**Public Relations and Media Communications:**

**Sample Policy and Procedure[[1]](#footnote-1)**

# **Policy.**

It is the policy of [*PCA-HCCN name*] (“PCA-HCCN”) to conduct all public relations-related activities and media communications in accordance with applicable federal and state law, regulation and policy. To this end, all media tools and public communications developed by and on behalf of the PCA-HCCN will portray the PCA-HCCN and its activities (and those of its members) in a truthful and accurate manner, ensuring that the information neither misrepresents nor misleads.

**Procedure.[[2]](#footnote-2)**

**1. Public Relations.** PCA-HCCN will conduct all public relations-related activities (whether presented through written, auditory or visual media) consistent with applicable federal and state laws and regulations regarding truth and accuracy in advertising. For purposes of this policy, “public relations-related activities” include, but are not limited to, advertising, community service announcements, news releases, videos, and other promotional materials, whether in written, auditory or visual form. If PCA-HCCN utilizes “real-life” testimonials in conjunction with any public relations-related activities, PCA-HCCN will ensure that each person involved in a testimonial executes an appropriate release and/or authorization prior to such use.

**2. Media Communications.** PCA-HCCN will establish a media communications procedure, which will include the following components:

1. A “media point person” who will: coordinate media at PCA-HCCN; be responsible for answering all media inquiries and drafting press materials (both in reaction to events/inquiries and proactive unsolicited materials); and develop and maintain relationships with local media. Candidates should be able to make decisions to react to immediate media-related needs. Except for the identified “media point person,” employees and agents of PCA-HCCN are prohibited from contacting or speaking with the media on behalf of PCA-HCCN in any manner (including, but not limited to, telephone inquiries, interviews, press releases), unless specifically authorized to do so.
2. An annual media plan, including the number of media events to be held during the year and a strategy for each event.
3. A reporter database with names, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses for local media, which will be compiled by the “media point person” and added to the PCA-HCCN’s newsletter mailing list.
4. A media spokespeople database with contact information for persons who can put a human face on complex issues that may arise (e.g., PCA-HCCN Board members, patients of member health centers).
5. A media crisis plan that establishes roles and responsibilities and includes a protocol addressing who can and cannot speak to the press during times of crisis and how the PCA-HCCN will respond on an immediate basis.
6. A clearinghouse for general health-care related information, including up-to-date news releases, data, etc.

**This policy and procedure shall be periodically reviewed and updated consistent with the requirements and standards established by the Board of Directors and PCA-HCCN management, federal and state laws and regulations, and applicable accrediting and review organizations.**

**Responsible parties:**

### Signature Date

### Executive Director

Signature Date

1. The Authors of these materials include attorneys at the law firm of Feldesman Tucker Leifer Fidell LLP. The sample documents offer general guidance based on federal law and regulations and do not necessarily apply to all PCAs-HCCNs under all facts and circumstances. Further, these materials do not replace, and are not a substitute for, legal advice from qualified legal counsel. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Authors’ note: Using the following sample as a guide, PCAs-HCCNs should tailor the procedure to reflect their own structures and operations. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)