

MEMO

To: Friends of NCHS Executive Committee

From: Emily Holubowich and Lindsey Horan

Date: October 28, 2016

Re: New Governance Structure for Friends of NCHS

Issue: AcademyHealth – and its previous advocacy arm the Coalition for Health Services Research – has acted as the institutional home to the Friends of NCHS (National Center for Health Statistics) since fall of 2003. The coalition was formed in response to the agency’s flat-lined budget for the years preceding its formation. As the main survey branch of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), NCHS provides data critical for informing us about the overall health of the U.S. population, access to care from ethnic and minority groups, trends in health care, outcomes research, and more.

Given researchers’ reliance on high-quality, affordable, accessible, and timely data, AcademyHealth has been a sensible home for this coalition. However, as we look toward the future, namely at our advocacy activities and competing long-term policy goals, we believe it is in the best interest of the Friends of NCHS to move to a new governance structure, with an Executive Committee managed by a revolving chair and vice chair.

Proposal: Herein, we will describe our proposal for restructuring the Friends of NCHS.

I. Friends of NCHS Executive Committee

The Friends of NCHS will be managed by an Executive Committee of nine organizations’ members who reflect the major NCHS divisions and the interests of current coalition members. Membership on the Executive Committee will be restricted to those representing non-profit organizations to avoid any appearance of conflicts of interest.

The Executive Committee will meet quarterly, or as needed, to discuss and plan future Friends of NCHS activities. It will make ongoing judgments about draft letters from the coalition, strategy for appropriations requests, and content for the Friends’ webpage.

Within the nine members of the Executive Committee, seven organizations



will have a permanent seat. These seven organizations will represent those that have had an ongoing and active role with the Friends since its inception:

- American Congress of OB-GYNs
- American Statistical Association
- Association of Population Centers/Population Association of America
- Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics
- March of Dimes
- National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems (NAPHSIS)

When a representative from one of these seven organizations vacates his/her position, the organization will be asked to appoint another senior staff person to the Executive Committee of the Friends.

Chairmanship

The Executive Committee is managed by a chair and a vice chair, which are selected by the Executive Committee. Each position has a two-year term. A new vice-chair is selected in the fall of every other year. After serving for two years as vice-chair, that member serves for two years as chair. All members of the Executive Committee must agree to serve a term as chair and vice-chair.

Mary Jo Hoeksema of the Association of Population Centers/Population Association of America has agreed to serve as chair for 2017-2018. We seek a volunteer to serve as vice-chair during this period and who is willing to serve as chair for 2019-2020.

Two Rotating Committee Seats

Representatives of the Friends' member organizations will hold the other two seats on the Executive Committee. At least one of these two seats will be held by a patient advocacy and/or consumer organization.

These two representatives will serve a two-year term, with an option to renew for a second two-year term. The representatives of the Executive Committee must be senior-level individuals who can speak on behalf of their organizations during Executive Committee deliberations. If a representative from one of these organizations vacates his/her position, the organization will be asked to appoint another senior representative for the remainder of that term.



Annually, if needed, the Chair will invite the members of the Friends of NCHS to nominate themselves for one of the two seats on the Executive Committee. Consideration will be given to inviting organizations that continually balance the Executive Committee with the diversity of research interests at NCHS.

Members of the Executive Committee are expected to contribute funds and/or in-kind support (e.g., technological resources or staff time) for the coalition's activities. These activities may include congressional briefings, tours, training, materials, etc.

External Activities

The Chair of the Executive Committee may sign the Friends onto group funding letters relevant to NCHS funding as long as there are no objections from Executive Committee members.

II. Considerations and Next Steps

a. Communication with Relevant Stakeholders

After the inaugural meeting of the Executive Committee, AcademyHealth will notify the agency, and the Friends of NCHS. AcademyHealth will explain our rationale for the transition and instill confidence that our commitment to the Friends of NCHS is steadfast, as is the commitment of the other proposed Executive Committee leaders. AcademyHealth will also announce the new chair and vice chair, and issue a call for volunteers for the two open seats on the Committee.

b. Website

The Friends of NCHS website information, including past sign-on letters and meeting materials, currently lives on the AcademyHealth website. The Executive Committee should determine where it wishes to house the Friends of NCHS site. AcademyHealth could provide the technical support and continue to maintain the site; or could create a new microsite for which we could pass log-in information between the chairs year-to-year; or find some combination of those options (e.g., h

We welcome the Executive Committee's feedback on how best to handle the website.

c. Documents and Archives





Similar to the website, there is consideration about where to house the historical and current Friends of NCHS information. The documents currently housed on AcademyHealth's drive include the Friends of NCHS email distribution list, testimonies, speeches and presentations, fact sheets, and more.

