

Advertising and Marketing Guidelines

Accreditations in Health Outcomes and Community-Focused Care



Introduction

Congratulations on earning NCQA Accreditation status! We encourage you to publicize your achievement and have developed the following Marketing and Advertising 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 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 achievements in a fair and accurate manner.

The guidelines below are to be used in conjunction with [NCQA's Guidelines for Advertising and Marketing](#).

If you have questions, you may submit them through My NCQA at my.NCQA.org.

Describing Accreditations in Health Outcomes and Community-Focused Care

Organizations may use the following statements in marketing and advertising materials:

Accreditations in Health Outcomes and Community-Focused Care

- Health Outcomes Accreditation and Community-Focused Care Accreditation are nationally recognized Accreditations that purchasers, regulators and consumers can use to distinguish organizations that meet rigorous standards in serving the needs of their unique populations.

Health Outcomes Accreditation Only

- NCQA Health Outcomes Accreditation recognizes organizations that use standardized data collection and measurement to understand their population's unique health needs and address differences in health outcomes, experience or access.
- Health Outcomes Accreditation recognizes organizations that lead the market in providing accessible and culturally or linguistically appropriate care or services.

Community-Focused Care Accreditation Only

- NCQA Community-Focused Care Accreditation recognizes organizations that use standardized data collection and community-based partnerships to understand and meet their population's non-medical or social needs.
- Community-Focused Care Accreditation recognizes organizations that lead the market in providing member or patient-centered care or services.

General Guidelines for Advertising and Marketing Accreditations in Health Outcomes and Community-Focused Care

- Organizations must always advertise their most current Health Outcomes Accreditation and/or Community-Focused Care Accreditation status.
- Organizations that reference their accreditation status should always write out “Health Outcomes Accreditation” and “Community-Focused Care Accreditation” by their full titles; do not abbreviate.
- Organizations may not use, disclose, represent or otherwise communicate reports or numeric results from an NCQA-provided gap analysis to any third party for any other purpose.
- The organization may not represent that they have achieved Health Outcomes Accreditation and/or Community-Focused Care Accreditation based on reports or numeric results without a final NCQA decision.
- Organizations may not release supplemental worksheets.
- Organizations may advertise that they are either awaiting the results of an Accreditation Survey or are scheduled for a survey.
- Organizations may use pre-approved quotations from NCQA staff members in their advertising materials.
- Organizations must specify that Accreditation Seals apply only to specific sites, regions, affiliates or entities that have earned Accreditation.
- Organizations are not required to advertise their Accreditation effective or expiration dates.

Regional Comparisons

Organizations may say theirs is the first product line/product/organization in a region or state to earn Accreditation.

If an organization is not the first in a region/state to earn Accreditation, it may promote its status by acknowledging, for example, that it is “one of two health systems” or “one of five plans” in the region/state.

Health Outcomes Accreditation and Community-Focused Care Accreditation Statistics

Organizations may use statistics from the NCQA Report Card in promotional materials, provided statistics are in a format that is accurate and can be easily understood by the consumer.

Because statistics can change monthly, all advertising and marketing materials should include the date on which they were drawn. Some durable goods may need to be corrected.

Organizations must maintain accurate marketing materials. If Accreditation status changes, organizations must update all promotional items within 30 days of the status change and must cease distributing materials with incorrect status information.

Find the NCQA Report Cards at <https://reportcards.ncqa.org> or by calling NCQA Customer Support at (888) 275-7585.

Health Outcomes Accreditation and Community-Focused Care Accreditation Seals

NCQA encourages organizations to display Accreditation Seals in their advertising and marketing materials. Organizations that received a Health Equity Accreditation and/or Health Equity Accreditation Plus seal may continue to use the Health Equity or Health Equity Plus seal in marketing materials until the expiration of their current status.

Seals are provided in JPEG and SVG formats.

Approved Quotes Regarding Accreditation

Organizations that have earned Accreditation may use the following quotes in their marketing and advertising materials.

- “Earning [Health Outcomes Accreditation/Community-Focused Care Accreditation] shows that an organization is making a breakthrough in providing excellent healthcare to diverse populations with different needs. I congratulate any organization that achieves this level of accreditation,” said Dr. Vivek Garg, President and CEO of NCQA. “Eliminating disparities in healthcare is essential to improving the quality of care overall.”
- “Cultural competency is crucial to providing high-quality healthcare,” said Dr. Vivek Garg, President and CEO of NCQA. “Organizations achieving [Health Outcomes Accreditation/Community-Focused Care Accreditation] are leaders in closing gaps in access to, experience with and quality of care. NCQA commends them for their dedication.”
- “The prevalence of racial, ethnic, and other disparities has been a barrier to improving the quality of healthcare of many Americans for too long,” said Dr. Vivek Garg, President and CEO of NCQA. “Organizations achieving [Health Outcomes Accreditation/Community-Focused Care Accreditation] are leaders in closing this gap, and NCQA commends them for their dedication.”

Describing NCQA Accreditation Status

All preceding guidelines apply to press releases.

Organizations may develop press releases mentioning their NCQA status. Press releases must include a description of the Accreditation and the NCQA boilerplate language below. Submit questions related to press releases through [My NCQA](#).

NCQA is an independent nonprofit organization that defines and drives healthcare quality through accreditation, standards, performance measurement and expert support. For more than 35 years, NCQA has advanced transparency, accountability and enabled healthcare organizations to deliver better outcomes for patients. NCQA’s Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) is one of healthcare’s most widely used performance improvement tools. Learn more at ncqa.org. Follow NCQA on X [@ncqa](https://twitter.com/ncqa) and on LinkedIn [linkedin.com/company/ncqa](https://www.linkedin.com/company/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.

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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 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.

Thank you for observing these guidelines. Contact the NCQA Marketing department through [My NCQA](#) if you have any questions.