

HPG Protocols

July 10, 2024



Introduction

Current Members of the Workgroup

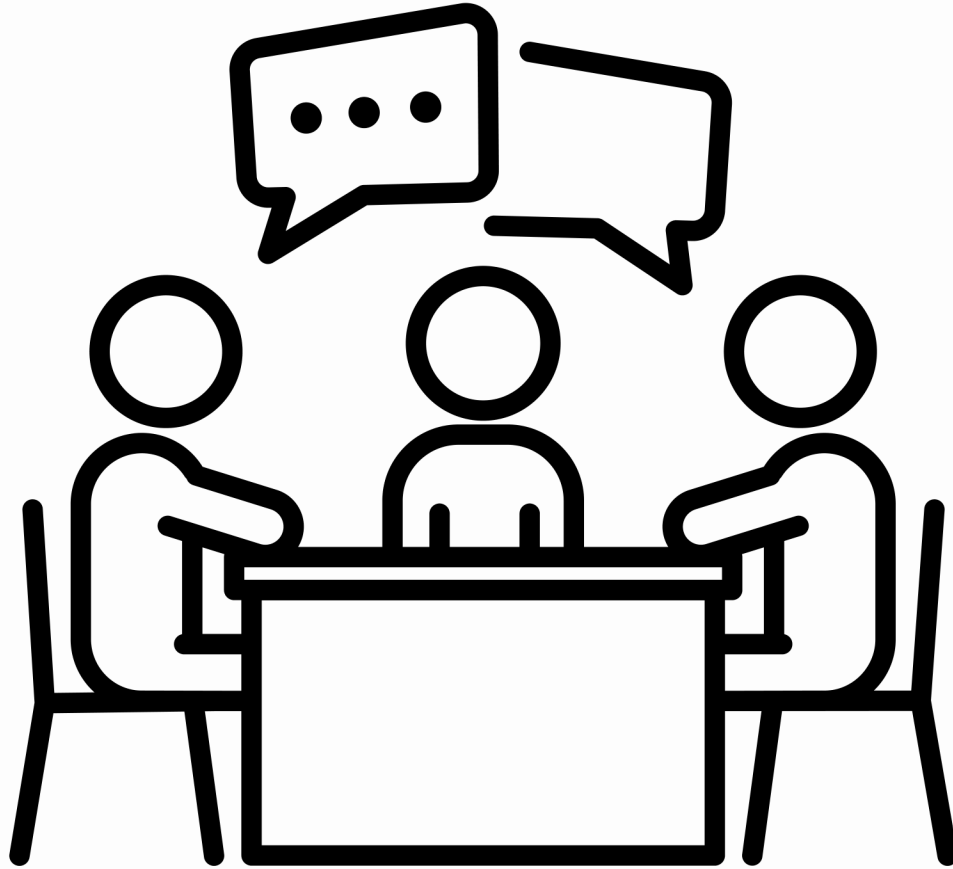
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Activities

Review current language, suggest changes, lead discussions during HPG meetings to get approval to make modifications.

What's Next?

Incorporate the items discussed today and continue to work on reviewing the last sections.



ORIGINAL SECTION VII

SECTION VII. MEMBERSHIP EXPECTATIONS

7.1. GENERAL MEMBERSHIP EXPECTATIONS:

7.1.1. Terms: HPG members from the community are elected for three (3) year terms commencing in January of their first year. Members may reapply through the regular application process for another three (3) years, with a maximum total of six (6) years in service. Members serve on a rotational basis to target the guidelines for the Composition of Membership as outlined in section 6.1.2. Representatives from state agencies have terms that are set at the discretion of the Division. Representatives from government offices may be added and removed at the discretion of their administrators regardless of the planning process timeline.

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PROPOSED CHANGES SECTION VII

SECTION VII: MEMBERSHIP EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1. GENERAL MEMBERSHIP EXPECTATIONS:

7.1.1. Terms: HPG Community Representatives from the community are elected for three (3) year terms commencing in January of their first year. Community Representatives may reapply through the regular application process for another three (3) years, with a maximum total of six (6) consecutive years in service. Previous members are welcome to apply to rejoin the HPG after a minimum one-year absence as a member. Community Representatives serve on a rotational basis to meet the guidelines for the Composition of Membership as outlined in section 6.1.2.c.

Staff from state agencies have terms that are set at the discretion of the Division. Staff from government offices may be added and removed at the discretion of their administrators, regardless of the planning process timeline.

7.1.2. Orientation: All new HPG members will be required to attend a mandatory one (1) day orientation training session, either held prior to the first meeting of the year or during the first applicable HPG meeting. Each new member will receive a membership binder during orientation.

7.1.2. Orientation: All new HPG Community Representatives will be required to attend a mandatory one (1) day orientation training session, either held prior to the first meeting of the year or during the first applicable HPG meeting. Each new Community Representative will receive a membership binder during orientation.

7.1.3. Attendance: Members are expected to be on time for meetings and attend at least 75% of the meetings annually. Members not present for more than 25% of meetings annually are subject to removal and replacement from the applications for HPG membership. The minutes will reflect those members who are present and those members who were not present for each meeting. There are no 'excused' absences; occasionally being unable to avoid missing a meeting (illness, emergency, etc.) is recognized through the 25% of meetings members are allowed to miss. Members should routinely notify the Division and Community Co-Chairs of any known absence or unexpected illness to ensure the safety and care of our members and expected guests.

7.1.3. Attendance: [Not being present at HPG meetings affects the business and success of improving HIV planning, prevention, and services in Pennsylvania. Attendance tracking is required as a matter of efficiency and consistent meeting practice, especially for a quorum when voting occurs.](#)

[7.1.3.a. Expectations:](#)

- Community Representatives will sign in at the start of each meeting.
- Community Representatives are expected to be on time for meetings and attend at least 75% of the meetings annually.
- Community Representatives not present for 25% or more of meetings annually are subject to removal and replacement from the last year's HPG Community Representative applications.
- The minutes will reflect those Community Representatives who are present and those Community Representatives who were not present for each meeting.

No previous language existed in HPG Protocols

7.1.3.b. Qualifying Events

- HPG events with a planned meeting agenda sent to all members at least one week prior are qualifying events and will require attendance tracking.
- The HPG Community Representatives may determine through majority vote additional qualifying events requiring attendance tracking. Examples of other qualifying events can be: Town Halls, Outreach Events, Community Feedback Sessions, etc.

No previous language existed in HPG Protocols

7.1.3.c. Lack of Attendance Removal

- As attendance is tracked by the HPG Planning Coordinator, when individuals will not achieve the minimum 75% attendance expectation, outreach will be made by the Community Co-chair. Notification will be made from the HPG Planning Coordinator to the Recruitment and Membership Workgroup as a HPG Community Representatives' lack of attendance percentage increases.
- Engagement from HPG leadership is key to understanding the reason(s) for a members' absence(s). It also provides insight in determining if removal is needed. Community Representatives may resign if they determine attendance cannot be maintained. See 7.1.7 for more details.
- In the event removal for attendance is required, the Recruitment and Membership Workgroup will be notified by the Community Co-chair and/or the Planning Coordinator, about the membership opening as preparation for a priority pool individual to be contacted with the opportunity to replace the departing HPG Community Representative(s).

7.1.4. Absence, Lateness & Early Departures: In order for the business of the HPG to be effectively conducted it is imperative that members are courteous and notify HPG Co-Chairs of their expected absence, lateness or early departures at least 24 hours in advance of a scheduled meeting. It is understood that due to work constraints, travel delays, personal emergencies, and health, HPG members may at times need special accommodations. There are no 'excused' absences; occasionally being unable to avoid missing a meeting (illness, emergency, etc.) is recognized through the 25% of meetings members are allowed to miss. Members should routinely notify the Co-Chairs of any unexpected absence that may affect the safety and care of our members and expected guests.

7.1.4. Absence, Lateness & Early Departures: In order for the business of the HPG to be effectively conducted, it is imperative that members are courteous and must notify HPG Co-Chairs via email of their absence, lateness or early departures at least 24 hours in advance of a scheduled meeting. It is understood that due to work constraints, travel delays, personal emergencies, and health, HPG members may at times need special accommodations.

- There are no 'excused' absences; occasionally being unable to avoid missing a meeting (illness, emergency, etc.) is recognized through the 25% of meetings members are allowed to miss.
- Members should routinely notify the Co-Chairs of any unexpected absence that may affect the safety and care of our members and expected guests.

No previous language existed in HPG Protocols

7.1.5. Removal Due to Conduct: Upon receipt of a written allegation or complaint, the Co-Chairs will consult with the Steering Committee and whomever else is deemed appropriate in a timely manner. Upon review of the allegation or complaint, the Steering Committee will have discretion to dismiss the matter, or determine it has sufficient merit to pursue further. If the latter is the case, the Co-Chairs will immediately inform the Community Representative of the alleged violation in writing. The Co-Chairs may temporarily suspend the Community Representatives' membership pending the resolution of the matter; which may include mediation administered by the Steering Committee. If mediation is not successful, Community Representatives will vote on terminating the Community Representative's HPG membership at the next HPG meeting (provided at least 10 days precede the next HPG meeting). Prior to a vote of removal, the alleged violating HPG Community Representative may provide the Co-Chairs with a written response to the complaint and may also request to present their response directly to the HPG. Outcomes will be provided in writing to all parties involved.

Violations of any HPG policies contained within these protocols (Confidentiality, Representation, Conflict of Interest, Attendance, or other substantial allegations), a Community Representative may be removed from the HPG by a vote of the majority of the Community Representatives present at a duly convened meeting or teleconference, provided a quorum is present.

Planning Partner Agencies may not be removed, however the HPG can request the agency individual be replaced by another due to poor conduct.

7.1.5. Participation: A meaningful involvement in the planning process with an active collegial voice in decision-making by all HPG members is essential and encouraged. The views, perspectives, and needs of all members are welcome, respected, and equal.

7.1.6. Recruitment and Nomination: Members of the HPG are encouraged to nominate Community Representatives who may be candidates for future HPG membership to the Recruitment and Nominations Work Group open nominations process as described in section 5.5.1. Members of the community-at-large may also recommend individuals for membership by contacting a Co-Chair or the Chair of the Recruitment and Nominations Work Group.

7.1.6. Participation: All HPG members are essential and encouraged to provide meaningful involvement in the planning process with an active cordial voice in decision-making. The views, perspectives, and needs of all members are welcome, respected, and equal.

Recruitment and Nomination moved to 7.1.9

7.1.7. Member Resignation: HPG members wishing to resign shall notify the Co-Chairs in writing. The vacant position shall be filled in the next nominations cycle or from the recent, rolling applications for HPG membership. If an individual holds an appointed membership position representing an agency/organization (Department of Corrections, Department of Education, HIV Prevention Program Field Staff, etc.) and that individual's affiliation changes, that individual shall resign their position and the designated agency/organization shall appoint a replacement. Resignation does not prohibit someone from reapplying for HPG membership in the future.

7.1.7. Resignation: HPG Community Representatives wishing to resign shall notify the Co-Chairs in writing. The vacant Community Representative position shall be filled either:

1. in the next nominations cycle or,
2. from the priority pool of rolling applications for HPG Community Representatives.

- If an individual holds an appointed position representing a Planning Partner agency / organization (Department of Corrections, Department of Education, HIV Prevention Program Field Staff, etc.) and that individual's affiliation changes, that individual shall resign their position and the designated agency / organization shall appoint a replacement.
- Resignation does not prohibit someone from reapplying for HPG membership in the future.
- [See Section 10 regarding resignation of Co-Chair and Subcommittee Chair\(s\).](#)

7.1.8. Travel: Travel and travel reimbursements are governed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and updated periodically. The Department will provide HPG Community Representatives with the current Travel Guidelines and instruction on completing and submitting the Travel Expense Reimbursement Form during the HPG Orientation. Travel is not covered for Planning Partners or guests, and the Division at its sole discretion may direct the Planning Coordinator to cover travel costs for key invited speakers.

Recruitment and Nomination moved from 7.1.6

7.1.8. Travel: Travel and travel reimbursements are governed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and updated periodically. The Division will provide HPG Community Representatives with the current Travel Guidelines and instruction on completing and submitting the Travel Expense Reimbursement Form during the annual HPG Orientation. Travel is not covered for Planning Partners or guests, and the Division at its sole discretion may direct the Planning Coordinator to cover travel costs for key invited speakers.

7.1.9. Recruitment and Membership Nomination: Community Representatives of the HPG are encouraged to nominate individuals who may be candidates for future HPG membership to the Recruitment and Membership Work Group open nominations process as described in section 7.2.1.a. Members of the community-at-large may also recommend individuals for membership by contacting a HPG Co-Chair or the Chair of the Recruitment and Membership Work Group.

The following slides have language moved from Section 5.5.1. to Section 7.2

7.2. WORK GROUP RESPONSIBILITIES.

7.2.1 Recruitment and Membership Work Group

7.2.1.a. Soliciting Nominations: The Division distributes HPG recruitment letters and nominations forms to all HPG members, Department HIV Health staff, HIV grantees (county and municipal health departments and regional grantees), HIV prevention program field staff, PLWH groups, and a variety of agencies identified as potential resources for recruiting disproportionately affected and traditionally underserved communities on an annual basis. Applicants from disproportionately affected communities, traditionally underserved communities, and applicants that fill gaps in current HPG Community Representative membership are specifically encouraged to apply; however, all applications will receive serious consideration.

7.2.1.b. Application Process: Applications will be available online at www.stophiv.com website, and may be requested and secured at the Department offices from the Division. Applications may also be obtained from the Community Co-Chair, members of the Recruitment and Membership Work Group, and general HPG members. Applications will be distributed widely across the Commonwealth and to every organization receiving Department of Health funds that provides HIV care or prevention programming. The process is open and ongoing.

7.2.1.c. Application Submission: Completed applications may be submitted online or sent to: The Pennsylvania Department of Health, Director of the Division of HIV Health, 625 Forester St., Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120. Applications should not be sent to the HPG membership or to an individual HPG member. Following the application deadline, all applications will be distributed to the HPG Recruitment and Membership Work Group for review.

7.2.1.d. Application Review: Community Representative applications are to be reviewed by the Recruitment and Membership Work Group during a meeting held for this specific purpose. Recruitment and Membership Work Group members review the applications and recommend new Community Representative nominations based upon gaps identified in the current HPG representation and the unique strengths of the applicants.

7.2.1.e. Membership Invitations: The Recruitment and Membership Work Group will contact each applicant elected by a majority vote of the Recruitment and Membership Work Group. The purpose of contacting is to confirm prospective Community Representative's commitment to participate in the scheduled meetings and answer any questions.

The Division will review the de-identified prospective member invitations for final review. Once this process is complete, the Planning Coordinator will share applicants' contact information with the Division, who will issue membership invitations to those applicants selected by the Recruitment and Membership Work Group. As many new members will likely have a wide range of skills, insights, and experiences, this notification must inform new members of which categories they are specifically representing on the HPG. The list of new members will be forwarded to DOH leadership for awareness.

5.5.1.e. Membership Invitations: The Nominations and Recruitment Work Group will make a telephone call to each applicant elected by a majority vote of the HPG. The purpose of the phone call is to confirm prospective member's commitment to participate in the scheduled meetings and answer any questions. The Division of HIV Disease will review member invitations and forward successful applications for final review and approval to the Pennsylvania Department of Health. Upon receipt of DOH approval, the Division will issue membership invitations, in letter form, to those applicants who were identified by the Nominations and Recruitment Work Group. As many new members will likely have a wide range of skills, insights, and experiences, this letter must inform new members of which categories they are specifically representing on the HPG.

7.2.1.f. Community Representative Selections: Any applicant receiving a membership invitation who confirms their commitment to participate in the HPG (verbally or in writing) will be selected to serve on the HPG as a Community Representative. If an applicant is invited to participate and declines to participate, another applicant may be chosen to fill the position.

7.2.1.g. Applicant Rejection: Remaining candidates who have not been selected will be sent an invitation to apply again in the future. The Division (via Division Co-Chair) will send these letters to denied applicants. A priority pool of key stakeholder applicants will be maintained by the Planning Coordinator. Applicants will remain in the pool until the end of the calendar year to potentially fulfill any midterm vacancies on a rolling basis. The Recruitment and Membership Work Group retains flexibility when creating recommendations to fill (or not fill) vacant positions in order to ensure parity, inclusion, representation and reflectiveness.

Discussion Before Vote of Approval.

Succession of Community Co-Chair

Division Request

The Division has requested an addition to the HPG Protocols for formalizing a succession process. Currently, the Co-Chair Elect steps in should the Community Co-Chair be unavailable. However, there is a lack of process for a third line in the chain of command in the event that neither of these individuals are available, or we're in an off year when a Co-Chair Elect has not been elected yet.

Protocols Updating

- Past Practice vs A Formal Plan
- Only Protocol reference is 10.1.3 where the Community Co-Chair Elect position states as a responsibility “filling in for the current Co-Chair if they are unable to attend an HPG meeting”.

Thank you.