

AAACN Charter Process Creates Template for Writing/Evaluating Position Statements

The AAACN Board of Directors developed a new strategic plan for the association in 2004. To develop and track the implementation of each of the goals in the plan, a document called a *charter* was used. The *charter* provides structure and direction for the implementation team (task force) to follow. It describes in detail what the task force must accomplish to meet the goal. Expected deliverables and timelines are clearly defined. A Board member is assigned to write the charter and oversee the implementation of its directives. With the charter process, the Board of Directors must be very clear on the assignment before it is approved for distribution to the committee/task force chair. Via the assigned Board member, the Board of Directors can monitor progress of the work being done by the task force and provide any needed direction or clarification. Since 2004, more than 15 charters have been created, guiding and accomplishing AAACN's work. Some have been completed, while others are in process. Each project, guided by a charter, allows AAACN members to participate in the work of the organization within a defined time period. Through the charter process, AAACN clearly reviews and defines its projects, resulting in accuracy and efficiency.

Position Statement Charter

As a leader in ambulatory care nursing, AAACN is often asked to state its position on an important issue. The charter process was recently used to develop criteria for writing and evaluating a position statement and included the creation of a template for use when writing a position statement. Board Directors Sana Savage and Kitty Shulman were assigned to create and oversee this task force, which included AAACN members Carol Rutenberg and Jo Ann Appleyard.

Table 1.

AAACN Template for Writing a Position Paper	
American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing <i>The Voice of Ambulatory Care Nursing</i> <i>Real Nurses, Real Issues, Real Solutions</i>	
(Enter title of paper, e.g. POSITION ON Ambulatory Care Nursing)	
1.	Brief background information on the subject matter and statement of the issue
2.	Definitions (if needed)
3.	Position Statement
4.	Resources
5.	Approval by AAACN Board/Date

The template, developed by the task force, is the tool that will give members a standard format for writing a position statement to submit to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors also can use the template and criteria for writing and/or evaluating potential position statements to endorse for other organizations. The template and criteria are depicted in Tables 1 and 2. This template and evaluation tool is available on the AAACN Web site under "Resources."

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Table 2.

AUTHOR Criteria for Writing Position Statement	Guideline/Criteria	BOARD Criteria for Approving Position Statement
	1. Describe the issue (including relevant background information) that the Position Statement would address. What is the purpose of the Position Statement?	
	2. Describe the importance and timeliness of this position to AAACN and ambulatory care nursing.	
	3. What is the recommended position to be taken?	
	4. What patient population, professional practice group, and/or modality of therapy will benefit from this Position Statement?	
	5. Does this Position Statement support the mission and strategic plan of AAACN?	
	6. Is this Position Statement consistent with the AAACN Standards and not in conflict with any current AAACN Position Statement or known standards of nursing practice, including scope of practice? (If other position statements or source documents exist, they should be referenced and/or attached.)	
	7. How will this Position Statement contribute to the continued growth of professionalism in ambulatory care nursing?	
	8. What are the advantages and disadvantages to development of this Position Statement? (For example, are there political, financial, social, or other implications outside of professional practice?)	