

Guidelines for OPHA Policy Statements: Resolutions, Position Papers and Motions

We are now accepting position papers and resolutions for consideration by the membership. **The deadline for submissions is September 7th, 2011.**

The following guidelines detail the steps involved with submitting a policy statement for consideration.

Definitions

Resolution

- A formal statement of intent on a particular issue
- Spells out relevant and specific actions consistent with OPHA's mission.
- Establishes OPHA policy and directs the Board of Directors on courses of action in response to that issue.

Position Paper

- A viewpoint on a particular health issue providing documented background data on that issue. If accepted by the membership, the position paper becomes an official document representing the Association's views.
- Required action is outlined in an accompanying resolution.

Motion

- A late-breaking issue put forward for discussion and debate at the Annual General Meeting that may require response from or action by OPHA.

To consider prior to submitting resolutions, position papers and motions:

Choosing an issue - Does it affect:

- The health of identifiable groups or the public at large.
- Health care or public health policy, programming or practice.
- The service delivery system or public health practitioners as an interest group.
- Existing OPHA policy statements that may require follow-up action, revision (updating and/or re-targeting), or deletion because they are obsolete.
- Emerging issues not yet well known or items of public discussion that can be made topical by OPHA action.

Is the topic relevant and timely? Use the following questions to screen possible resolutions:

- Does it fall within OPHA's mission statement?
- Does it address one or more of the issues identified under Choosing an issue?
- Will action taken after the Annual General Meeting, held each Fall, be relevant and/or effective?
- Is the scope of the issue local, provincial or national?
- Will OPHA have to refer the matter to some other agent or body?
- Has it been or is it currently being addressed by OPHA?

Is it practical as a resolution?

- Can OPHA directly or indirectly influence the issue or problem?
- Do the resources to carry out the proposed action exist within OPHA? If not, can the necessary resources be assembled in time to make a difference?
- Do other OPHA members, workgroups or constituent societies or external organizations share your concern? What, if anything, are they doing or planning to do about it?
- Could it be referred to the Board, a workgroup or committee for action?
- Could it be addressed by some other means, e.g., a brief, deputation or letter from the Board?

Implementation Strategies

- In arriving at an effective strategy, consider where and how the matter is to be decided, implemented and/or enforced.
- Identify the key decision-maker(s) that must be informed and influenced.
- Identify what opportunities exist for OPHA advocacy or action (public hearings, meetings, consultations, etc.).
- Develop a strategy that takes maximum advantage of the opportunities.
- Are you willing to work to implement the resolution?

Procedure for Submissions

STEP 1: Draft the statement

General Guidelines

- Existing workgroups, constituent societies, project staff and other stakeholders should be consulted where appropriate for feedback or possible partnership when drafting the statement.
- Using acronyms in policy statements should be avoided; if their use is necessary, please provide accompanying
- If you are submitting a policy statement on a topic for which there are existing statements, include a justification as to why your submission is needed to enhance the existing policy. As well, indicate whether your submission is meant to incorporate and complement or replace current OPHA policy.

If you are unsure if an existing policy statement exists on a particular issue, check the list of policy statements adopted as of 1988. The list is available on OPHA's web site at

http://www.opha.on.ca/our_voice/ppres/



Position Papers

- An executive summary must be submitted with the position paper. This should be no more than 1 single-spaced, typed page, using 12-point font. All margins should be at least one inch on standard 8 ½ x 11" paper.
- Each position paper should consist of no more than 15 single-spaced, typed pages, using 12-point font. All margins should be at least one inch on standard 8 ½ x 11" paper.

Resolutions

- When drafting a resolution, only one issue should be addressed per resolution. If more than one issue is addressed, the linkages must be specific, clear and necessary to taking effective action. If the linkages do not exist, separate the issues into multiple resolutions.
- “Whereas” clauses should be used to outline the principal points supporting or explaining the resolution.
- Resolutions should be accompanied by a concise summary of background information and supporting documentation consisting of no more than 5 single-spaced, typed pages, using 12-point font. All margins should be at least one inch on standard 8 ½ x 11" paper.
- Each resolution should consist of no more than one single-spaced, typed page, using 12-point font. All margins should be at least one inch on standard 8 ½ x 11" paper.
- An implementation strategy outlining who (e.g. sponsor, OPHA, etc...) will undertake the actions needed to carry out the implementation strategy should accompany each resolution.

Motions

- When drafting the motion, only one issue should be addressed per motion.
- Each motion should consist of no more than one single-spaced page, using 12-point font. All margins should be at least one inch on standard 8 ½ x 11" paper.

Step 2: Submit to the Advocacy Committee

- Policy statements must be submitted by two or more members in good standing (referred to as the sponsors or sponsoring members).

About Sponsors:

- Sponsors should be available to briefly introduce and respond to questions about the statement at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). They will also be required to provide an annual progress report for the following year’s Annual Report.
 - Sponsors who have business interests in the policy statement are expected to declare those interests. This information will be shared with the membership. This does not preclude a member’s right to present, discuss and vote on the policy statement.
- Resolutions and position papers must be submitted using the *OPHA Resolution and Position Paper Submission Form* (available from the OPHA website at http://www.opha.on.ca/our_voice/ppres/guidelines.shtml) and should be accompanied by sufficient supporting documentation, including executive summaries, background documents and implementation plans.
 - Policy statements must be submitted electronically in either plain text, Word or WordPerfect formats. The signed *OPHA Resolution and Position Paper Submission Form* should be submitted by fax at the same time.
 - The deadline for receiving resolutions and position papers is August 1. Sponsors are encouraged to submit resolutions and position papers as early as possible, which will allow for early feedback as per the review process (see Step 3 below).

- Motions to be presented at the AGM must be submitted to either the Chair of the AGM (President of OPHA) or the Chair of the Advocacy Committee prior to the AGM. Motions will be included in the AGM's agenda as New Business, and will then be subject to debate and voted on by the Membership. Once adopted, motions will be referred to the Executive Committee for action.

Step 3: Review and Feedback

- All proposed resolutions and position papers will be considered by the Advocacy Committee. The Committee will decide whether or not the documents will be accepted for presentation at the AGM.
- The Committee will review the policy statements and provide feedback to the sponsors.
- Sponsors are asked to make any recommended changes and return the revised paper to the OPHA office within two weeks of receiving comments. Additional revisions will be completed if time allows.
- Resolutions and position papers accepted by the Committee will be circulated to OPHA members four weeks prior to the AGM. The documents will also be made available at the AGM.

Questions regarding this process can be directed to:
Tino Serapiglia, Chair, Advocacy Committee
c/o OPHA, 700 Lawrence Ave. W., Suite 310, Toronto, ON
M6A 3B4
Email: admin@opha.on.ca

Dated: July 6, 2011