



'Planning a National Nursing Quality and Safety Alliance' Convener 'Ground Rules'

Overview

Over the next year, a core group of national nursing leaders will participate in facilitated conversations about building a unified 'policy voice' for nursing on issues related to health care quality and safety.

Two representatives from among eight nursing organizations ("convener organizations"), along with participation by the funder and the grantee, will gather to explore opportunities to advocate for policy setting that is "friendly" to nursing. Although the group of discussants will be relatively small, in order to make swift, democratic, and consensual decisions, the following must be assured:

- Conveners with the appropriate knowledge capacity to inform this work must be identified and engaged in the project;
- Conveners must participate in discussions at every opportunity;
- Consistency in convener representatives throughout the entire project must be attained;
- Participation among all representatives from all convener organizations must be achieved;
- Equitable and clear expectations must be established by the group and applied by The George Washington University (GW) so that work may be conducted in a focused and rapid manner;
- GW must establish and each convener must contribute to an atmosphere that is open, safe, trustworthy, and respectful;
- Decisions must not be delayed and/or revisited beyond their scheduled sequence in the stepwise process.

For these reasons, the following 'ground rules' are proposed for adoption under this project:

1. At least one representatives from each convener organization will meet established competencies and qualifications¹ (see Item I, *Role, Competencies, and Qualifications of Nursing Convener Organization Representatives, September 2008*);
2. If only one person is representing any convener organization, he/she will be expected to meet the established competencies/qualifications;
3. Each convener representative will be expected to speak on behalf of their organizations;

¹ RWJF will arbitrate in those cases where a convener organization expects reimbursement for expenses related to nominee's participation who does not meet the established criteria.

4. Conversely, each convener will be expected to serve as an advocate for decisions made by the conveners within their own constituencies/organizations including, but not limited to, obtaining support for resource commitments as needed;
5. Substitutes for and/or replacements of representatives of convener organizations at meetings and/or conference calls will be prohibited;
6. Decisions will be made by those in attendance at the time the decision is required based on the project plan;
7. Unless permitted by the schedule, decisions will not be revisited and/or reconsidered to accommodate a missing perspective and/or novel idea that was not previously articulated;
8. Consensus will be reached through a democratic process that will typically rely on active deliberation and conclusion drawing. In the event that a formal vote is required to determine the degree of agreement on a particular matter, each convener organization – represented by one or more representatives – will be granted one vote (e.g., one vote per organization);
9. Approval on any action requiring a vote is dependent on an affirmative vote by at least 66% of the convener organizations in attendance at the time the vote is taken;
10. Recognizing that nursing is diverse and its constituencies extend beyond the eight convener organizations invited to participate in this planning project, other national nursing organizations may attend in-person meetings in the roles of ‘reactors.’ A formal set of ground rules will be developed to guide the participation of reactors;
11. So as to not be disruptive to the process, once the project has officially begun, no additional organizations will be entitled to participate as a convener. Should the group determine that an additional organization be engaged, they may participate as a ‘reactor’ but not as a full, voting convener; and
12. Each convener representative is expected to assume the responsibility of sharing decisions, the work of the group, and commitments that are made in those instances in which the other representative from the organization misses a meeting/conference call.

Concerns with these ground rules or the rationale supporting them should be brought to the attention of project staff for consideration and/or deliberation. For the sake of progress and collegiality and in the spirit of consensus setting, support for and compliance with these ground rules is sought.