



# Written and Visual Standards

for Communicating about the  
National Health Service Corps

September 2011

# Introduction

This document lays out basic written and visual communications standards for the National Health Service Corps (NHSC). By ensuring that written and visual messages are consistently conveyed, we can improve the clarity and effectiveness of our communications. In turn, this will strengthen the NHSC's identity, improving our recruitment and retention efforts.

Any questions should be referred to Amy Schachner at [aschachner@hrsa.gov](mailto:aschachner@hrsa.gov) or (301) 594-4414.

# Written Standards

Terminology and Usage

Mission Statement

Messages

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Elevator Speeches

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# Terminology and Usage

The table provides guidance on how program-specific terminology should be used whether writing for the Web or for print communications.

Terminology is shown with its appropriate capitalization. If further explanation is needed, it is included in the Notes for the particular term.

PREFERRED TERM AND USAGE	NOTES
Affordable Care Act (ACA)	Use to describe the health care reform law
Ambassador	Refers to an individual who has committed to meeting the requirements of the Ambassador Program
Ambassador Program	Refers to program of individual Ambassadors responsible for helping to market the NHSC and provide peer-to-peer interaction opportunities for prospective members
American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)	Use name in full with acronym on first mention; not Recovery Act, American Recovery Act, etc.
Application and Program Guidance	Replaces term "Applicant Information Bulletin"; refers to the document that explains how the program operates
communities with a shortage of health professionals communities with a shortage of health care professionals communities with limited access to health care communities in need	Replaces "medically underserved communities" and "underserved communities"
continuation contract	Replaces "amendment"/"contract amendment"; occurs when Corps member wants to extend the service commitment beyond the initial 2 years, or wherever they are in their NHSC contract
the Corps	Another term for "the NHSC"
Corps member current member	A health care provider who has joined NHSC (either through NHSC LRP/SP); also includes current NHSC-approved sites
Customer Service Portal the portal	Online tool for NHSC members; capitalize when using name in full, otherwise lower case

# Terminology and Usage

(continued)

PREFERRED TERM AND USAGE	NOTES
dental dental professional	Refers to this NHSC-eligible discipline category and members in this category (includes hygienists)
Federal program	Capitalize "Federal"; use to describe the NHSC
field strength	The number of providers actively serving in the NHSC
financial incentives financial support	Use to describe the loan repayment and scholarships that the NHSC offers
health care provider primary health care provider	Replaces "clinicians"; another term for "Corp member"
Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA)	Use acronym after first mention; for Web, spell out first again on each new page
job opportunity	Replaces "vacancy"; refers to a job opening at an NHSC-approved site
loan repayment recipient NHSC Loan Repayment Program Awardee (in some circumstances)	Replaces "loan repayer"; refers to an NHSC member receiving loan repayment
loan repayment loan repayment program	Lower case; capitalize only when used with "NHSC"
member NHSC member	Refers to NHSC loan repayment recipients, Scholars, and sites; always lower case, even when used with "NHSC"
mental and behavioral health mental health professional	Refers to this NHSC-eligible discipline category and members in this category
the NHSC	Use instead of just "NHSC"
NHSC Alumni	Refers to NHSC members who have fulfilled their service commitments

# Terminology and Usage

(continued)

PREFERRED TERM AND USAGE	NOTES
NHSC Alumni Network the network	Refers to program of NHSC Alumni volunteers who help to market the NHSC and serve as a resource for current and potential members; capitalize when used with "NHSC"
NHSC-approved site	Refers to NHSC sites, especially on first reference; also considered current members of the NHSC
NHSC.hrsa.gov	Web site URL in all places where this appears
National Health Service Corps Loan Repayment Program (NHSC LRP)	Use acronym after first mention; for Web, spell out first time and again on each new page
NHSC loan repayment recipient	Refers to a primary health care provider receiving loan repayment
NHSC member	Refers to NHSC loan repayment recipients, Scholars, and sites; always lower case, even when used with "NHSC"
NHSC Scholar scholarship recipient	Refers to a student receiving an NHSC Scholarship
National Health Service Corps Scholarship Program (NHSC SP)	Use acronym after first mention; for Web, spell out first time and again on each new page
NHSC Scholarship scholarship	Capitalize only when used with "NHSC"
NHSC Students to Service Loan Repayment Program (S2S LRP)	An NHSC pilot program for which medical students (MD or DO) in eligible disciplines (Internal Medicine, Family Practice, Pediatrics, OB/GYN, and Geriatrics) qualify for loan repayment in their final year of school. After graduation, S2S LRP recipients must work at NHSC-approved sites in the highest-need HPSAs.

# Terminology and Usage

(continued)

PREFERRED TERM AND USAGE	NOTES
NHSC Support Network	NHSC contacts and resources for those involved with the Corps
primary care medical primary care medical professional	Refers to this NHSC-eligible discipline category and members in this category (e.g. doctors, nurses, dentists)
primary health care provider primary health care professional	Replaces “clinicians”; another way to describe Corps members
qualifying educational loans	Use when discussing student loans or education debt; refers to loans/debt covered by the NHSC
recertification	Replaces term “renewal application”; use when discussing the process some sites undergo to continue their designation of being an NHSC-approved site
Recruitment Site	Replaces term “Job Opportunities List (JOL)”; refers to the location where NHSC job opportunities are listed
scholarship scholarship program	Capitalize only when used with “NHSC”
service commitment	Replaces term “service obligation”; a member’s agreement to provide X years of service in exchange for loan repayment or a scholarship
service specialist	Replaces “state analyst”
Service Team	Contacts at BCRS assigned to deliver customer service to Corps members by State—several Service Teams assigned to members by State (e.g., Blue Team)

# Mission Statement

The National Health Service Corps builds healthier communities by supporting qualified health care providers dedicated to working in areas of the United States with limited access to care.

## Messages

These core messages about the NHSC convey the key components of the program for communication. The supporting proof points elaborate upon each message. The messages should not be presented as is; rather, they should be worked into other documents.

1

**The National Health Service Corps (NHSC) builds healthy communities by supporting qualified medical, dental, and mental and behavioral health care providers working in areas of the United States with limited access to care.**

- The NHSC is a network of more than 9,000 primary health care professionals providing culturally competent primary care at close to 12,000 health care sites in urban, rural, and frontier areas.
- More than 37,000 primary care medical, dental, and mental and behavioral health providers have served in the National Health Service Corps since its inception in 1972, providing desperately needed primary health care in areas where providers are in short supply.
- About one in five people in the United States (21 percent) lives in a primary care shortage area, which means they go without essential health services or have to travel long distances to see a health care provider.
- More than 80 percent of NHSC members report they plan to stay at the site where they are currently working after their obligation is fulfilled, which means communities in areas with a shortage of health care providers gain long-term access to needed services.



# Messages

*(continued)*

2

## **The National Health Service Corps offers financial and other incentives to support qualified health care providers who choose to bring their skills where they're most needed.**

- The NHSC Loan Repayment Program starts with an initial, tax-free award of up to \$60,000 for 2 years of service.
- Continued service provides the opportunity to pay off all health professional student loans.
- The NHSC Scholarship Program pays tuition, required fees, and some other education costs for as many as 4 years. Upon graduation, scholarship recipients serve as primary health care providers between 2 and 4 years in a community-based site in a high-need Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA).
- In addition to financial support, NHSC members have access to educational, training, and networking opportunities to support their professional growth.

3

## **Strengthening and growing our primary health care workforce is critical to keeping Americans healthy. The NHSC plays an important role in helping to address the country's primary care shortage and is expanding to help meet the need for providers.**

- Increasing access to providers who can support the physical and mental well-being of individuals can help prevent disease and illness and ensure everyone—regardless of where they live—has access to comprehensive, high-quality care.
- Additional funding through the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) has allowed the NHSC to grow significantly. More than 9,000 NHSC members will be caring for more than 9 million people by the end of 2011, more than doubling the size of the Corps since 2008.

# Messages

*(continued)*

## 4

**The National Health Service Corps is composed of NHSC Scholars, who are training to become the next generation of primary health care providers; NHSC members who are carrying out their service; and NHSC-approved sites, which serve as health delivery sites in communities in need.**

- Loan repayment and scholarship program members may choose where they would like to work from a wide range of NHSC-approved sites around the country in urban, rural, and frontier locations.
- Scholarship recipients fulfill their service commitment at NHSC-approved sites in some of the Nation’s neediest places.
- The NHSC does not “place” health professionals in jobs. Applicants to the NHSC Loan Repayment Program must first find a job of their choosing at an NHSC-approved site before they are considered for the program. Corps members receive a competitive salary from their site, in addition to loan repayment or a scholarship.
- NHSC-approved sites benefit from participation in the NHSC by getting help with the recruitment and the retention of qualified health care providers who care about people with limited access to health care, and who choose to work where they are needed most.

## Boilerplate

The boilerplate is a brief way to describe the NHSC and can be used to consistently describe the program in various written materials, e.g., press releases, newsletters, email updates, email signatures, and reporting.

The National Health Service Corps (NHSC) builds healthy communities by supporting qualified medical, dental, and mental and behavioral health care providers working in areas of the United States with limited access to care. It is a network of more than 9,000 primary health care professionals providing culturally competent primary care at close to 12,000 health care sites in urban, rural, and frontier areas.

# Elevator Speeches

The elevator speeches provide ways to talk about the NHSC program in conversation and answer the question: “What is the National Health Service Corps?” for different audiences. The most relevant information is presented in the first paragraph to account for a brief speech. Additional information follows for a longer conversation.

**AUDIENCE:**

## Community/non-health-care

“The National Health Service Corps is part of the Federal government’s solution to the primary care shortage. It provides financial and other incentives for health care providers to work in communities where they’re desperately needed.”

“Almost a quarter of the U.S. population lives in a Health Professional Shortage Area. This means they have to travel long distances for health or dental care or have to go without it.”

“So, the NHSC makes our communities healthier by ensuring that there are enough doctors, nurses, dentists, and other health professionals available, so everyone has access to care.”

# Elevator Speeches

*(continued)*

**AUDIENCE:**

## Potential member (NHSC LRP)

“The NHSC will pay back your student loans in return for service in a community with health care provider shortages. It starts with up to \$60,000 for a 2-year commitment, but you can potentially pay off all your loans with more years of service.”

“If you’re interested in primary care or general dentistry, the National Health Service Corps is a great way for you to get into that field without having to worry about the burden of loans.”

“You choose where you work and earn a regular salary in addition to loan repayment.”

“As well as financial support, you have access to education, training, and networking to support your professional development.”

# Elevator Speeches

*(continued)*

**AUDIENCE:**

Potential member (NHSC SP)

“The NHSC Scholarship Program pays tuition, fees, and some other education costs for up to 4 years in exchange for service in communities that have shortages of doctors, nurses, [other discipline].”

“If you’re interested in primary care or general dentistry, the National Health Service Corps is a great way for you to get into that field without having to worry about the burden of loans.

“As well as financial support, you have access to education, training, and networking to support your professional development.”

# Elevator Speeches

*(continued)*

**AUDIENCE:**

Potential member (NHSC-approved site)

“The NHSC is a Federal program that helps communities to provide financial and other incentives to attract qualified health professionals.”

“Our NHSC sites say the program is a great way to recruit health care providers who care about working in communities dealing with shortages.”

“The program is a great retention tool as well. More than 80 percent of our providers say they plan to stay in the community where they’re working once their service commitment is done.”

NHSC WRITTEN STANDARDS

## Tagline

Connecting dedicated  
primary care providers to the  
communities that need them.



# Graphic Standards

The graphic standards outlined in this section provide the necessary tools for integrating the NHSC identity into print and electronic communication. **Please review these standards before starting any design work.**

## The NHSC Identity

### Logo

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- Sizing
- Clear Space
- Usage with the HHS and HRSA Logos
- Incorrect Usage
- File Formats
- Confidentiality and File Sharing

### Tagline

- Tagline Without the Logo

### Color Palette

### Photographs

### Fonts

### Tools and Templates

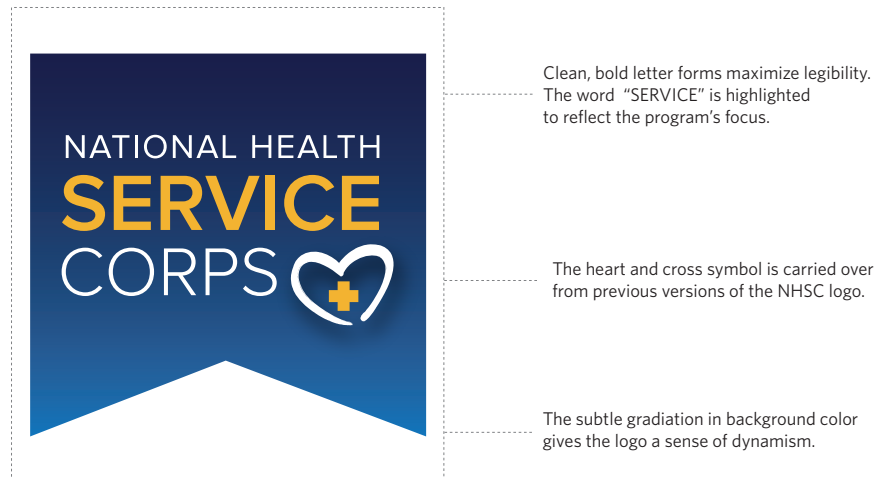
- NHSC Logo
- NHSC PowerPoint Template
- NHSC Letterhead

# The NHSC Identity

The NHSC identity is the visual representation of the NHSC program. It is communicated through use of the NHSC logo, tagline, color palette, photographs, and font type.

## Logo




To provide continuity, and as a nod to the program’s legacy, the updated NHSC logo borrows graphic elements from previous iterations. It pairs the heart and cross symbol from the previous NHSC logo with bolder typography that emphasizes the word “SERVICE,” reflecting the mission-driven thrust of the program. These elements are enclosed in a ribbon as a symbol of achievement and a badge of service. The blue and yellow color combination associated with previous versions is retained but brightened to connote optimism, progress, and energy.



NHSC GRAPHIC STANDARDS

# Logo

There are three approved versions of the NHSC logo.

Logo Version	Guidance	Sample Applications	Image
<p><b>Official</b> (With color gradation)</p>	<p>This is the preferred version for all materials. Use this version whenever possible. The CMYK colors are C=100, M=68, Y=8, K=52 (dark blue); C=100, M=42, Y=0, K=0 (blue); C=0, M=30, Y=95, K=0 (yellow)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ electronic communication</li> <li>▪ presentations</li> <li>▪ Web sites</li> <li>▪ social media</li> <li>▪ certificates</li> <li>▪ 4-color offset printing</li> <li>▪ digital printing</li> </ul>	 <p>The official logo features a blue banner with a white gradient at the bottom. The text 'NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CORPS' is displayed in white and yellow, with a white heart icon containing a yellow cross on the right.</p>
<p><b>Two color</b> (Flat)</p>	<p>When printing methods or limited budgets prevent programs from using the full-color logo, this version may be used. The Pantone colors are PMS1235 (yellow) and PMS 295 (blue).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ limited color offset printing</li> <li>▪ giveaways</li> <li>▪ signage</li> <li>▪ embroidery</li> <li>▪ apparel</li> </ul>	 <p>The two-color logo uses a flat blue banner with white text and a white heart icon containing a yellow cross.</p>
<p><b>Black</b> (One color)</p>	<p>Use this version for materials printed in black and white.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ advertisements in one color</li> <li>▪ documents printed in one color</li> <li>▪ official documents</li> <li>▪ forms</li> <li>▪ contracts</li> </ul>	 <p>The black and white logo features a black banner with white text and a white heart icon containing a white cross.</p>

## Color

The official colors for the NHSC logo are as follows:

- Blue = PMS 295
- Yellow = PMS 1235

However, please note that the official logo contains a gradient blue field that can only be achieved with a full-color print process or digital printing.

## Sizing

The NHSC logo must never appear smaller than 0.75 inches. Anything smaller than this compromises legibility.



When resizing the logo, make sure that the proportions are maintained without distortion. Holding down the shift key while pulling on the corners usually does the trick.

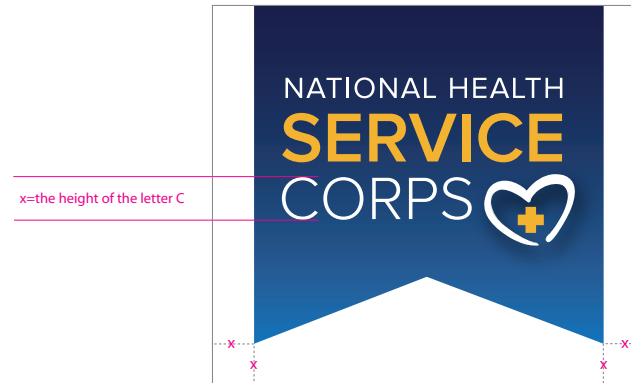


*Exception:* In special cases where the logo needs to appear smaller than 0.75 inches, the three-line text and symbol grouping from the logo may be used without the ribbon. Note that the text-symbol grouping must remain intact and all rules on usage must still be followed. Approval from the NHSC may be required. (Sample applications: lanyards, pins, small buttons)

# Clear Space

Maintaining adequate clear space or “breathing room” around the NHSC logo helps to maintain its visual integrity. The logo should not appear to be crowded by other elements, graphics, or logos. Clear space  $x$  equals the height of the letter “C” in the word “CORPS” as illustrated.

The upper edge of the logo is typically top-aligned or bleeds off the page.



In cases where the logo is used in a lock-up or cannot be aligned with the edge of the page or a graphic, clear space must be maintained on all four sides.



# Usage with the HHS and HRSA Logos

In cases where the three logos must appear together, the following order must always be maintained: HHS, HRSA, and the NHSC. The HHS logo must always appear larger than the two other logos. The logos must be displayed with enough clear space and centered horizontally.



# Incorrect Usage



Do not change the proportion of the logo.



Do not change the fonts.



Do not add any text or graphic elements to the logo.



Do not place the logo at an angle.



Do not change the color of the logo.



Do not alter the shape of the logo.



Do not cut or crop the logo.



Do not use a color logo that doesn't stand out from the background.



Do not put the logo in a containing shape.



Do not use a pixelated or blurry version of the logo.



Do not fade out the logo.



Do not place the logo over busy backgrounds.

## File Formats

Using the right file format for the application generates the best results in terms of resolution and legibility. All file formats are available for download.

- EPS (Best for print, signage, banners, or giveaways)
- JPG (Best for Web or online)
- GIF (Best for fast-loading Web graphics)
- PNG (Best for Microsoft applications like Word and PowerPoint)

## Confidentiality and File Sharing

Use of the NHSC logo can imply authorship, endorsement, sponsorship, or partnership. Please check with the NHSC Division of External Affairs, (301) 594-4414, before sharing the logo outside of the Department.



NHSC GRAPHIC STANDARDS

# Tagline

When the logo and tagline appear together, the following graphic presentations are acceptable. Make sure that the text is legible. The tagline should only be reproduced in PMS 295 (dark blue).



*Connecting dedicated primary care providers  
with the communities that need them*



*Connecting dedicated primary care providers  
with the communities that need them*

— WHITNEY BOOK ITALIC, PMS 295

When presented in black and white, the following tagline treatment is acceptable.



*Connecting dedicated primary care providers  
with the communities that need them*



*Connecting dedicated primary care providers  
with the communities that need them*

— WHITNEY BOOK ITALIC, BLACK

# Tagline Without the Logo

In some instances, for example on letterhead, or on banners and posters, the tagline can be positioned apart from the logo. These tagline treatments are approved for this purpose.

WHITNEY BOOK ITALIC, PMS 295

*Connecting dedicated primary care providers  
with the communities that need them*

GOTHAM BOLD, PMS 295

**Connecting dedicated primary care providers  
with the communities that need them**

GOTHAM BOOK, PMS 295

Connecting dedicated primary care providers  
with the communities that need them

WHITNEY BOOK ITALIC, Black

*Connecting dedicated primary care providers  
with the communities that need them*

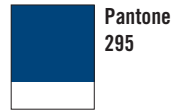
GOTHAM BOLD, Black

**Connecting dedicated primary care providers  
with the communities that need them**

GOTHAM BOOK, Black

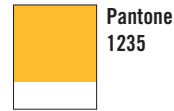
Connecting dedicated primary care providers  
with the communities that need them

# Color Palette



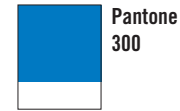
C = 100  
M = 68  
Y = 8  
K = 52

R = 0  
G = 47  
B = 95



C = 0  
M = 30  
Y = 95  
K = 0

R = 255  
G = 182  
B = 18



C = 100  
M = 42  
Y = 0  
K = 0

R = 0  
G = 101  
B = 189



C = 9  
M = 11  
Y = 13  
K = 23

R = 183  
G = 177  
B = 169

# Photographs

Using photography is a powerful way to make vivid the NHSC identity. Select photographs that show optimism, dignity, authenticity, and diversity. Avoid stock photographs. Photographs should be drawn from the NHSC photo library whenever possible. Contact (301) 594-4414 for photograph requests.



Optimism + Dignity  
Authenticity + Diversity

# Fonts

For the purpose of consistency, these font families are recommended for all NHSC print and electronic communications. Using these fonts consistently helps reinforce the NHSC identity.

For use in design program documents (e.g., Adobe InDesign, Adobe Illustrator, QuarkXPress)

Gotham (for headlines, titles, and short phrases)  
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
1234567890&.,:;'\$¢%!?(\* )

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ**  
**abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz**  
**1234567890&.,:;'\$¢%!?(\* )**

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Whitney (for body text and headlines)  
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
1234567890&.,:;'\$¢%!?(\* )

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ**  
**abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz**  
**1234567890&.,:;'\$¢%!?(\* )**

For use in Web sites, electronic communications, and Microsoft Office application documents (e.g., Word, PowerPoint)

Arial (for body text and headlines)  
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
1234567890&.,:;'\$¢%!?(\* )

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ**  
**abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz**  
**1234567890&.,:;'\$¢%!?(\* )**

Note: Avoid using the font Arial Unicode, which presents issues when preparing documents for Section 508 compliance. For more information, refer to <http://www.hhs.gov/web/508/index.html>

NHSC GRAPHIC STANDARDS

# Tools and Templates

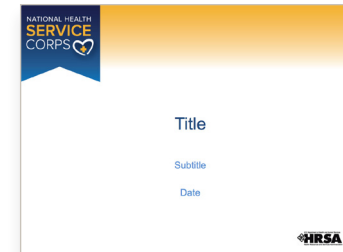
These tools and templates have been developed according to the NHSC visual standards and are available for your use.

The templates are posted on the BCRS Regional Office SharePoint page and can be accessed through BCRS' shared internal files or by calling (301) 443-4510.

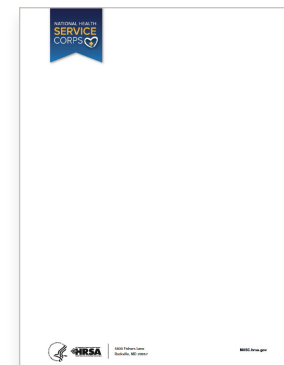
NHSC Logo



NHSC PowerPoint template



NHSC Letterhead





National Health Service Corps  
Health Resources and Services Administration  
Bureau of Clinician Recruitment and Service  
Division of External Affairs  
[NHSC.hrsa.gov](http://NHSC.hrsa.gov)