



'Planning a National Nursing Quality and Safety Alliance' Establishing a Nominations Process

Background

During the June 10, 2009 conference call of the Nursing Quality and Safety Alliance (NQSA) conveners, the group shared its interest in establishing a formal process for identifying and nominating candidates to key committees, task forces, and boards. So that expectations and responsibilities are clear, the group agreed on the importance of mapping out a precise, well defined, and stepwise nominations process.

In response and on behalf of the conveners, GW project staff have explored a range of approaches that might best meet the Alliance's needs, produce a broad range of highly qualified candidates, and avoid an extensive, "open call" approach. The following proposal is derived from two primary sources: input and suggestions from several NQSA convener organizations and "best" nominating practices that are currently being utilized by federal agencies and international organizations (e.g., The United Nations, The World Heritage Foundation, Dell, Inc., and Public Relations Society of America).

Aim

The overall aim of the nominations process is to identify and nominate highly qualified candidates eligible for appointment to key positions on national committees, task forces, and boards with the goal of promoting the Alliance's mission of **"advancing the highest quality, safety, and value of consumer-centered health care for all individuals – patients, families, and communities."**

Nominations Process

NQSA's nominations process is envisioned as an eight-step process:

1. prioritizing key organizations;
2. identifying content areas;
3. establishing a pool of candidates;
4. creating the roster;
5. finalizing the slate;
6. determining member support;
7. approving nominees; and
8. notifying nominees.

Each step in this proposed process is described below in detail.

Step 1: Prioritizing Key Organizations

Based on the number of potential opportunities, it is impractical to expect NQSA to respond to *every* organization that announces a vacancy and *every* opportunity to make a nomination. Instead, it is recommended that the Alliance prioritize organizations and positions are likely to facilitate its overarching mission. Concentrating on key organizations will prevent duplicate effort and better leverage NQSA's resources.

Based on the agreed upon mission, the conveners should consider prioritizing the following organizations:

- AARP;
- AcademyHealth;
- Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ);
- AQA;
- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS);
- Department of Health and Human Services;
- Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA);
- Hospital Quality Alliance (HQA);
- Institute of Medicine;
- Joint Commission;
- National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA);
- National Quality Forum; and
- Quality Alliance Steering Committee (QASC).

Prioritization of these organizations is likely to result in focused, systematic, and strategic efforts to place high-level nurses in key positions of influence.

Step 2: Identifying Content Areas

The overall process should be efficient and responsive. While one approach might be to "fit" candidates with opportunities as they emerge, the conveners should also consider having a parallel process that proactively identifies candidates with specific backgrounds that are likely to be needed among the high priority organizations. These candidates would comprise a pool "pre-approved" candidates from which NQSA could draw.

Based on emerging issues, NQSA should consider identifying expertise in the following content areas:

- Accreditation;
- Aging;
- Chronic care;

- Cultural competence/diversity;
- Delivery systems;
- Financing;
- Global health;
- Hospital acquired conditions;
- Health Information Technology;
- Maternal/Child health;
- Medicare;
- Medicaid;
- Patient safety;
- Performance Measurement.
- Population health;
- Prevention; and
- State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).

Content areas should be revisited annually by NQSA. The Steering Committee or its Nominating Work Group could assume this function.

Step 3: Establishing a Pool of Candidates

Once content areas have been identified, annually NQSA members will be invited to identify candidates based on expertise in one or more content areas.

The following minimal information will be needed for each candidate:

- Name (first, middle, last);
- Credentials;
- Position/Title;
- Areas of expertise;
- Brief bio (i.e., 150 word maximum);
- Current place of employment;
- Current curriculum vitae;
- Contact information (mailing address, email address, telephone number).

The candidate pool will serve to supply nominations in forecasted content areas. However, the pool will need to be augmented and expanded in response to unanticipated needs and direct requests to NQSA. In such cases, project staff will solicit additional names from the NQSA membership.

Step 4: Creating the Roster

When a nominee is needed, project staff will assemble a roster of possible candidates from the existing pool (or among those identified through augmentation/expansion). The goal will be to match candidates with the appropriate knowledge, skills, and experience to the specific requisites of particular opportunity based on the information provided/available. This preliminary screening will also serve to streamline work by the NSQA Nominating Work Group.

Step 5: Finalizing the Slate

The Nominating Work Group will be charged with initially reviewing and revising the roster prepared by NQSA project staff and recommending a consensual slate of nominees for review by NQSA's membership. At this stage, project staff will contact each candidate to determine his/her level of interest in the position vacancy, openness to the nominations process, and willingness to serve. Inclusion on the ballot signifies that the Nominating Work Group has agreed on the candidate and, if named, the candidate has agreed to serve.

Step 6: Determining Member Support

Project Staff will compile a ballot of candidates and distribute it to the full membership for a vote. Each member may submit one ballot.

Step 7: Approving Nominees

As NQSA's primary governing structure, the Steering Committee will finalize nominations. Member votes will be tallied by project staff and portrayed to the Steering Committee for its approval. Unless a predetermined number of nominees has been specified by the organization making the request, the goal will be to approve three nominees for each vacancy. The Committee will consider the tally (e.g., candidates who received the top three highest vote counts) but can act independently. Since the NSQA Steering Committee will meet in-person twice annually, it is expected that its approval will occur electronically or by conference call.

Step 8: Notifying Nominees

Project Staff will notify each candidate of the NQSA nomination. Nominees will be responsible for preparing and submitting any information required (e.g., nomination/application form). Project staff will notify the membership on the outcome of the nomination.

Next Steps

While this process is precise, well defined, and stepwise, it represents a significant amount of work and will consume a significant amount of resources. *Is this how the conveners wish project staff to spend their time? Are there ways to abbreviate the process without losing precision? What adjustments are recommended?*

Should this approach be viewed favorably, other considerations include:

- What organizations should be prioritized?
- In what content areas are nominees likely to be needed?

- Is this process suitably precise, well defined, and stepwise?
- Will it lead to identifying and naming the best candidates?

What improvements and refinements are needed in order for the conveners to trust and honor its results?