

Advertising and Marketing Guidelines

Credentials Verification Organization

Certification



Introduction

Congratulations on earning NCQA Accreditation, Certification, Recognition, Distinction or other NCQA status! We encourage you to publicize your achievement and have developed the following Advertising and Marketing Guidelines to help you get the most out of your NCQA status. The guidelines include how to market your achievement, appropriate language to incorporate into your marketing and advertising materials and helpful ideas to get you started.

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).

Credentials Verification Organization Certification Guidelines

CVOs Certified for 10 out of 10 Verification Services

- Organizations should use the following language to describe their certification status:
 - CVO A received NCQA Certification for 10 out of 10 verification services.
 - CVO A is NCQA Certified for 10 out of 10 verification services.
 - CVO A is fully Certified by NCQA for 10 out of 10 verification services. (Organizations should not use the term "Full Certification.")
 - CVO A is NCQA Certified for the following verification services...
- Organizations that have been certified for all 10 verification services are not required to individually list all of the 10 services for which they have received certification.
- CVOs that have been certified for 10 verification services may also say that they "comply" or "meet" NCQA's credentialing standards for health plans.

Examples of correct language:

- CVO A meets NCQA's credentialing standards for health plans.
- CVO A is compliant with NCQA Standards.

CVOs Certified for 9 or Fewer Verification Services

A CVO must state its certification status relative to individual credentials verification services for which it has been certified in any advertising or marketing material. These definitions must be clearly defined.

Example of correct language:

- CVO A has received certification from the National Committee for Quality Assurance for the following credentials verification services....
- CVO A was certified by NCQA for 9 out of 10 verification services. (This should be followed later in the text with an actual listing of those nine services.)

CVOs that have been certified for fewer than 10 verification services may say that their verification services are "designed to comply with NCQA credentialing standards for health plans" or are "structured to be consistent with NCQA credentialing standards."

Descriptions of Credentials Verification Organization Certification

The following statements may be used in your marketing and advertising material:

- CVO Certification is a quality assessment program that health care organizations can use to assess Credentials Verification Organizations and other organizations that verify the credentials of physicians.
- CVO Certification evaluates a CVO's management of various aspects of its data collection and verification operation, and the process it uses to continuously improve the services it provides.
- CVO Certification is a voluntary review process.
- CVO Certification reduces duplicative oversight and inefficient gathering of information by health plans and CVOs.
- CVO Certification includes rigorous on-site evaluations conducted by a team of health care professionals and certified credentialing specialists. A national oversight committee of physicians analyzes the team's finding and determines certification based on the CVO's compliance with NCQA standards.
- CVO Certification is governed by NCQA's rigorous Standards for Certification, developed with the assistance of representatives from the credentials verification industry, as well as input from managed care organizations.

Descriptions of Credentials Verification Organization Certification Status

The following statements may be used in your marketing and advertising material:

- There are two major components to the CVO Certification Survey:
 - 1) A review to determine compliance with NCQA's Health Plan credentialing standards.
 - 2) An audit of completed credentials files to determine compliance with NCQA's Health Plan credentialing standards.
- Certification is awarded to participating organizations on the basis of individual credentials elements. Organizations may be certified for all, some, or none of the 10 credentials elements addressed in the NCQA Standards. These elements are:
 - License to practice
 - DEA Registration
 - Education and Training
 - Work History
 - Malpractice Claims History
 - Medical Board Sanctions
 - Medicaid/Medicare Sanctions
 - CVO Application and Attestation Content
 - Practitioner Application Processing
 - Ongoing Monitoring
- CVO Certification is not considered all-inclusive, and pertains only to those elements reviewed as part of the NCQA CVO certification process.

Use of Credentials Verification Organization Certification Seals

NCQA encourages organizations that have received UM/CR Accreditation to display their seals in marketing and NCQA encourages organizations that have received Credentials Verification Organization Certification to display their seals in marketing and advertising materials.

- There are 10 seals for Credentials Verification Organization Certification.
- Plans with more than one CVO Certification, may use one seal or multiple seals on materials. Please note that if you use one seal, you are required to specify the elements in which you have been certified (listed underneath the seal or footnoted below the seal). Please review NCQA's Guidelines for Advertising and Marketing for specific usage guidelines for the seals.
- Organizations must use the seal they have received certification in (if you choose to use the seal).
- Seals are provided in EPS and JPEG formats and are available at www.ncqa.org/seals.
- Organizations should be aware that Certification statuses can change which may affect the statement on durable goods (e.g.: a billboard that is no longer accurate will have to be corrected). It is the organization's responsibility to maintain and update accurate marketing materials. Should your status change, you are responsible for updating all promotional items, and must cease distribution of all materials with incorrect status information. Updating of website and other distributed materials should take place within 30 days of the status change.

Approved Quotes

Organizations earning CVO Certification can use the following quote from Margaret E. O'Kane, President, in their marketing material.

"Achieving CVO certification from NCQA demonstrates that [Name of Organization] has the systems, process and personnel in place to thoroughly and accurately verify providers' credentials and help health plan clients meet their accreditation goals."

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 their NCQA status. The press release must include a description of the Credentials Verification Organization Certification 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.