

# Special Interest Group (SIG) Leader Handbook

Updated Spring 2025

## Introduction

The Society of Hospital Medicine (SHM) represents the fastest growing specialty in modern healthcare, reflecting the strength and vibrancy of the hospitalist movement.

As a Special Interest Group (SIG) Leader, you have a very important role in SHM's national organizational structure and engagement strategy.

SHM reviews each SIG on an annual basis to ensure it is meeting baseline requirements to maintain full SIG status. The requirements are designed to ensure that SHM member participation within a SIG provides them with a high-quality experience, worthy of their limited time.

SHM expects each of its SIGs to serve as a vehicle for:

- Networking and engagement opportunities with other members who share similar interests;
- Volunteer leadership opportunities;
- Information transfer and shared problem solving for the benefit of members of the SIG to improve the quality of practice, in both clinical and administrative aspects; and
- Highlighting relevant SHM initiatives, trends, policy issues, and events to the members of the SIG.

This SHM SIG Handbook has been created as a reference guide for you and your SIG. To make it easier to use, we have divided the handbook into sections so you can quickly find the information you need.

We wish you much success with your Special Interest Group. If you have any questions, please contact the SIG program staff at [SIGS@hospitalmedicine.org](mailto:SIGS@hospitalmedicine.org).

## SIG Support

SHM employs staff who support the SIG program by providing oversight to ensure an effective foundation and platform for success, consistent with SHM's mission, vision, values, and goals.

## SHM Office

The SIG program is managed by SHM staff who are located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

## Location and Contact

Society of Hospital Medicine  
1500 Spring Garden, Suite 501  
Philadelphia, PA 19130  
Phone: (800) 843-3360  
Email: [SIGS@hospitalmedicine.org](mailto:SIGS@hospitalmedicine.org)

## SIG Program Overview

SIGs are organized around topics of interest, practice areas, and/or care models. SIG membership consists of any active, dues-paying member of the Society of Hospital Medicine who has self-selected to join a SIG.

## SIG Charge

- Promote the mission of SHM to hospitalist members;
- Create opportunities for meaningful engagement, networking, and information sharing among SIG members;
- Foster member engagement within their respective SIG communities;
- Use the Hospital Medicine Exchange (HMX) platform as the primary vehicle for communication and interaction with SIG members;
- Submit an annual SIG Leadership Roster and Plan, including contact information for officers and other members of the leadership team.

Please visit [the SIG page](#) on SHM's website for a current list of SIGs.

## Keeping Informed

SIG Leaders should become familiar with their respective SIG Community and the SIG Leaders Group within SHM's Hospital Medicine Exchange (HMX) platform. The SIG Leaders Group is exclusive to SIG Leaders and should be utilized for the following:

1. Networking with other SHM SIG Leaders;
2. Obtaining and accessing links to relevant forms;
3. Locating resources and tools;
4. Reviewing posted updates and news by Society staff.

## Quarterly Updates to Leadership

SHM staff will host a quarterly virtual meeting with SIG Officers. They will include updates and news from SHM and shared practices and updates from SIGs on their existing activities, successes, and struggles. At least one representative from every SIG Leadership team must attend each meeting.

## SIG Structure

### SIG Leadership

Officer roles follow a one-year term, renewable up to 3 years for the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. Other members of the SIG Leadership team, as determined by each SIG, have one-year renewable terms.

### Requirements

Although each leadership position within a SIG may operate differently, all SIG Leaders must meet the following requirements:

- Be a current, dues-paying member of SHM
- Demonstrate dedication to SHM, the SIG's area of interest, and be willing to effectively execute the duties and responsibilities of the position;
- Make themselves available to attend all required meetings.

## SIG Leadership Positions and Selection of Leadership

There are a variety of leadership appointment procedures in use throughout SIGs. In general, recruitment and appointment for open leadership positions should take place

around SHM Converge as SHM's operational and volunteer leadership calendar operates on an annual conference to annual conference basis.

## SIG Leadership Rosters

SIG Leadership rosters are managed by SHM's SIG program staff in coordination with SIG Leadership. SIGs will be annually required to fill out a form updating their Leadership roster and contact information.

## Timing

Whatever process for leadership selection the SIG chooses, they should align with SHM's annual conference so that Leadership team terms start and end by May 31 of each year.

## Recruiting New Leaders

All SIG members should be given the opportunity to apply for open leadership positions. SHM staff will provide a link to a [universal application form](#), which SIG Leadership Teams may opt to post on their HMX forum to solicit applications. This form provides applicants an opportunity to identify the SIG Leadership Team for which they are applying, upload a CV, and provide a short statement of interest and applicable skills.

To recruit new leaders, SIG Leadership Teams may deploy the following process:

Post a call for leaders in the SIG's HMX community, and announce at upcoming calls/events. Include details such as

- Link to the Universal Application form
- Number of open seats the SIG is recruiting
- Any open officer roles
- Specific qualifications (skills/attitudes/knowledge) or perspectives
- Deadline to apply

When the SIG's application period has closed, email staff at [sigs@shm.org](mailto:sigs@shm.org) and request the files.

SHM staff will email officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary) with 1. A spreadsheet with applicant contact information and open essay responses, and 2. Applicant CVs.

Leadership teams may review applications at their own discretion and pace and communicate with applicants regarding their status.

## SIG Membership

Once a SIG is established, all active members of the Society of Hospital Medicine are eligible to be members of the SIG. There are no separate fees to belong to an SHM SIG. SHM members can join any SIG by opting into the SIG's community in the SHM Hospital Medicine Exchange (HMX). Active SHM members not subscribed to a specific SIG's HMX Community can still view the SIG Community's content but will not appear as members on the HMX roster.

Please note that SIGs are an SHM member benefit made possible by member dues. Non-SHM members are not eligible to join the SIG, should not have access to SIG events, may not join the leadership team, and are unable to access the HMX community. An exception applies for SIG event access to invited guest speakers participating as a speaker or panelist for a SIG engagement event.

The primary modes of communication with SIG members are via HMX, Zoom, and SHM's monthly events newsletter. To ensure SIG activities remain transparent and available to all SHM members, as well as compliant with SHM's privacy policy, SHM is not able to provide email addresses for general SIG membership. Member information is the property of SHM and may not be used for anything other than SIG purposes or shared with any individual or company.

## Planning For Engagement

The SIG Leadership should determine what activities and events it would like to conduct during the current year. SIGs will be asked to comment on activity plans for the year when filling out the annual SIG Leadership Roster and Plan.

## Planning Leadership Meetings

When completing the annual SIG Leadership Roster and Plan, SIG Leadership teams will have the opportunity to specify the desired frequency of recurring SIG Leadership meetings. Meetings should be used to plan upcoming events and communicate important initiatives.

## Leadership Training for New Leaders

SHM will provide SIG Leadership overview and training annually in the summer, with additional updates to SIG Leadership officers throughout the year.

SIG Leaders should mentor potential future leaders by outlining expectations, providing growth opportunities, and using this handbook as a training tool to ensure continuity in leadership.

# SIG Roles & Responsibilities

## **Chair**

- Attend and participate in SIG Leadership meetings and teleconferences
- Develop and share meeting agendas
- Ensure engagement event forms are completed to support staff promotion and posted on HMX
- Assign responsibilities to leadership members as needed
- Set deadlines for completion of assigned responsibilities

## **Vice-Chair (Chair-Elect)**

- Attend and participate in SIG Leadership meetings and teleconferences
- Work with chair to lead SIG
- Assist in development of meeting agendas
- Serve as acting chair if/when chair unavailable

## **Secretary**

- Responsible for helping to prepare and share meeting and teleconference agendas
- Responsible for recording and sharing brief meeting and teleconference notes
- Assist in sharing necessary documents with SIG Leadership
- Ensure completion of annual SIG Leadership Roster and Plan by May 31

## **Additional SIG Leadership Members**

- Attend and participate in SIG Leadership meetings and teleconferences
- Prepare for meetings by reviewing agenda and reading background materials
- Respond in a timely fashion to requests for information from the chair
- Keep a pulse on postings in HMX and respond to requests/questions
- Complete all assignments in a timely fashion
- Present new community engagement ideas
- Disclose real or perceived conflicts of interest as they arise

## **SHM Staff**

- Assist SIG Chair in coordinating meeting and teleconference dates and times
- Provide support scheduling SIG meetings and teleconferences via email calendar appointments for SIG Leadership

- Share relevant news and updates concerning the SIG program and SHM
- Provide access to tools and best practices necessary for SIG success
- Provide HMX support to SIG Leaders and members

## Getting Started

### SIG Launch

Once a SIG has been approved, SHM staff will take the following steps to set up newly approved SIGs:

#### *SIG Community Page in Hospital Medicine Exchange (HMX)*

The SIG will have its own page on SHM's Hospital Medicine Exchange (HMX). The community page will include information about the SIG (including leadership, events, etc.) and a discussion area.

#### *Daily Digest Setting*

SIG members will receive Daily Digest emails from HMX when there are messages posted within the community. SIG membership consists of all SHM members who have subscribed to the SIG's HMX Community.

#### *SIG Information on HospitalMedicine.org*

The SIG will be added to the list of SHM SIGs on SHM's webpage.

#### *Schedule Initial Planning Call*

SHM staff will hold an initial meeting with the leaders from the newly formed SIG to discuss responsibilities and answer any questions.

#### *Announcement of SIG*

After the SIG's HMX Community page is live and initial members have been assigned to the SIG, SHM will schedule an announcement in an upcoming newsletter. SIG Leaders should announce the establishment of the SIG on the [HMX Open Forum](#). This initial post should introduce the SIG and its purpose to current and potential members.

### SIG Kickoff Meeting

The following steps are recommended for the planning of the SIG's first meeting:

1. Work with SHM staff to determine a date and time when all parties are available to hold the SIG's first call.
2. Once a time has been agreed upon, SIG Leaders should announce the call on HMX, as well as by directly reaching out to colleagues. SHM staff will promote the call by sending an electronic calendar appointment to the SIG Leadership and add it to the SHM HMX [Calendar of Events](#).
3. Develop an agenda (see recommendation below) and share it in the SIG HMX Community.

It is recommended that the SIG's first meeting be planned at least 1 to 2 months in advance. Most SIG meetings are one-hour calls held during the work week (Monday-Friday) and are held during normal business hours. Due to the varied geographic locations of SHM membership, SHM recommends that calls are held no earlier than 12 p.m. ET/11 a.m. CT/10 a.m. MT/9 a.m. PT. It is recommended that the following agenda be used for the SIG's initial meeting:

1. Welcome from and introduction of SIG Leaders and those present on the call;
2. Discussion regarding the purpose of the SIG, its plans and activities for the first year;
3. Time for additional topics and open discussion.

## Annual Evaluation

SIG program staff will conduct an annual evaluation of all SIGs every June. To remain active on the SHM website and retain their HMX community, SIGs must meet minimum criteria. This evaluation will be based on the SIG's achievement of the criteria and requirements listed below. Upon evaluation, a SIG will be assigned a 'health status.' Below is a description of each status:

### Green

**Officers:** The SIG has at minimum a chair and vice-chair. SIGs may optionally appoint a secretary.

**Composition:** Including officers, the SIG Leadership should consist of a minimum of 3 total members. To operate effectively, SHM recommends SIG Leadership teams only recruit additional members to the extent necessary to accomplish their goals, up to a maximum of 15, including officers.



## **Engagement:**

*Leadership Meetings:* The SIG holds, at minimum, 2 SIG Leadership meetings and/or calls.

*Engagement Events:* The SIG holds, at minimum, 3 SIG membership engagement activities or engagement opportunities for the term, including active participation in the annual SIF.

*HMX Engagement:* SIG Leaders are required to post notice of all SIG Engagement Events in their HMX Community, and ensure timely responses to occasional questions or comments from members of their community.

*Administration:* The SIG has submitted the most recent annual Leadership Roster and Plan form by the May 31 deadline.

## **Yellow**

The SIG has not met 1 or more of the above criteria for Leadership, Composition, Engagement, or Administration in the past year.

## **Red**

A SIG is considered in “Red” status when it has not met officer, composition, engagement requirements for 2 consecutive years and SIG Leadership has not communicated to staff a plan for improvement. In the absence of such communication, SHM reserves the right to move a SIG to “Red” status earlier.

Once the SIG has become Red, it will be sunset. A sunset SIG will no longer receive staff support and its community will eventually be hidden from the SHM website and HMX platform (not deleted). Future volunteer leaders interested in reviving any sunset SIG may reapply for re-establishment and submit to SHM staff for review.

## **Member Engagement**

One of the primary roles of a SIG Leader is to encourage members to get more involved with the Society by joining SIG Leadership, applying to serve on a committee, getting

involved in a chapter, or serving in a national leadership role such as speaking at a conference or presenting academic work.

SIG Leaders should promote these opportunities to members, especially those who demonstrate an interest in becoming more involved.

Here are some ideas to help SIG Leaders:

- Encourage members to consider joining SIG Leadership in the future;
- Solicit feedback for roundtable discussions, webinar topics and speakers, types of engagement events, and resources that are of interest to members;
- Start discussions in the SIG's HMX Community to get members communicating virtually;
- Provide updates or summaries of SIG meetings in the SIG's online HMX Community;
- Establish recurring or pre-scheduled Leadership meetings so SIG leaders are prepared to participate on a regular basis.
- Hold member-wide engagement opportunities at regular intervals.

## Plan a Variety of Interesting Activities for Your SIG Members

### *Non-CME Educational Webinars*

Rotate the topics and speakers to keep SIG members interested. HMX and the Special Interest Forums (SIFs) are a great way to engage with members, market the webinars, and solicit topics.

### *Roundtable/Problem Solving Discussions*

SIGs may host one-hour calls focused on a relevant topic of interest. This activity can be an opportunity for SIG members to engage with one another in relation to a specific idea or problem that they are looking to garner responses to or just to connect with a loose agenda that promotes networking and an open forum to bring up relevant and pertinent topics related to the scope of the SIG.

### *Networking, Mentoring, Peer-to-Peer Mentoring*

Host a meeting to talk about the value of SHM membership, the benefits, national meetings, and engagement and networking opportunities.

### *Encourage Involvement with other SHM Programs*

At any meeting and as appropriate, SIG Leaders may highlight other opportunities to get involved, including achieving/obtaining Fellows and Senior Fellows designations,

submission of talks to local chapters, submission of track sessions at SHM Converge, SHM's Annual Conference, and submission of abstracts to the Research, Innovations and Clinical Vignettes Competition at both the Chapter and National Conference level.

## Activity Planning Tips

SHM's most successful SIGs offer a variety of events to meet members' needs.

### *Plan ahead and early*

Events succeed by planning well in advance of the event. It helps to have input from SIG members prior to the event or activity to ensure relevance and interest. SIG Leaders can survey members on topics that are of interest to them. Advance notice for all participants is key. It is recommended that activities be announced no less than 4 to 6 weeks prior to the event. Planning should start even sooner.

### *Follow up on the details and thank contributors*

Send written 10confirmations to speakers. After the meeting or event, send a thank you message to anyone who donated time, knowledge, and/or resources as they will be more likely to help again in the future.

## SHM Converge Special Interest Forums (SIFs)

SIGs that have submitted the Leadership Roster and Plan within the last year will be provided the opportunity to have a Special Interest Forum (SIF) during SHM Converge. While it is not mandatory for all SIG Leaders to be in attendance at SHM Converge, SIG Leadership should have a plan for their SIF agenda and designate at least one SIG leader be present to facilitate the forum.

## Technology

### SIG Web Presence

SIGs are prohibited from creating individual websites or social media accounts. To maintain the SHM brand, the SHM website, web domains, and HMX platforms are the only virtual spaces that should feature SIG information. SIGs are encouraged to review SHM's virtual areas and domains where SIGs are highlighted and provide staff with updates that may need to be made to maintain consistency with the group's scope and focus.

A SIG's community page is created in SHM's Hospital Medicine Exchange (HMX) upon launch of the SIG. SHM staff will assist SIG Leaders with the maintenance of relevant content on each SIG page. Please visit the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) page for help on navigating HMX and maintaining SIG community pages.

Updates to submit to SHM Staff:

- Updated SIG Officer Information: Staff will add and remove officers on SIG community pages.
- SIG Events: SIG Leadership should communicate with SHM staff about any events or meetings they plan to hold 4-6 weeks in advance via the [SIG Engagement Event form](#). SHM staff will deploy email calendar invitations to the SIG's Leadership roster and any approved will happen prior to each SIG meeting (or once for a recurring series) or event. In addition, SIG program staff will ensure events appear on the HMX Event Calendar and monthly SHM Events Newsletter. SIG Leaders should ensure a post about the event is made in the SIG's community and may also post in the Open Forum.

Any communication regarding SIG-related information for raising awareness of events or seeking input from SIG members should take place expressly via HMX. Prior approval from SHM staff and leadership is required for any communication outside the platform.