for receiving, processing, and development Position Statements and Resource Documents of NAEMSP

Introduction:

At the National Association of EMS Physicians® (NAEMSP) we pride ourselves in being the world's leader in the development and practice of EMS Medicine. Maintaining and advancing our position in the field requires us to maintain awareness of our existing practices, to identify areas where EMS can be improved, and to keep a watchful eye on the horizon as new practices and technology emerge. As members we are the strength of NAEMSP. Our organization's members are the zeniths in the field of EMS medicine, and together we are looked upon to provide the foundations of our practice through active leadership and advocacy. The strength of our membership is fortified when we achieve a collective voice through development and dissemination of position statements and resource documents.

Our membership's diversity in experience, roles, and practice environments help us achieve a voice with depth and breadth. However that diversity also creates potential for divergence from a unified voice unless our mission is collectively defined and understood. As NAEMSP develops the position statements and resource documents that help us provide leadership and advocacy for our practice and to our stakeholders, we value the input of members who possess focused knowledge and experience. It is important to accept, though, that such input must sometimes be tempered to ensure our message is reflective of our organization's collective values and mission.

Development of NAEMSP's position statements is not achieved by a single person or as an isolated event. They are the net result of collaborative and integrated efforts. To be effective, development of position statements and resource documents requires an approach that ensures the documents have sufficient merit, effective governance, that the change impacts of the documents are fully appreciated, and that key tasks are achieved in a timely manner.

A critical element of our position statements and resource documents is for the end users to fully understand, buy in, and adopt the concepts described in those documents. The development of these documents necessitates our adoption of effective change management principles. Change management is the practice of transitioning individuals, teams, and organizations from a current state to an ideal future state. Several tactics exist to execute effective change management including: organizational design, communication, leadership alignment, training, business readiness, adoption measurement, and project management. Some of these tactics must be deployed at the



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local level because they are outside the span of control of NAEMSP. However, for those tactics that are in our purview, it is imperative we employ those tactics following a common and consistent framework.

A consistent process that encompasses the solicitation, submission, screening, sanctioning, project development, ratification, and distribution of position statement topics is necessary to ensure each document we produce is appropriately vetted for merit and risks, is written according to the organization's standards and values, and is sustained through its lifecycle. With membership representation through the Standards & Clinical Practices committee, the NAEMSP Board of Directors has organized the tasks associated with position statement and resource document development into a *Position Statement Guidance Plan* aimed at achieving a consistent, standardized approach to project management from conception to publication and lifecycle sustainment.

Guidance Plan Elements and Process Description:

See accompanying Figure: *NAEMSP Position Statement Guidance Plan Process Map*

The *Guidance Plan* involves the solicitation, submission, and screening of suggestions for position statement topics received from internal and external stakeholders. Suggested topics are processed through a series of committees and workgroups including the *Standards & Clinical Practices Committee*, the *Board of Directors*, and *Project Writing Teams*. A description of the roles and responsibilities of these entities follows.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is responsible for ensuring NAEMSP's position statements are consistent with the organization's current and future strategic priorities and values. Under this *Guidance Plan* this responsibility includes sanctioning of suggested position statement topics that have undergone screening by the Standards & Clinical Practices Committee (S&P), as well as final ratification of completed position statements prior to submission for publication in *Prehospital Emergency Care (PEC)*. [Resource documents do not require Board ratification, but do require editorial approval from the editorial review board of *PEC* prior to publication.]

The Board is also responsible for prioritization of existing and planned writing initiatives and for communicating those priorities to S&P and the project writing teams via established committee liaisons. Finally, when position statement development involves entities external to NAEMSP, the Board must provide sanctioning of involvement of external parties when NAEMSP is the primary author, and sanctioning of NAEMSP member involvement on the writing team when NAEMSP is not the primary author.

Standards & Clinical Practices Committee

The Board of Directors has established a standing *Standards & Clinical Practices Committee (S&P)* to provide the resources and leadership necessary to develop position



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statements and resource documents for the organization. Though other committees have the opportunity to author such documents, it is important to maintain involvement of S&P to ensure the organization's standards for document content, structure, format, grading, and level of evidence assignments are adhered to from the onset of document development. Under this *Guidance Plan*, S&P holds responsibility for the initial receipt and review of suggested position statement topics and will provide preliminary recommendations regarding the fate of these suggestions to the Board of Directors. Following Board sanctioning of a writing project, members of S&P will also hold responsibility for oversight of the project and will moderate the timely achievement of writing tasks. Finally, S&P will perform a committee-level review of the project writing team's completed deliverables prior to consideration by the Board of Directors for ratification.

Project Writing Team

The development of NAEMSP's position statements (and when appropriate, resource documents) requires a team approach. Talent for writing teams may come from any of NAEMSP's committees, but should always include representation from S&P. Additionally, some position statements achieve added value when NAEMSP collaborates with other organizations to create an inter-organization shared message. In such circumstances, the NAEMSP Board of Directors must first sanction the creation of an inter-organizational writing team. Whenever possible, NAEMSP should be positioned to act as the primary authoring organization, and leadership for the writing team should come from within NAEMSP. In circumstances where NAEMSP does not serve as the primary authoring organization of a position statement, the Board must approve NAEMSP membership involvement in the writing team. NAEMSP must perform the screening, sanctioning, and ratification processes outlined by this *Guidance Plan*, even when another organization is the primary author.

Participation on a writing team requires a commitment from each team member to contribute in a meaningful manner. Contributions may include initial literature review, grading of evidence, document drafting, and/or final content editing of the document. The project lead should support each of those contributions while working to keep the project on track and on time.

Timelines

NAEMSP's position statements may be created in response to a newly defined need, to reflect and define a current state of practice, or to proactively establish an ideal future standard. In most cases, position statements will be developed in an urgent or non-urgent timeframe. In some cases positions must be emergently developed to respond contemporaneously to a major event that affects the clinical or operational practice of EMS Medicine. Regardless of the need being filled or the timeframe driving development of a position statement, content development tasks must be completed in



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a timely manner. While NAEMSP recognizes that the contributions of writing team members are voluntary, the importance of establishing and adhering to a project development timeline cannot be understated.

Process Mapping

The following narrative describes the steps a position statement topic suggestion must undergo from initial submission to final publication as depicted in Figure 1.

1. Internal or External entities wishing to make a position statement topic suggestion complete a **Form 1: Position Statement Topic Suggestion SBAR** (*see appendix*) and submit it to the Standards & Clinical Practices Committee.
2. S&P performs an initial review of topic suggestions and makes one of three recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding the fate of each topic suggestion:
 - **Proceed:** Suggestions meeting the recommendation of “proceed” are felt by S&P to encompass enough value to warrant further discussion at the Board of Directors level to further determine if the topic is in line with current or future organizational values and strategic priorities. These topic suggestions will be further defined in **Form 2: Position Statement Topic Proposal** and presented to the Board (see #3 below) for further consideration.
 - **Decline:** Suggestions meeting the recommendation of “decline” are felt by S&P to not encompass enough value to proceed or are felt to be inconsistent with the organization’s values or strategic priorities.
 - **Revise:** Suggestions meeting the recommendation of “revise” are felt by S&P to have some merit, but require additional value proposition/topic development before meeting the threshold for recommendation to proceed. These suggestions will be returned to the stakeholder who submitted the topic to undergo further concept development. S&P will establish a date for additional concept consideration at the time the concept is returned to the stakeholder for further development.
3. The recommended fate of each topic suggestion will be reported by S&P to the Board of Directors at any of the bimonthly Board of Directors meetings.
 - Topic suggestions that S&P recommend to proceed will undergo more detailed description using **Form 2: Position Statement Topic Proposal**. Formal topic proposals will consist of both the **Form 1: Position Statement Topic Suggestion SBAR** and a **Form 2: Position Statement Topic Proposal**.
 - Topic suggestions that S&P recommends to decline or revise will also be reported to the Board of Directors to confirm the suggestion’s fate. This aspect of the *Guidance Plan* will establish a system of checks and balances



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between S&P and the Board with regard to the processing of topic suggestions.

4. The Board of Directors performs a review of the recommendations made by S&P and makes a final decision regarding each topic's fate.
 - **Sanction:** The Board of Directors feels a *topic proposal* conforms to the organization's strategic priorities and values. The Board officially sanctions the topic as a position statement in need of development.
 - **Reject:** The Board of Directors feels a topic proposal fails to conform with the organization's strategic priorities or values and rejects the topic suggestion for any further action.
 - **Revise:** The Board of Directors feels a proposal needs additional development before determining whether the topic conforms with the organization's strategic priorities and values.
5. Sanctioning of a topic proposal triggers the assembly of and initiates action by the Project Writing Team outlined in **Form 2: Position Statement Topic Proposal**. Talent for the writing team may be drawn from internal and/or external factions depending on whether the project is an internal or joint project.
6. The project enters the research and writing phase managed by the Project Writing Team. [*Position statements do not always obligate development of or submission of a Resource Document.*]
7. The project writing team submits their final deliverables to S&P for additional review and editing.
8. S&P either recommends additional revision or approves the documents. Position statements approved by S&P are submitted to the Board of Directors for further review. Resource documents approved by S&P may be co-submitted to the Board of Directors for additional contextual interpretation of the Position Statement, but are not typically subject to final review and approval by the Board of Directors.
9. Final document review occurs by the appropriate entity.
 - a. The Board of Directors performs a final review of the position statement and takes final action:
 - **Approve:** The Board of Directors ratifies the position statement and instructs the Chairperson of S&P to submit the document to *Prehospital Emergency Care* for publication. Position statements do not require peer review by *PEC* prior to publication but are subject to copy editing by *PEC*.
 - **Revise:** The Board of Directors provides recommendations for revision back to the writing team with a deadline for final revisions.
 - b. The Editorial Board of *Prehospital Emergency Care* processes the resource document through their formal peer-review. This stage of the process only



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occurs if the associated position statement is previously ratified by the NAEMSP Board of Directors

10. Documents undergo *PEC* peer review (Resource document) or copy editing (Position statement)

Note: *Publication of position statements and resource documents may not occur simultaneously.*

- a. Position statements are formally published in *PEC*
 - b. Resource documents are accepted by *PEC* for publication or are returned to the writing team for revision.
11. The position statement (and resource document, if applicable) are electronically published on the NAEMSP website.

Summary

The success of the *Guidance Plan* is dependent on adherence to the practice standards established by this framework and supporting documents. Consistent application of the strategies outlined herein will help mitigate past issues in communication and preparation of projects that affect our membership and other stakeholders. As we continue to innovate and lead the EMS industry, in part by producing position statements, utilization of the *Position Statement Guidance Plan* will help secure our success.

Appendix:

Figure 1. NAEMSP Position Statement Guidance Plan Process Map (3 pages)

Form 1: Position Statement Topic Suggestion SBAR

Form 2: Position Statement Topic Proposal