

Chapter Start-Up Guide



In This Guide:

<u>What is PNHP and SNaHP?</u>	2
<u>Starting your chapter</u>	3
<u>Sample charter</u>	4
<u>Tips and tactics</u>	5
<u>Tips and tactics</u>	5
<u>Sample calendar</u>	9
<u>Getting more involved</u>	10
<u>Resources for your chapter</u>	11

This guide was adapted from the student strategy sessions of PNHP's Annual Meeting and Leadership Training, plus workshops from the SNaHP Summit, and resources from various SNaHP student chapters.

*It was edited by the SNaHP Infrastructure Committee.
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What is PNHP and SNaHP?

Students for a National Health Program (SNaHP) is the student arm of Physicians for a National Health Program (PNHP). PNHP is a single-issue organization advocating a universal, comprehensive single-payer national health program. PNHP has more than 19,000 members and chapters across the United States.

Since 1987, PNHP has advocated for reform in the U.S. healthcare system. The organization works to educate physicians and other health professionals about the benefits of a single-payer system. PNHP members and physician activists work toward a single-payer national health program in their communities. The organization performs groundbreaking research on the health crisis and the need for fundamental reform, coordinates speakers and forums, participates in town hall meetings and debates, contributes scholarly articles to peer-reviewed medical journals, and appears regularly on national television and news programs advocating for a single-payer system. PNHP is the only national physician organization in the United States dedicated exclusively to implementing a single-payer national health program.

SNaHP grew organically out of PNHP and AMSA as a platform for medical and health professional students to become single payer advocates. In 2012, two medical students organized a day-long conference of thirty-five students for single payer in PNHP's headquarters in Chicago, calling it the SNaHP Summit. Since then, the summit has more than doubled in size and is now held annually at rotating medical institutions. Today, SNaHP members are organized within medical schools as "SNaHP chapters" and collaborate on nationwide campaigns under countrywide 'Leadership Teams' SNaHP

Additional information can also be found on our website at <https://student.pnhp.org/>



PNHP National Board

PNHP Staff

PNHP Speakers Bureau



SNaHP Executive Board

Leadership Teams:

- **Infrastructure**
- **Education**
- **Media**
- **Political Advocacy**
- **Inclusivity & Outreach**

Local PNHP + SNaHP Chapters

Starting Your Chapter

When you're thinking about starting a SNaHP chapter, chances are high that you are not the only person in your geographical area who is an advocate for single-payer! Starting a chapter entails understanding your local advocacy ecosystem.

1. Consult our [chap ter map](#) to see if a chapter already exists at your school. You can also use this map to see if chapters exist at schools in your geographical region. If no chapter exists at your school, you can start thinking about starting your own group.
1. Look into your school's guidelines for starting a student group. The best time of year to think about starting a group is several months ahead of the new school year. This will give you enough time to fill out necessary paperwork and start recruiting founding members.
2. Contact Lori at 773-559-1712 or lori@pnhp.org, as well as the Infrastructure Committee Members listed as contacts on the chapter map. The National Organizer will help you to identify PNHP members from the faculty of your medical school who might serve as a mentor or sponsor of your group, and connect you to other PNHP student leaders in your area.
3. Have an initial meeting of interested medical students. Your group should discuss the following:
 - a. What does your chapter hope to accomplish? What kinds of leadership roles are needed to facilitate those actions?
 - b. How often will your chapter meet, and how?
 - c. How will your chapter be structured and how will your group make decisions? • What kind of leadership positions will your chapter have?
 - d. How will your chapter grow? Who do you hope to recruit into your chapter?
 - e. What kinds of other student groups or civic organizations will your chapter partner with, if any? Is there a process for working with other like-minded groups?
4. Create a "Chapter Charter." The charter is a statement of intent to the national headquarters of PNHP and should be signed by founding members (see sample charter on the following page). There is no minimum number to get started, although we do recommend a minimum of 3 students. The charter signers can be all students, but you might optionally consider asking your faculty advisor to sign as well. Send your signed charter to lori@pnhp.org, fax to 312-782-6007, or send by mail to 29 E. Madison Street, Suite 1412, Chicago, IL 60602.
5. **All signatories of the Chapter Charter should be members of SNaHP or join SNaHP upon signing.** Student memberships are free! Join at www.pnhp.org/join
6. Follow SNaHP on social media (instagram: @snahp_, TikTok: @SNaHPNational)
7. Check out the [SNaHP Chapter Resource folder](#). We hope this can be a place where you can find information and templates to help plan your SNaHP events and actions. We recommend you save this folder to your or your chapter's google drive account "as a shortcut" on your main Drive folders page, so you do not lose this among the other files that are shared with you.
8. Begin planning a kick-off event, such as a film screening, panel discussion or speaker. The National Organizer at PNHP can help you with ideas, acquire the rights to show certain films, provide lists of members to invite, and help book speakers from PNHP. You can use the worksheet in the appendix to start coming up with ideas.
9. Most universities have an Activity Fair at the beginning of the school year. Contact your school about reserving a table, and email PNHP at organizer@pnhp.org to receive materials for your table (such as sign-up sheets, posters, handouts and buttons). Make sure to have a flyer for your kick-off event at the table!

Sample Charter

Physicians for a National Health Program
29 E. Madison, Ste. 1412
Chicago, IL 60602

Date:

Dear Physicians for a National Health Program,

We, the undersigned (medical/health professional/pre-med) students, seek to start a student chapter of Physicians for a National Health Program at (institution) in (city, state).

We would like to have access to the resources of PNHP to advocate for a single-payer health care system as outlined by the Physicians' Proposal (JAMA, 2003):

1. Access to comprehensive health care is a human right. It is the responsibility of society, through its government, to assure this right. Coverage should not be tied to employment.
2. The right to choose and change one's physician is fundamental to patient autonomy. Patients should be free to seek care from any licensed healthcare professional.
3. Pursuit of corporate profit and personal fortune have no place in caregiving. They create enormous waste and too often warp clinical decision making.
4. In a democracy, the public should set health policies and budgets. Personal medical decisions must be made by patients with their caregivers, not by corporate or government bureaucrats.

Sincerely,

First Name	Last Name	Email	Graduation
First Name	Last Name	Email	Graduation
First Name	Last Name	Email	Graduation
First Name	Last Name	Email	Graduation

TIPS AND TACTICS

Developing Your Chapter

Define short and long-term objectives. Try to include at least one objective that is small and localized enough to be winnable in the short-term. For example:

- Establish a healthy SNaHP chapter with medical school funding
- Try to integrate more health policy (and relevance of single payer) into medical school curriculum
- Expose each new medical student class to the arguments for single payer
- Speak to your Congressperson about co-sponsoring HR 676, "Expanded and Improved Medicare for All" or Senator about co-sponsoring S1804, "Medicare for All Act of 2017"

Finding allies

- Faculty and residents:
 - Contact the Committee of Interns and Residents (CIR) chapter if your institution has one
 - Check with the national PNHP office for faculty who are members to serve as mentors and faculty advisers
 - Other medical students:
 - AMSA supports single payer and is often well-established at medical schools. Join AMSA's Health Care for All campaign, which is dedicated to advancing single payer (amsa.org/advocacy/health-care/) or get involved with the HCFA Scholars Program (amsa.org/members/career/scholars-programs/hcfa/). Their chair can be reached at hcfa.chair@amsa.org
 - Several other medical student groups are great for partnering on events, such as Physicians for Human Rights (PHR), Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR), Latino Medical Student Association (LMSA), and the National Medical Student Association (NMSA).
 - While the American Medical Association is not an organization in favor of a national health program, many local AMA-MSS delegates are (and the number is growing!). It is worth feeling out your institution's delegates and building a relationship.
 - Other health professionals & health professional students:
 - You might consider inviting students from other health professionals such as public health, nursing, dentistry, physical therapy, etc... to join the group.
 - Check your school's list of registered student organizations to see if there are any groups that seem relevant or potentially sympathetic. Email the group's leaders and either invite their members to an event, or ask to give a presentation on single payer at their next meeting.
 - PNHP Members
 - Physician PNHP members are your greatest allies! The national office will provide a list of members in your area, and they are usually delighted to help in any way they can to help your chapter thrive. If there is a local PNHP chapter in your area (check the PNHP website to see), consider joint events, informal potlucks, mentoring, and even help with fundraising.

Appoint or elect positions.

- This works best if positions entail specific, well-defined tasks. It helps increase accountability and decrease confusion. Medical School is busy so giving each member a concrete task to complete will help keep the scope of your chapter large, while everyone does an achievable amount of work.
- Most SNaHP student chapters have at least a President and often a Co-President. However, feel free to develop a structure that works for your group, and make sure you've talked through how your group will make decisions (majority vote? Consensus? flipping a coin? Etc.)
- Think about how to spread leadership positions across class years to ensure continuity over time. As students go on to clinical years, they often have less time to devote to SNaHP until 4th year. Identify replacements early and spend time training them to ensure a smooth transition.

Communicating with your members and outside of your group

Developing a web presence

- Create some way to communicate with your members
 - Repetition and redundancy are key to sharing your message with your members or broader audience. Generally, at the top leadership positions of your chapter, you will most likely be the hardest working person in the group, so if you want other people to put any effort in, you'll want to lead by example and model your own expectations for other members or future leaders.

'Good' communication strategies	'Bad' communication strategies
Frequent Meetings w/ everyone Consistent Messaging→ Institution Consistent Offers to Join Google Drive Organized & Shared Calendar Invites with Zoom link included Hard-Working Leaders Detailed Agendas sent before Meeting	Occasional leadership (only) meetings Inconsistent Messaging→ only members Sticking with first few people Messy Google Drive, withheld access Email with Zoom Link, but no calendar invite Overly Committed Leaders Meeting with no detailed agenda

- Create a way to communicate on social media - Twitter and Instagram are popular and pretty effective.
- Post resources, current events, pictures of past events, etc...
- Identify who the group is and what is the mission, and ways to get in touch with leaders.
- Make sure it is someone's definite role to maintain the website/twitter/facebook page.
- Create an email for your chapter using gmail (for example: uicsnahp@gmail.com or snahp@uic.edu).

Planning Events

Scheduling:

- Big events like day-long conferences should be scheduled at least six to eight weeks in advance. Others, like bringing in out-of-town speakers, should be scheduled at least a month in advance.
- Be conscious of exam dates and class schedules. When mapping out your year with your group's leadership, try to have a copy of the academic calendar on hand.
- Lunch events work well if your classmates are on campus during the day - it is more difficult to encourage attendance at evening or weekend events.

Advertising:

- Maintain a list of members and email one week before the event and one day before the event. Short emails with snappy subject lines are the most effective.
- Make announcements in first and second year classes on the morning of the event.
- Word of mouth is important - so talk it up!

Food:

- Schedule delivery at least 15 minutes prior to the time of the event
- Consider out-of-the-box and healthy options
- For evening events, consider potlucks or dessert-only
- Remember to let PNHP's national office know about your event ahead of time and send your receipts to them afterwards - PNHP will reimburse up to \$150 per semester for a student event.

Capturing Attendance:

- ALWAYS have a sign-in sheet. It's a good idea for the event organizers to fill in the first space with complete information (name, year, email, etc....). Attendees will be more likely to sign up if they see other people have already done so.
- For larger events, have someone stand near the door asking folks to sign in.
- ALWAYS make a verbal pitch to join SNaHP Membership is free, and they can join online. Alternatively, you can have a check box on your sign-in sheet that says, "I would like to become a member of SNaHP". You can then enter these new memberships yourself online (membership is free) or send copies of the sign-ins to PNHP's national office.
- Consider having brief evaluations for talks, panels, and debates to improve for the future

Program Ideas

- Lunch lectures
 - These are often well-attended (food is always a draw), and convenient for people coming straight from class. Lunch lectures are great for shorter presentations.
 - Lunch lectures are perfect for introductory events or series. It's an excellent way to engage PNHP members who are faculty at your institution (by attending the event or presenting the topic) and

familiarizing the student body to your group.

- Keep in mind that lunch-time lectures are often constricted by time and typically don't allow for in-depth discussion
- Dinner events
 - Informal potlucks and catered dinners at the home of your faculty adviser or another faculty PNHP member have become very popular over the years. Dinners hosted by physicians allow for lots of networking and organic dialogue. Often, dinners formatted this way have less of a specific focus on single payer in order to allow maximum participation. These are great events for outreach to other health professional student organizations.
- Debates
 - Well-planned debates help the audience understand the arguments for and against a national health program, and having big names participate can be a great draw.
 - Make sure you give yourself adequate time to plan, especially since it involves coordinating multiple schedules.
 - If the debate involves local or national leaders, consider inviting media - In the past, some chapters have succeeded in getting the debate recorded for radio or covered by local news outlets.
- Film Screenings
 - Film screenings are easy to organize and promote, and you can borrow many relevant films from the PNHP national office. They make for a great follow-up event after a larger program to capture momentum.
 - Following the film, consider how to channel the energy in the room into action - Having a faculty member facilitate a dialogue, asking participants to write letters to the editor, sign a petition, join PNHP, or brainstorm sessions are all appropriate post-film activities.

Additional thoughts

- Importance of local action
 - As you get started, do not forget the importance of local politics. The easiest and best thing your chapter can do, from our experience, is passing a resolution endorsing Medicare for All (or single payer) in your local city council or county council. You can reach out to Lori or your Infrastructure Committee member to understand more about this process!

Sample Calendar

Month	Event / Program	Notes
August	Table at your institution's activities fair Have a planning meeting with core leaders	Make sure to get tabling material from the national office by contacting lori@pnhp.org Involve your faculty adviser! Your adviser, especially if they are a PNHP member, is an excellent resource for advice and ideas.
September	Host a single payer 101 event Start investigating the local political landscape in your town/ county/ state	Contact the national office to help identify a compelling speaker. Host event during noon hour or dinner time to maximize attendance. Reach out to your school to understand what funding options are available for conferences. Contact the national office and the SNaHP Political Advocacy Committee to understand what efforts may already be underway in your region
October	Host a discussion session on a current relevant issue Register for the SNaHP Summit and start connecting with SNaHP students nationally	Having a follow-up event to the "Single Payer 101" program will keep students interested.
November	Attend the PNHP Annual Meeting and Leadership Training	Connect with like-minded students and physicians
December	Strategy Meeting to plan following year events/ actions	December is a challenging time to do anything, but make sure to meet before winter break to make plans for the spring Semester. Use what you learned at the Annual Meeting and Leadership Training.

January	Host a discussion session on a current relevant issue Get started on your 'action' based on your local political environment	Having a follow-up event to the "Single Payer 101" program will keep students Interested. This could be scheduling a meeting with a legislator or a hearing with city council for a resolution.
February	Identify next set of group leaders	Communicate with SNaHP National Organizer and Infrastructure Committee about role transitions Make sure not to finish the year without officially "handing over" leadership of the chapter to new leaders, ideally current M1's.
March	Continue events/ actions	
April	Continue events/ actions	
May	Get started thinking about the upcoming year's strategy	Reflect on your experience as chapter leader with the new leaders - What went well? What would you change if you could go back?

Getting More Involved

SNaHP Leadership Teams

SNaHP's leadership structure has been evolving as the student movement for single payer has begun to snowball. Currently, several Leadership Teams exist under the direction of an Executive Board.

- Infrastructure Team
- Education Team
- Political Advocacy Team
- Media Team
- Inclusivity + Outreach Team

Contact lori@pnhp.org if you are interested in joining any of the SNaHP Leadership teams, or if you would like to learn more.

PNHP Annual Meeting and Leadership Training

The PNHP Annual Meeting brings together the nation's leading physician voices for single-payer, international health systems experts, and compelling keynote speakers to discuss the latest developments in health policy each November. PNHP also hosts a one-of-a-kind Leadership Training the day prior to the Annual Meeting, which is an excellent "crash course" in health policy and the case for national health insurance. Aimed specifically towards physician activists, the Leadership Training builds participants' skills around speaking, chapter organizing, and lobbying for single payer.

Through PNHP's Nick Skala Student Activist fund (www.pnhp.org/skalafund), travel scholarships are available for medical and health professional students to attend both of these events. Become a member of SNaHP at www.pnhp.org/join and keep your eye out for emails regarding application deadlines. Information is posted in late summer at www.pnhp.org about the Annual Meeting and Leadership Training.

Resources for your Chapter

PNHP Contact Information

PNHP National Staff:

Ken Snyder, Executive Director

ken@pnhp.org

Matthew Petty, Deputy Director

matt@pnhp.org

Contact for: Help with questions about reimbursements and scholarships, history of PNHP

Lori Clark, National Organizer

lori@pnhp.org

773-559-1712

Contact for: Help with starting your chapter

Rebecca Delay, National Organizer

rebecca@pnhp.org

Mandy Strenz, National Organizer

mandy@pnhp.org

TBH, Communications Specialist

Contact for: Help writing and placing an op-ed, questions about getting media coverage

Dixon Galvez-Searle, Communications Specialist

dixon@pnhp.org

Contact for: Help with social media, designing a website, e-mail blasts, or technical issues

*Contact info@pnhp.org for general inquiries, or to be put in touch with local staff

Single Payer Allies

These are national groups that PNHP frequently partners with on single-payer events:

Healthcare NOW! www.healthcare-now.org

Public Citizen www.citizen.org

National Nurses United www.nationalnursesunited.org

National Healthcare for the Homeless Council www.nhchc.org

Progressive Democrats of America www.pdamerica.org

American Medical Student Association www.amsa.org

PNHP Local Chapters www.pnhp.org/stateactions

Labor Campaign for Single Payer www.laborforsinglepayer.org

Social Security Works <https://socialsecurityworks.org/>

And others!

PNHP Slideshows & Videos

You can access most slideshows that PNHP members give as presentations from the Annual Meeting and Leadership training, as well as sample grand rounds and special topics on the PNHP website. Members are encouraged to use these slides to develop their own presentations, just make sure to add credits when relevant. The slideshows are password protected, contact info@pnhp.org to get access. PNHP slideshows are found at www.pnhp.org/slideshows. Check out PNHP's YouTube channel for recordings of past presentations and grand rounds, workshops, and webinars.