

Group Decision Making Process Change – Providing for Formal, Written Dissent

Early on, this group decided to proceed in the decision-making process based on a consensus decision-making model. Consensus decision making is a creative and dynamic way of reaching agreement between all members of a group. Instead of simply voting for an item and following the majority's decision, a group using consensus is committed to finding solutions that everyone actively supports, or at least can live with. From the outset, this group has worked hard to ensure that all opinions, ideas, and concerns are taken into account. The whole group has worked hard at finding solutions that address everyone's concerns, rather than ignoring or overruling minority opinions.

So far, we have had many successes with the consensus approach; however, there are indications that some Plan issues may not receive support or "I can live with it" backing. In the event this occurs, the following suggestion is made so that all the good work done for the last three years will not be lost.

The Plan approval process would proceed on an informed-consent basis, while recording formal, written dissent in the Plan as a clearly identified appendix. Those wishing to provide formal, written dissent will:

1. Clearly identify the section, statement, and/or issue that is the subject of dissent,
2. Communicate the basis of the dissent, and
3. Provide alternative approaches as appropriate.