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The Coalition of State Rheumatology Associations is pleased to provide you with this 2004 workbook/manual. This manual will provide you with guidance and examples that are helpful in developing a Professional Association in your state or region. This manual is not designed to replace legal counsel, accounting advice or a management plan. After reviewing the contents of this binder, you and your colleagues should have a better understanding of what is required to develop and formalize your own state society.

The process of forming a Rheumatology Association is not difficult or different from formalizing any organization. It only requires initiating the effort, motivation, a small amount of startup funding and a little bit of time and patience. In our state (North Carolina) as well as other states, it is extremely helpful to enlist the cooperative effort and assistance of several of your colleagues who share the vision of a state organization and understand the enormous influence that is inherent in speaking with a collective voice. The rewards to of joining with your colleagues in a professional organization will be well worth the effort.

It will be necessary to have an attorney develop Articles of Incorporation that will be filed with the Secretary of State Office in your state. Once this is completed you will need to obtain a Federal Tax ID number. Bylaws will need to be drawn before requesting attendance to a meeting of all interested Rheumatologists. The Bylaws will need to be accepted and officers elected.

It will be very important to have this done before filing a 501(c) 3 status form with the IRS. 501(c) 3 status will be most helpful in requesting unrestricted grants from industry leaders that will be necessary for educational meetings, administrative costs, CME filing, and related activities.

Your state society can then begin work on issues that affect Rheumatology care in your state and act as the official voice for your colleagues and subspecialty patient care. The sharing of experience of other state societies in this area will be of additional value to your association in these efforts. We hope that you will strongly consider joining the Coalition of State Rheumatology Associations and become part of our network to share your experiences with others and assist others in forming state organizations as well as assist other state and regional societies in promoting our subspecialty and access of care for our patients with Rheumatic diseases.

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State Rheumatology Organizations

What are the Top Ten Reasons to Form a State Rheumatology Organization?

10.) With the glut of rheumatologists, we have a lot of extra time on our hands.

9.) It is easy to get all of the Rheumatologists in our state to agree on almost anything.

8.) Our colleagues will welcome and support our ideas.

7.) Insurance companies will be even happier to hear from us.

6.) Work without pay is good for the soul.

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5.) Our overhead is not increasing; we don't need help. Everything is fine.

4.) Rheumatologists are enthusiastic and easily motivated to act on their own.

3.) It has become too boring to relax on the beach. [Wilmington is too far away for most of us anyway.]

2.) We all get to go to more meetings, receive more mail and, for a change, initiate phone calls.

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**Even if we do not advocate for
our patients and our specialty,
surely someone else will !**