



**SCIENTIST PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
(SciPAC)**



**CHARTER OF THE
SCIENTIST PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
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SciPAC Charter

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Scientist Professional Advisory Committee (SciPAC) Charter

(Revised July 2017)

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I. MISSION

The Scientist Professional Advisory Committee (SciPAC) provides advice and consultation to the Surgeon General (SG) and the United States Public Health Service (PHS) Commissioned Corps (CC) through the Chief Professional Officer (CPO) for the Scientist Category on issues relating to the professional practice and personnel management of PHS CC Scientist Officers. Upon request, the SciPAC also provides advice and consultation to CPO, the PHS Operating Divisions (OPDIVs) and non-US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) agencies and programs to which CC officers may be assigned. Lastly, SciPAC provides various services to PHS CC Scientist Officers, including career development, mentoring, and advocacy.

II. RELATION OF SCIPAC TO THE U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

In carrying out its responsibilities, SciPAC operates in a resource and advisory capacity and does not substitute for line management or in any way exercise the prerogatives of the OPDIVs. The SciPAC advises the CPO who advises the SG and PHS CC. SciPAC voting members are PHS CC Scientist Officers assigned to various PHS OPDIVs and non-PHS agencies and programs. They are knowledgeable professionals who represent a cross-section of the interests, concerns, and responsibilities of the professionals in the OPDIVs, agencies, and programs staffed by PHS CC officers. SciPAC voting members do not speak for nor represent the management of their OPDIV, agency, or program.

III. OBJECTIVES

SciPAC represents a large number of professional interests and disciplines and seeks to recognize the importance of scientific contributions to the mission of the PHS. SciPAC functions in a resource and advisory capacity to assist with the development, coordination, and evaluation of activities related to the Scientist Category and the number of scientific disciplines represented by PHS CC Scientist Officers with the specific objectives of:

1. Identifying and facilitating resolution of issues and concerns within the PHS Scientist category.
2. Assessing PHS CC Scientist personnel needs and assisting in meeting these needs through recruitment, training, utilization, and professional recognition of officers in the PHS Scientist category.
3. Developing position papers, statistical reports, and/or guidelines in order to advise and comment on matters relating to the personnel issues and professional practice of the PHS Scientist category.
4. Promoting the development and utilization of Scientist Officers by the PHS and other governmental programs.

5. Promoting cooperation and communication among Scientist Officers within PHS.
6. Liaising with other PHS CC professional categories and provide advice and consultation to OPDIV leadership upon request.
7. Promoting the development of PHS Scientist Officers within their professional disciplines.
8. Facilitating relationships with professional organizations and academia to promote the linkage between public health professions and disciplines within PHS Scientist category.

IV. FUNCTIONS

SciPAC has the responsibility to identify and add functions as necessary to carry out its broad mission and objectives. Therefore, this list is not all inclusive. The functions of SciPAC shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Provide general professional advice and recommendations:
 - a. Review and comment on issues referred to SciPAC by the SG, CPO, or OPDIV leadership (e.g., National Prevention Strategy and Healthy People 2020)
 - b. Deliberate on issues, develop findings, and present recommendations to the SG and/or the CPO.
 - c. Provide advice on the professional aspects of the Scientist category (i.e., new technologies, regulations, curricula, research, roles, etc).
 - d. Provide advice on ethical and professional issues affecting SciPAC membership, retention, and standard operating procedures (SOP) regarding SciPAC.
 - e. Review and provide recommendations concerning proposed or needed changes to appointment standards and professional requirements for the Scientist category.
2. Act as a primary source for career development:
 - a. Advise on issues concerning CC career development.
 - b. Advise on operating practices concerning the appropriate/optimum use of Scientist Officers to meet PHS needs, including advocating for scientist involvement in PHS deployments and other activities.
 - c. Advise on issues related to PHS promotion practices of the Scientist category.

- d. Identify both continuing and long-term intramural and extramural education needs of the Scientist category and recommend specific trainings and/or experience opportunities designed to meet these needs.
3. Provide advice and assistance on recruitment issues:
 - a. Assess and project the needs for the Scientist category.
 - b. Provide advice on the goals, objectives, and procedures designed to meet the PHS CC staffing needs and assist in category retention initiatives.
 - c. Formulate criteria for screening the qualifications of applicants to the PHS CC that would commission as Scientist Officers.
 - d. Screen and interview applicants to the PHS CC that would commission as Scientist Officers.
 - e. Develop, review, and critique Scientist category-specific PHS CC recruitment materials, procedures, and programs.
 - f. Establish networks of current and former PHS CC Scientist Officers who can assist and facilitate recruitment activities.
 - g. Provide guidance concerning the PHS CC recruitment of qualified candidates to the Scientist category.
 - h. Develop orientation materials for newly-hired Scientist category professionals and provide advice/recommendations concerning orientation programs.
 4. Communicate and encourage appropriate use of awards/recognition systems to foster visibility:
 - a. Identify, establish, and administer professional, Scientist category-specific awards.
 - b. Maintain cognizance of the existing PHS CC award programs and opportunities.
 5. Serve as a communication link and information resource for the scientific disciplines represented in the category:
 - a. Communicate to the PHS CC important information concerning professional, ethical, and technical issues.
 - b. Encourage individual membership in and involvement with scientific organizations and societies to promote communication and collaboration with non-Federal colleagues.
 - c. Ensure the distribution of minutes and/or other SciPAC-developed materials as appropriate to PHS CC Scientist Officers.

- d. Ensure availability of SciPAC minutes and other relevant information to other PACs and the Office of the SG (OSG) through SciPAC website.
- e. Liase with scientific organizations

V. MEMBERSHIP

1. **Basic Eligibility Requirements for Voting Membership:** Members must be full-time PHS CC at the time they are nominated and appointed to SciPAC, and meet the eligibility requirements for initial appointment to the Scientist category and personnel systems. In addition, all PHS CC personnel must meet the PHS basic readiness standards at the time they are nominated and appointed to SciPAC and throughout their term of service on SciPAC.
 - a. Staff from the Office of the Secretary (OS) and the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH) may serve on a PAC providing that they recuse themselves from voting on issues and decisions that may have the appearance of a conflict of interest with respect to their duty assignments.
2. **Size of SciPAC:** SciPAC shall have no fewer than 7 and no more than 20 voting members. The term for voting membership will be 3 years, except when the PAC Vice Chairperson is required to stay on a 4th year as Chairperson to fulfill that requirement.
3. **Selection Criteria Considerations:**
 - a. **Organizational Representation:** To provide the range of experiences and perspectives necessary for addressing issues before SciPAC, every effort must be made to have the broadest representation possible among all agencies that are routinely staffed by PHS CC Officers of the Scientist category.
 - b. **Geographic Considerations:** SciPAC will have, as voting members, at least two individuals whose regular duty station is geographically removed by a distance of 75 or more miles from the Washington or Atlanta Metropolitan Area.
 - c. **Gender and Minority Representation:** SciPAC will make a concerted effort to include both men and women and racial and ethnic minorities in the composition of its membership.
 - d. **Professional Seniority:** SciPAC will have as a voting member a minimum of one individual who at the time of the appointment to SciPAC has less than 5 years time in service in the CC.
 - e. **Professional Discipline Composition:** Cognizant of the fact that SciPAC is structured around more than one major professional discipline, efforts should be made to ensure that the voting membership is representative of the major Scientist Category sub-disciplines.

4. Ex-Officio Members (non-voting): The CPO and Civil Service Liaison are ex-officio members of SciPAC. The Immediate Past Chairperson may serve 1 year as an ex-officio member of SciPAC. SciPAC may identify other individuals and request they serve as ex-officio members.
5. Liaison Members (non-voting): SciPAC may identify individuals to serve in a liaison capacity to provide information or to assist with activities (e.g., staff from the Office of the Secretary [OS] or the OASH or other advisory groups).

VI. NOMINATION PROCESS

1. Annually, via email and other appropriate forums, SciPAC will solicit nominations for voting membership vacancies on SciPAC from all individuals in the category represented professional disciplines. Self-nominations will be solicited. A selection team (selected by the Rules and Membership subcommittee) and the CPO will identify, by name, the most qualified nominees to fill the anticipated vacancies. A final list of selections will be sent by the CPO to the SG for approval.
2. This nomination process shall be conducted so that the final nomination package for a new voting membership is available for the SG's consideration no less than 60 calendar days prior to the expiration of the regular term of a current member (i.e., July 2).
3. Should the need arise to fill an unexpired term, the same process as used for regular term appointments will be followed except that the nomination package will be conveyed to the SG as soon as possible for action.

VII. TERM OF APPOINTMENT

1. Terms will be staggered so approximately one-third of the members' terms will expire annually. The SciPAC operational year is September 1 through August 31 and newly appointed voting members will begin their term in September of the operational year.
2. Once a voting member has accumulated a lifetime total of 6 years of service on SciPAC, they are not eligible for reappointment. Terms of office may be served consecutively at the discretion of SciPAC.
3. Alternates: Cognizant of the demands of the member's primary work responsibilities, and SciPAC's need to conduct business, SciPAC has the option of establishing procedures to allow each voting member to appoint, and inform the Chairperson, of a single individual who can serve as his/her alternate. Such alternates shall have voting privileges when serving in the place of a primary member. It is the responsibility of the primary SciPAC member to keep the alternate fully informed and knowledgeable of SciPAC's activities.

4. Attendance: Any voting member of SciPAC who misses greater than 3 meetings without just cause (i.e. unexcused absences) can, at the discretion of SciPAC voting members, executive board, and/or CPO be asked to voluntarily resign from SciPAC voting membership, or SciPAC can initiate a request to the SG to terminate said membership.

VIII. EXECUTIVE BOARD

1. The Executive Board shall be comprised of the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Executive Secretary, Commissioned Officers Foundation (COF) Liaison, and the Immediate Past Chairperson.
2. The Vice Chairperson, Executive Secretary, and COF Liaison will be elected annually by the voting membership of SciPAC. They may be nominated or self-nominated.
3. Term of Appointment: The Executive Secretary and COF Liaison each serve a one-year term. The elected Vice Chairperson serves a three-year term; the first year is served as Vice Chairperson, the second year as Chairperson and the third year as Immediate Past Chairperson. If the second year of that three-year term (i.e., the year the officer is Chairperson) coincides with the expiration of that individual's membership on SciPAC, they may be reappointed as a voting member per the provisions of Section VI or serve their third year of the term (i.e., Immediate Past Chairperson) as an ex-officio member of SciPAC conditioned on supervisor approval of the extension.
4. The role of Vice Chairperson is considered the Chairperson-elect. It is the responsibility of the Chairperson to ensure that the Vice Chairperson is trained in the duties and responsibilities of the Chairperson throughout their year as Chairperson. At the conclusion of the Chairperson's term, the Vice Chairperson will assume the role of Chairperson.

IX. CHIEF SCIENTIST OFFICER

1. The SciPAC CPO shall be a non-voting, ex-officio member of SciPAC.
2. Relationship with SciPAC: All appropriate output of SciPAC, be it correspondence, reports, minutes of its proceedings, or other business, must be transmitted through the CPO who, as he/she may deem appropriate, may provide concurring or non-concurring comments but may not stop or unduly delay such transmittals.

X. OPERATIONS AND PROCEDURES

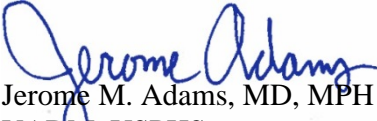
1. Operating Procedures:

- a. Operational year: SciPAC operational year shall be from 01 September through 31 August.
 - b. Frequency of meeting: Meetings will be held once per quarter at a minimum.
 - c. Agenda: The Executive Secretary, with direction from the Chairperson, shall prepare an agenda prior to each meeting and make it and associated materials available to SciPAC before the meeting.
 - d. Standard operating procedures (SOPs): A detailed standard operating procedure for SciPAC can be found in a complementary document to this charter.
2. Records and Reporting:
- a. Minutes of each SciPAC meeting shall be recorded by the Executive Secretary. Draft minutes shall be circulated to SciPAC Voting Members for review and corrections. The Executive Secretary shall send the corrected minutes to the Chairperson for approval.
 - b. Minutes and reports of SciPAC will be distributed in accordance with Section IV.5(c).
 - c. SciPAC will establish a system to maintain a permanent file of the official minutes and non-sensitive reports on SciPAC website and on an internal secure, shared site (i.e., max.gov).
 - d. Executive Secretary: The Executive Secretary will transfer all records (e.g., meeting minutes, achievements, other documentation, etc.) produced during their term to the Website Subcommittee who will archive SciPAC materials.
3. Quorum: A quorum consists of 50 percent of SciPAC's voting membership. If the PAC opts to use alternate members, an alternate reporting in lieu of a voting member shall be counted in determining the quorum requirement.
4. Voting: Where voting is required or appropriate, (e.g., election of the Executive Board Officers), a quorum must be established to move forward with the results of that vote.
5. Subcommittees: Where SciPAC elects to establish standing or ad hoc subcommittees, said membership may include any PHS CC Scientist officer provided that the subcommittee Chairperson is a voting member of SciPAC.
6. Charter Update and Approval:
- a. SciPAC Charter must be reviewed and approved by the SG.
 - b. If SciPAC subsequently modifies its charter, such modifications require the review and approval of the SG.

c. SciPAC will review and, if required, update its charter at least every three years.

DECISION

Approved X Disapproved _____ Date October 18, 2017


Jerome M. Adams, MD, MPH
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Surgeon General