



National Health Council

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Before You Donate to a Patient Advocacy Organization, Look for the Seal of Excellence

Washington, DC (October 11, 2011) -- Donations supporting specific disease or disability organizations in the U.S. were a prominent area of charitable giving in 2010. Health organizations received an estimated \$22.8 billion.

Donors who support patient advocacy organizations that serve the needs of people with chronic conditions can easily determine if an organization meets the highest standards of transparency, accountability, and ethical practice: Look for the Standards of Excellence[®] certification logo on the organization's website.

The Standards of Excellence[®] certification demonstrates that a patient advocacy organization meets the stringent requirements established for members of the National Health Council (NHC) and maintains the highest standards of organizational effectiveness and public stewardship. The NHC Standards are aligned with, but more comprehensive than, the Standards for Charitable Accountability adopted by the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance. The NHC Standards are also unique to patient advocacy organizations.

Compliance with the Standards is determined through an analysis of an organization's documents, such as bylaws, audited financial statements, and annual reports, and the completion of an in-depth survey. This thorough review covers

- organization governance,
- human resources,
- programs,
- fundraising,
- finance,
- accounting and reporting, and
- evaluation practices.

More than 133 million people in the United States live with a chronic disease or disability, and the organizations that help these patients live better and healthier lives need public support to advance the development of new treatments and cures and improve patient access to appropriate health care. To ensure that donation dollars go to a patient advocacy organization that will use the funds efficiently and effectively, consumers should look for the Standards of Excellence[®] logo before they donate.

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For More Information:

- NHC Standards of Excellence Certification Program: <http://www.nationalhealthcouncil.org/pages/page-content.php?pageid=89>
- Patient Advocacy Organizations that meet the NHC Standards of Excellence: <http://www.nationalhealthcouncil.org/pages/member-roster.php#VHA>
- Giving USA 2011 Executive Summary: <http://www.givingusareports.org/free.php>

About the National Health Council – www.nationalhealthcouncil.org

Founded in 1920, the National Health Council (NHC) is the only organization of its kind that brings together all segments of the health care community to provide a united voice for people with chronic diseases and disabilities and their family caregivers. Made up of more than 100 national health-related organizations and businesses, its core membership includes approximately 50 of the nation's leading patient advocacy organizations, which control its governance.

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