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## SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP (SIG) POLICY

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This is an UPDATED policy for governing Special Interest Groups (SIGs) within NASPGHAN. The policy is structured to differentiate SIGs from committees (which are more formal and have traditionally represented the organizational structure of NASPGHAN) while emphasizing member engagement, inclusivity, collaboration, and structured oversight. The framework guiding this draft conceives of SIGs as active constituents of NASPGHAN committees. The goal of the policy is to improve processes for establishment and governance of NASPGHAN SIGs, to ensure that these groups remain dynamic, inclusive, and productive while contributing to NASPGHAN's mission.

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### Policy Governing NASPGHAN Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

**Purpose:** Special Interest Groups (SIGs) within NASPGHAN are established to facilitate networking, collaboration, and knowledge exchange among members with a shared interest in specific areas of medical practice, research, or education. SIGs provide a platform for addressing gaps in knowledge that are not currently a primary focus of existing NASPGHAN committees, SIGs, or other society initiatives. SIGs are designed to be inclusive and open to all society members who express an interest in the subject matter. Once formed, a NASPGHAN SIG should be conceptually considered valuable constituents of the committee to which they are associated.

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#### 1. Formation and Scope

**1.1 Objective:** Special Interest Groups (SIGs) exist in NASPGHAN to promote the development and exchange of knowledge and resources among members who share a common interest in a specific topic. The scope of SIG activities includes:

- Networking among society members
- Developing research collaborations
- Identifying knowledge gaps and areas of unmet need.
- Collaborating with committees on educational activities or resource development.
- Proposing society work products (e.g., guidelines, webinars, patient education materials, etc.) to the committees of which they are constituents

**1.2 Proposal for Formation of New SIGs:** To propose the formation of a new SIG at NASPGHAN, interested members must submit a formal proposal to the society (max 2 pages). This proposal must include:

- *Review of Current Knowledge:* A written review of the current state of knowledge on the proposed SIG's focus topic, identifying gaps that need to be addressed and areas where the SIG can provide value to society members.
- *Identified Gaps:* A clear explanation of how the SIG will address the identified gaps in knowledge, practice, or research that are not a primary focus of existing committees, SIGs, or other society initiatives.
- *Preliminary Membership List:* A list of at least five (5) full members of NASPGHAN who have pledged to join the SIG upon its approval. Fellow members can join SIGs once they are formed but cannot be in the original list of 5 full members at the time of proposal. 1-2 of the 5 members should be named as the initial *Facilitator(s)*.
- *Endorsement from a Committee Chair:* Written endorsement from a committee chair who has been approached by the proposed SIG members. The chair should attest to having discussed the

SIG's proposed purpose with the group and agree that the SIG is a valuable constituency of their committee and can fall under their committee's structural oversight.

**1.3 Inclusivity:** Once approved, SIG membership will be open to all society members interested in the group's topic. Invitations to join new and existing SIGs will be broadly circulated by the society on at least an annual basis to encourage widespread participation. SIG membership does not require formal appointment or selection and is not subject to term limits. Members will indicate their desire to remain in the SIGs they have joined on an annual basis – at the time that they renew their society dues.

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## 2. Activities and Work Products

**2.1 Proposing Work Products:** If a SIG identifies a need for the creation of a formal society work product, such as a guideline, educational activity, or webinar, a detailed proposal must be submitted to the committee chair to whom the SIG reports. The proposal should include:

- A description of the work product and its relevance.
- Identification of the knowledge gap it seeks to address.
- A timeline for completion.
- A budget estimate, if applicable.
- Potential names for a proposed working group or task force.

**2.2 Review and Approval:** The committee to which the SIG reports will review the proposal. If approved, the committee chair will work with the SIG facilitator to finalize a working group or task force comprised of members from both the committee and the SIG (and potentially other society members). The NASPGHAN Council Liaison assigned to the Committee (as well as, by definition, the associated SIG who are valued constituents of the Committee) should help facilitate and mediate discussions about who should be included in a working group or task force. There should be careful attention throughout the entire process to ensure the SIG is properly represented, included and credited with the resulting work product, which will come from the committee. The proposal and names of the working group or task force will be submitted via appropriate other processes (e.g., Professional Education for a webinar; RFA response for Single Topic Symposium proposals; Committee on Clinical Quality (CCQ) for guidelines, etc.) and ultimately to the Society Council for final approval. Once the project is completed, the Working Group/Task Force will be disbanded.

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## 3. Governance

**3.1 Facilitator Role:** SIGs will not have formal chairs. Instead, each SIG will be led by 1-2 **Facilitator(s)**. The facilitator(s) will manage the group's activities, including organizing meetings, leading discussions, and ensuring consistent communication with the oversight committee/committee chair and among members. The Facilitator(s) will:

- Arrange and lead SIG meetings (virtual and/or in-person)
- Promote and monitor online discussions (via email, bulletin boards, social media, etc.) to ensure that ideas that are proposed by SIG members are organized, circulated and tracked
- Foster networking and collaboration within the group.
- Ensure SIG activities align with the society's broader goals.
- Ensure smooth transition when their term is complete

**3.2 Term of Service:** The Facilitator(s) will each serve a two-year term, renewable once (for a maximum of four years). Multiple (max 2) facilitators for the same SIG do not need to be on the same timeline. At the end of each Facilitator's term, volunteers from within the SIG will be invited by the current "rotating off" Facilitator to take over the role. Names of volunteers will be submitted to the associated committee chair for review and recommendation to the society's Council for appointment.

### **3.3 Role of Facilitator**

#### **Commitment & Leadership**

- Maintain active membership with dues paid in full
- Dedicate time and effort to the role
- Champion NASPGHAN/NASPGHAN Foundation's mission with passion
- Respond to leadership requests for special assignments

#### **Collaboration & Communication**

- Align SIG activities with broader society goals
- Foster communication, networking, and facilitate engagement within the SIG
- Work closely with the affiliated committee chair, providing reports on initiatives and budget requests as needed. (Committee chairs may not commit NASPGHAN funds)

#### **Engagement & Organizational Excellence**

- Organize and attend SIG meetings (virtual and optional at NASPGHAN and DDW)
- Lead and participate in SIG conference calls
- Share meeting minutes with members, the National Office, oversight committee, and Council Liaison

#### **Mentorship & Growth**

- Mentor and support SIG members and future facilitators for smooth transitions

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## **4. Reporting Structure**

**4.1 Committee Oversight:** Each SIG will report to a specific NASPGHAN committee/committee chair, who will view the SIG as a valuable constituent group. The committee chair will serve as the SIG's primary point of contact for any proposals or activities requiring broader society involvement or approval.

**4.2 Accountability:** The SIG Facilitator is responsible for maintaining regular communication with the committee chair to whom they report. All SIG activities, including the submission of any proposals for society work products/task forces, must follow the proper reporting structure to ensure alignment with society goals and objectives.

**4.3 Council Liaison:** In addition, each SIG will be supported by the Council Liaison who is assigned to the committee that the SIG reports to. The SIG Facilitator(s) should include the councilor and the committee chair in their distribution list. Both should be invited to any SIG meetings.

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## **5. Meetings and Communication**

**5.1 Frequency:** SIGs are encouraged to meet regularly (virtually and/or in person), at intervals agreed upon by the group, to discuss topic updates, ongoing activities, share knowledge, and explore collaboration opportunities.

**5.2 Meeting in person at the Annual Meeting:** SIG Facilitators will have the opportunity each September to sign up for a conference room space during the NASPGHAN Annual Meeting to hold a SIG meeting. This will be an “opt in” process.

**5.3 Communication Tools:** The Facilitator will ensure the group stays connected through various means, including virtual meetings, online forums, and in-person events at society conferences or other gatherings. A summary of key discussions and decisions should be shared with SIG members following each meeting.