Policy Committee

Duties of Committee

The members of the Policy Committee are appointed by the President and charged with updating/adding policy, position, and guidance statements for the Society.

Composition of Committee

The committee is composed of ASCP members to include board members, a member of the Council of Presidents, Pharmacy Practice and Government Affairs staff, and members at large from diverse pharmacy practice backgrounds.

Definitions

1. Policy Statements
   a. Description: policy statements describe and delineate a preferred benchmark, standard of practice, or rule that senior care pharmacists should achieve. These documents should express the view of ASCP and serve as a guide for members.
   b. Length: policy statements need to hone in on actions, behaviors, or systems that should be in place to achieve the policy described and are usually 1 to 2 pages in length, excluding references.
   c. Section headings: policy statement, preamble/background, arguments, research, summation if needed, references. References should be cited in numerical order within the text.
   d. Scope/breadth: succinct, focused.
   e. Technical level: easily understandable to all stakeholders, which include non-health care professionals. Use lay terms and explanations where indicated.
   f. Review prior to submitting to the Board of Directors should include the following ASCP committees: Policy, Government Affairs, other appropriate committees, and appropriate legal counsel as needed.
2. Position Statements
   a. Description: position statements provide ASCP’s opinion or stance on a particular topic for both internal and external constituents.
   b. Length: position statements need to include succinct summary of arguments to justify and explain the position taken and are usually 1 to 2 pages in length, excluding references.
   c. Section headings: position, preamble/background, arguments and research, summation if needed, references. References should be cited in numerical order within the text.
   d. Title: each position statement should clearly state the nature of the position in its title (e.g., agrees, disagrees, should, should not, etc.).
   e. Scope/breadth: succinct. Include a summary of research as needed to clarify or justify the position.
   f. Technical level: easily understandable to all stakeholders, which include non-health care professionals. Use lay terms and explanations where indicated.
   g. A review prior to submitting to the Board of Directors should include the following ASCP committees: Policy, Government Affairs, other appropriate committees, and pharmacists with current expertise in the topic of the position statement.

3. Guidelines (Guidance Statement)
   a. Description: guidelines are practical tools that serve as a resource for implementing a policy in practice settings. They provide background information and pertinent considerations for senior care pharmacists to develop and implement a more focused policy or position in their practice setting.
   b. Length: guidelines by nature are more extensive than policy or position statements and of sufficient length to present a balanced overview of the topic.
   c. Section headings: preamble/background, guidelines, arguments and research, summary, references. References should be cited in numerical order within the text.
   d. Scope/breadth: guidelines are the broadest of the 3 types of documents.
   e. Technical level: easily understandable to health care professionals and administrators.
   f. Review prior to submitting to the Board of Directors: same as for policies and position statements, but also should be reviewed by pharmacists with current expertise in the topic of the position statement.

The following example illustrates the differences between policy statements, position statements, and guidelines for the topic of telehealth in senior care pharmacy practice settings.

A. Policy: Provision of telehealth services to older adults requires presence of multiple safeguards, appropriate documentation, and adequate training of senior care pharmacists to ensure patient privacy and safety standards.

B. Position statement: ASCP supports the use of telehealth services as tools to reduce medication errors and to improve drug safety.

C. Guideline: describes processes and procedures based on current evidence or practice standards to help pharmacists deliver state-of-the-art telehealth services in senior care pharmacy practice settings.
**Process for updating policies**

Depending on committee workload, review up to 25% of existing ASCP policies, position statements, and guidelines (Documents) annually for updating, deleting, or maintaining without changes.

1. Members of the committee are responsible for selecting which documents to review, with input from the ASCP President.
2. Content experts outside the committee members may be called upon to assist in the review process as needed.
3. Disposition of Documents will be as follows:
   a. Documents that are updated will be forwarded to the Board of Directors for discussion and vote.
   b. Documents recommended for deletion will be forwarded to the Board of Directors for discussion and vote.
   c. Documents recommended to maintain without changes will be forwarded to Board of Directors for discussion and vote. Appropriate notation to be added to the Document and re-posted on the ASCP website.

**Process for initiating new policies**

1. Identifying need for new policies, position statements, and guidelines (documents).
   a. Solicit recommendations from Pharmacy Practice and Government Affairs staff and from the committee members.
   b. Solicit recommendations from ASCP members to engage membership in the process; solicit ideas from other leadership committee members.
   c. All recommendations for new documents must be funneled through the Policy Committee.
2. Selected topics must be relevant and reflect the opinion of ASCP members.
   a. The Policy Committee will decide if a policy, position statement, or guideline is an appropriate format for the topic.
   b. For policy or position statements, the Policy Committee is responsible for confirming the ASCP stance on the topic prior to drafting the document. The committee will seek input as needed from the Board of Directors and/or ASCP staff.
3. Prioritize the topics.
4. Draft the document – identify volunteers either within the committee or in conjunction with colleagues who are content experts but not on the committee to draft the document according to the format (headings) outlined above.
5. Review of document –
   a. Once drafted, the document will be reviewed by 1 or 2 content experts (identified by the committee).
   b. Comments will be sent back to the document author(s) for consideration and revision.
   c. The committee will make final draft revisions and vote to accept/reject the draft document.
d. Once revised & finalized, ASCP staff will format the document and post the final draft for a period of 30 days for member comment.

e. Member comments will be addressed as indicated by the committee and/or author(s).

6. Following a vote of the committee to accept the new document – the final document will be forwarded to the Board of Directors for discussion and vote.

7. Presentation of policy to membership – approved document will be publicized to the membership and posted on the website.