

# Process for the Submission and Review of Requests For Data and External Research Collaboration

## INTRODUCTION

NCCPA has a robust repository of data on certified physician assistant demographic and practice characteristics and pursues a research agenda that focuses on its core activities and the ongoing evaluation and improvement of its exams and certification program. A variety of reports, publications, tables, charts, and graphs reflecting data collected by the NCCPA are provided on its website ([www.nccpa.net](http://www.nccpa.net)).

NCCPA is also committed to collaborating with external researchers to share data in appropriate and ethical ways to further advance the health and safety of the public or otherwise conduct useful research related to physician assistants. NCCPA must consider its pursuit of and investment in research through the filter of its purpose and mission as a certifying organization, its obligation as stewards of the data collected, and the ultimate aim of advancing the health and safety of the public and maintaining appropriate criteria and standards for certification of physician assistants.

The purpose of this document is to specify the requirements and procedures for submitting requests for NCCPA data not otherwise available to the public. It is a companion to NCCPA's *Policies for the Review of Requests for Data and External Research Collaboration* and should be read as such.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

In this document, **research** is defined as a systematic investigation for the accumulation of scientific knowledge. For NCCPA's purposes, research projects must have stated goals that include outside publication or other methods of knowledge dissemination. Investigations intended to result in presentations or publications in books, monographs, dissertations, and journals will be considered under NCCPA's data sharing policy.

**NCCPA data** is defined as data collected and/or generated by NCCPA.

## APPLICATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

### **Step One - Application**

The following information is required for any request to be considered by NCCPA:

- Name(s) and contact information of primary investigator and all co-investigators
- Bio sketch or curriculum vitae of the primary investigator
- Location and facility or institution where research will be conducted
- One to two page executive summary describing the purpose/objective of the project (including a hypothesis or research question) and how it serves the public interest and/or enhances the standing of certified PAs in health care delivery systems
- Specific data and variable requested and date data is needed
- Methodologies recommended for the data analysis options

- Intended method(s) of disseminating the results
- Budget, including direct and indirect costs, and source(s) of funding
- Projected timeline (the research/grant term) and completion date for the project
- Disclosure of any potential conflicts of interests for the researcher(s), including any financial involvement with the project
- Description of how the project will comply with institutional and NCCPA policies on confidentiality and research guidelines
- Evidence of institutional approval, where appropriate
- A copy of the formal approval from the applicant's Institutional Review Board (if available) or a timeline for obtaining IRB approval pending the approval of the data request where necessary

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A signed *NCCPA Nondisclosure Affidavit*

### **Step Two – Preliminary Screening**

NCCPA staff will conduct a preliminary screening of requests to determine that the application includes all required elements and may contact the submitter to request additional information. The NCCPA staff will develop an estimate of the time and associated costs for internal resources needed to fulfill the request. This information, along with the information included in the application materials, will be provided to the NCCPA Research Collaboration Advisory Work Group (“the Advisory Work Group”) for review. Only completed applications will be provided to the Advisory Work Group for consideration, and completed applications must be received no later than three weeks prior to the Advisory Work Group’s meeting in order to be placed on the agenda for review. A schedule of the Advisory Work Group’s quarterly meetings will be published on NCCPA’s web site as soon as those dates have been confirmed for 2015.

### **Step Three – Review and Decision**

The Advisory Work Group will convene at least once per quarter to review proposals and will consider (1) the extent to which the proposal advances the health and safety of the public and maintaining appropriate criteria and standards for certification of physician assistants; (2) completeness of the proposal, adequacy of the design and methodology, and qualifications of the primary investigator; and (3) the requirements and availability of the NCCPA resources required for completing NCCPA’s responsibilities related to the project.

NCCPA reserves the right to decline any data request that in its view does not support NCCPA’s mission and purpose, meet a legitimate educational purpose, is not collaborative in nature, or requires excessive NCCPA staff time or organizational overhead. Approval of data requests is at the sole discretion of NCCPA.

The Advisory Work Group may recommend that NCCPA (1) approve the request; (2) conditionally approve the request pending the applicant’s acceptance of recommended revisions, obtainment of IRB approval, or satisfaction of other specified conditions; or (3) deny the request. If a request is denied, a maximum of two additional revised proposals representing a previously submitted application will be accepted by the NCCPA for review.

Depending on the extent of time and costs associated with preparing the requested data and conducting the required analyses, NCCPA may assess a fee to cover those direct costs. If a fee will be assessed, this will be communicated to the researcher with the decision notice.

**Step Four – Execution of Agreement**

If the proposal is approved, NCCPA will provide an agreement to the researcher with the decision notification. The agreement will specify the terms and conditions for the research collaboration, use of the data provided by NCCPA, and any fees required for NCCPA's staff to conduct the analyses, if applicable. NCCPA will require that any published work using NCCPA-provided data, other than data this is publically available, must include a member of NCCPA's staff or other appointee who will also be involved in writing the manuscript. NCCPA will not begin work on extracting or analyzing the data and no resultant data tables will be provided to the researcher until a fully executed agreement and any applicable fees have been received.

**NOTICE OF RIGHT TO AMEND**

NCCPA's policies for sharing data in external research collaborations are subject to change and may be amended at any time at the discretion of NCCPA.

**CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

If you would like to discuss any possible collaboration or if you have any questions regarding this information, please email or call:

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