



Medical Advisory Committees Policy and Procedure

Purpose: The National Lymphedema Network (NLN) serves to provide education and guidance regarding lymphedema management to patients, healthcare professionals, and the general public by disseminating information on the prevention and management of lymphedema.

Scope: The NLN creates limited term Medical Advisory Committees (MAC) composed of experts in the field of lymphology to create consensus documents specific to various topics, otherwise known as NLN Position Papers. Each MAC composes a position paper on said topic to be published by the NLN. Periodically, the committees will be re-formed in order to update the papers in relation to emerging science.

Policy Statement: The NLN seeks to create Medical Advisory Committees consisting of lymphology experts to create NLN Position Papers based upon current research and best practice standards. The NLN Leadership will select a Committee Chair for each MAC. The committee assignments are limited in scope with all MACs being dissolved upon successful completion of the task. Committee members will acknowledge that the MAC participation is an at-will agreement with the NLN and that the NLN retains the ability to discontinue participation in writing at the discretion of NLN Leadership. The participating member also retains the right to discontinue participation at any time by providing written notice to the NLN.

Procedure: The National Lymphedema Network Medical Advisory Committees exist to assist in the drafting, editing, and completion of NLN Position Papers. To be considered for participation on a MAC, prospective committee members will complete an application and select up to three position paper assignments for which they qualify. All information will be kept confidential and will be reviewed by the NLN Leadership. Submissions will be reviewed within 14 business days on a revolving basis. Applicants will receive a response via email thereafter. The deadline for submission of application can be found on the NLN website under the [MAC page](#). Upon review of the applications by NLN Leadership, a Committee Chair will be appointed for each MAC. The committees are formed according to the desired number of members for each position paper. The committees will meet to review current research and practice standards to establish a consensus paper for publication on the NLN website and in print. The deadline for completion is within 120 days from the date of the committee assignment. References used to support the position paper will be cited and provided for the NLN to review. Once the document is in the final draft, each paper will be submitted for peer-review by another non-related MAC. The NLN Leadership will review and approve the final paper for publication. The committee will then dissolve and may be requested to reform in the future for any updates at the discretion of the NLN Leadership. Each participant in the MAC will receive credit for authorship presented on the final page, listed in alphabetical order. The NLN Leadership requests that at least one member of each MAC present the newly published Position Paper at a designated NLN event.

Roles and Responsibilities:

NLN Leadership: The NLN Leadership is composed of selected NLN board members and staff who will oversee the process of review and selection of committee members via an application and vetting process. Each Committee Chair will report to NLN Leadership via the NLN Liaison. The NLN Leadership has the final decision on publication of the NLN Position Papers.

NLN Liaison: The NLN Liaison is part of the NLN Leadership, and is responsible for management of the MAC program, including but not limited to, processing applications and supporting documentation, setting deadlines for each MAC, and is the primary contact for all communication with each individual MAC member as necessary, each committee chair, and the NLN Leadership.

Committee Chair: This is a selected member of the committee who will report directly to the NLN Leadership via the NLN Liaison on the progress and outcome of the position paper based upon the current science and best practices. The Committee Chair will ensure the deadline for completion is maintained and will provide any drafts to the NLN Leadership during the process. The Committee Chair is also responsible for meeting minutes and attendance which will be documented.

Compliance: All committee members will:

- Agree to schedule and attend meetings to allow for expedient completion of the project within the proposed timeline.
- Agree to collaborative, cooperative and interactive communications with the goal of achieving a consensus document.
- Maintain professional conduct at all times.
- Recognize that the committee assignments are limited in scope and all committees will dissolve upon completion of the task.
- Acknowledge that participation on a MAC is voluntary and without compensation.
- Be in agreement with the NLN and any discontinuation will be in writing and at the discretion of the NLN.
- Agree that all materials are subject to final approval by NLN Leadership for publication.
- Acknowledge that the NLN will retain ownership and trademark rights of the materials and committee members will not share these with any other entities for publishing or any other purposes without the express written consent of the NLN.
- Be allowed to include their participation and reference the specific NLN Position Paper in their curriculum vitae.
- Acknowledge participation for presenting end documents may be requested for conferences or other events and each member is requested to participate.
- Format all references in the Chicago style format.

Review of Policy: In order to maintain up to date Position Papers, a review of the current documents will be required. The frequency of the review will be determined by NLN Leadership, though it will not exceed three years from the date of the most recent publication.

Approval Process: Before an NLN Position Paper can receive final approval for publication, the following process must be adhered for each document:

- Each document will be reviewed no less than two times prior to submission of the final draft. The Committee Chair will share each draft with the NLN Leadership via email.
- The final draft will be peer-reviewed by another non-related MAC.
- The NLN Leadership and the peer-review committee shall have 10 business days to analyze the draft and submit written feedback to the Committee Chair via email. The Committee Chair is then responsible for communicating the proposed changes or suggestions to the rest of the committee members.
- Completion date for the final draft is 120 days from the date of full committee assignment.
- Exceptions and delays in this process will be subject to review by the discretion of the NLN Leadership.

Effective Date:

This MAC policy and procedure document has been approved by the NLN Board on April 3, 2024. Policy is subject to change at the discretion of the NLN Leadership at any time.

