



National Association of EMS Physicians®

Position Statement & Resource Document Development Plan

AUDIENCE: NAEMSP membership

PURPOSE: Update NAEMSP's structure for receiving, processing, and development of documents representing the opinions and science-based positions of NAEMSP.

In October 2016 the NAEMSP board of directors approved the Association's first *Position Statement Guidance Plan*. This document was designed to define and describe how documents representing the Association's position on various topics cogent to the field of EMS Medicine are developed and curated. Since that plan was established, the association has reviewed several aspects of our document development process including the nomenclature identifying different document types and the process for sanctioning and approving proposed projects for development. In 2020 a workgroup of current and prior Standards & Clinical Practices committee chairs was formed to suggest revisions to the existing process. Those suggestions were submitted as version 2.0 of this document.

In 2021 and 2022 NAEMSP embarked on developing and publishing the Prehospital Airway Management and Prehospital Trauma Management compendium projects. Through these compendium projects efforts were made to advance the scientific rigor NAEMSP writing groups used to review evidence in support of the topics discussed in the project manuscripts. Additionally, evolutions were made to the scope and structure of NAEMSPs position statements and resource documents. In conjunction with these changes, several other opportunities for improvement were identified by writing groups for other position statements and resource documents that have been published in the past two years. Based on the lessons learned and the identified opportunities for additional process improvements that could be made, the document development plan document has been revised further and is now offered as version 3.0.

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



documents that represent our organization's official opinions as well as science-based positions.

Our membership's diversity in members, 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 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.

A consistent process that encompasses project solicitation, submission, screening, and sanctioning, as well as project management, ratification, publication, and document distribution 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, that the change impacts of the documents are fully appreciated, that strategic project milestones are achieved in a timely manner and that the document 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 the document development process with intent to achieve a consistent, standardized approach to project management from conception to publication and lifecycle sustainment.

The documents developed to reflect NAEMSP's positions can vary in scope-length and are named and described in the [Recommendations for Methods and Evidence Evaluation and Reporting in NAEMSP Position Statements](#) (see appendix)

Document Development Process Description:

[See Appendix, Figure 1: NAEMSP Document Development Process Map](#)

The document development process involves the solicitation, submission, and screening of project proposals received from internal and external stakeholders. Project proposals are developed by project leads and processed through the Standards & Clinical Practices committee and are then submitted to the board of directors for consideration of formal sanctioning. 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 statement and resource documents are consistent with the organization's current and future strategic priorities and values. Under the document development process, the board's



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responsibility includes sanctioning of project proposals that have undergone screening by the Standards & Practices committee. After a project is sanctioned and final drafts of the project's deliverables are complete, the Standards & Practices committee will review the position statement document and make recommendations to the board to accept or revise the position statement. The board of directors will then provide additional review and final ratification of the position statement. When a resource document is also part of the project, the board will perform formal PEER review of the resource document and will communicate recommended revisions to the project writing team. The board holds final responsibility for ratification of the project's documents and providing approval for publication of the documents in *Prehospital Emergency Care*.

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. Additionally, when document development involves entities external to NAEMSP, the Board must provide sanctioning of involvement of external parties when NAEMSP is the primary author, and approval of NAEMSP member representation on the writing team when NAEMSP is not the primary author.

Standards & Practices Committee

The Board of Directors has established the standing Standards & Practices committee to provide the resources and leadership necessary to develop position statements and resource documents for the organization. Though other committees can author such documents, it is important to maintain involvement of the Standards & Practices committee to ensure the association's standards for document content, structure, format, and evidence review and summation are adhered to from the onset of document development.

Under the document development process, the Standards & Practices committee holds responsibility for the initial receipt and review of project proposals and will provide preliminary recommendations regarding whether the project has enough merit to be endorsed or if there is sufficient valid concern regarding the project to oppose the proposal. The committee will make their recommendations to the board of directors via the Standards & Practices committee chairperson.

Following Board sanctioning of a proposed project, officers of the Standards & Practices committee will hold responsibility for oversight of the project and will moderate the timely achievement of strategic milestones. Finally, Standards & Practices will perform a committee-level review of the final position statement draft prior to consideration by the board of directors for ratification. Resource documents are not



reviewed by the Standards & Practices committee, rather they are submitted to and reviewed directly by the board of directors after the project's position statement document has been ratified.

Project Writing Team

The development of NAEMSP's position documents requires a team approach, including appropriate support from resources of the Standards & Practices Committee when needed. Talent for writing teams may come from any of NAEMSP's committees. It is critical that writing teams are appropriately supported and guided through the entirety of their document development process to ensure that writing projects adhere to organizational writing, format, and content standards, and to assist the writing teams in navigating the organization's document development processes. To that end, after a project proposal is sanctioned by the board of directors, project writing teams that do not include someone with prior experience writing an NAEMSP position document must engage with a Standards & Practices Project Mentor to help advise and guide the project writing team in their efforts. Standards & Practices Project Mentors are not required to be listed as co-author of these documents. However, per requirements set forth in the Prehospital Emergency Care journal standards, everyone meeting the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) requirements for authorship should be included as an author of the published paper.[§]

Inter-organization Joint Project Writing Teams

Some documents 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. The NAEMSP board must also approve NAEMSP representative(s) on projects led by other organizations. NAEMSP will perform our own screening, sanctioning, and ratification processes outlined by this document development process, even when another organization is the primary author.

Project Lead

The project lead is responsible for drafting the project proposal and working with the Standards & Practices committee Chairperson to submit the proposal through the project review and approval process.

The project lead should support the contributions of each co-author while working to keep the project on track and on time. Often co-authors contribute portions of a larger document. As the master document is assembled from these individual contributions it often does not have a consistent voice, syntax, or writing style because



each co-author likely has their own style of writing. Therefore, a critical responsibility of the project lead is to ensure the final drafts of all deliverables are appropriately edited so they are written in a singular, unified voice and writing style. The project lead is also responsible for ensuring the final drafts of all deliverable documents comply with NAEMSP and *Prehospital Emergency Care* style and formatting guides.

The project lead will typically be an NAEMSP member. However, projects that are led by organizations other than NAEMSP but involve NAEMSP as a collaborating entity may have project leads that are not NAEMSP members.

Project Mentor

Proposed projects that have a lead author who has not previously been involved with authoring an NAEMSP position statement and/or resource document will require the engagement of a Standards & Practices committee Project Mentor. The project mentor can be determined by the lead author and the S&P chair at any point during the project proposal and review process but must be assigned before any project proposal is forwarded to the board for sanctioning.

Co-authors

Participation on a writing team requires a commitment from each team member to contribute in a meaningful manner. Contributions may include initial literature searches and evidence review, document drafting, and/or final content editing of the project's deliverables.

Timelines

NAEMSP's position documents may be created in response to a newly defined need, to reflect upon and define a current state of practice, to proactively establish an ideal future standard, or to revise a pre-existing position statement. Depending on the scope and nature of a project, the time and effort needed to review supporting literature, summarize the evidence, and craft the project's deliverables will vary. While NAEMSP recognizes that the contributions of writing team members are voluntary, the importance of establishing and adhering to a project management timeline cannot be understated.



Document Development Process Mapping

The following steps must be undertaken for the initial submission and final publication of a project proposal and deliverable development (Figure 1).

1. A project lead representing internal and/or external entities wishing to propose development of an NAEMSP position statement and/or resource document must complete the [Project Proposal SBAR Form](#) (aka “the SBAR,” *see appendix*) and submit it to the Standards & Clinical Practices committee chairperson.
2. The Standards & Practices committee chairperson will collaborate with the project lead to provide initial screening of the SBAR and to provide initial mentorship regarding the NAEMSP document development process.
3. The Standards & Practices committee will perform an initial review the SBAR portion of the project proposal and make one of three recommendations to the board of directors regarding the fate of the proposal:
 - **Endorse:** Proposals meeting the recommendation of “endorse” are felt by the Standards & Practices committee to encompass enough value to warrant further discussion by the board of directors to determine if the proposed project is in line with current or future association values and strategic priorities.
 - **Oppose:** Proposals meeting the recommendation of “oppose” are felt by the committee to not encompass enough value to proceed or there are significant concerns that the proposed project may be inconsistent with the organization’s values or strategic priorities.
 - **Revise:** Proposals meeting the recommendation of “revise” are felt by the committee to have some merit but require additional value proposition and concept development before meeting the threshold for the committee to provide a recommendation to endorse. Suggestions for SBAR revision will be communicated to the project lead by the committee chairperson. After undergoing revision, the proposal will again be reviewed by the committee for a final endorse or oppose recommendation.
4. When the committee provides a recommendation to endorse the proposed project, the committee chairperson will work with the project lead to ensure the entire project proposal package is complete before the proposal is forwarded to the board of directors for potential sanctioning. The recommended fate of each project proposal will be reported by the Standards & Practices chairperson to the board of directors at any of the bimonthly board of directors’ meetings.
 - Topic suggestions that the committee issues a “oppose” recommendation will also be reported to the board of directors to confirm the project’s fate. This aspect of the project proposal process will establish a system of checks and balances between the committee and the board to ensure each proposal receives due process.



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5. The board of directors performs a review of the recommendations made by the Standards & Practices committee and makes a final decision regarding each proposed project's fate.
 - **Sanction:** The board of directors feels a project proposal conforms to the organization's strategic priorities and values. The Board officially sanctions the project for development. With this sanctioning the board of directors will provide guidance as to the desired scope of the document.
 - **Reject:** The board of directors feels a project proposal fails to conform with the organization's strategic priorities or values and rejects the proposal for any further action.
 - **Revise:** The board of directors feels a proposal needs additional development before determining whether the proposed project conforms with the organization's strategic priorities and values.
6. Sanctioning of a proposal provides approval to the project writing team to begin development of a manuscript's position statement section and applicable resource document section.
7. After the writing team completes their final draft of the position statement section it will proceed to the Standards & Practices committee for review and subsequent recommendations for further revision or for provisional approval and movement forward in the process.
 - a. If a resource document is also drafted as part of the project, the project lead (and project mentor, if applicable) will work together to ensure that the final draft of the resource document meets NAEMSP and *Prehospital Emergency Care* style and formatting standards before submitting the document to the board for review. Resource document review will not commence until the position statement portion of the document is ratified by the board.
8. Once the position statement final draft has received provisional approval by the Standards & Practices committee, the document will move on to the board of directors who will vote to ratify the statement or recommend further revisions.
9. After the position statement section is ratified by the board of directors, the position statement document and any resource document written for the project will be submitted via the *Prehospital Emergency Care* portal, along with an appropriate cover letter. If a resource document is submitted as part of the final manuscript the editorial board of *Prehospital Emergency Care* will direct the manuscript to undergo formal peer review by members of the NAEMSP board of directors.
10. The project lead will coordinate with the editors of *Prehospital Emergency Care* and the board peer reviewers to perform final content revisions and copy editing.
11. The manuscript is queued for publication in *Prehospital Emergency Care*.



Summary

The success of the document development process 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 document development process will help secure our success.

Appendix:

- Figure 1. NAEMSP Document Development Process Map
- Project Proposal SBAR form
- Project Proposal Cover Letter and Instructions
- Recommendations for Methods and Evidence Evaluation and Reporting in NAEMSP Position Statements

§ “Defining the Role of Authors and Contributors.” International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. - <https://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/defining-the-role-of-authors-and-contributors.html> Accessed 25 April 2023.