

SCOTTISH PARTNERSHIP FOR PALLIATIVE CARE: TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSTITUENCY GROUPS

Scottish Partnership for Palliative Care

1. Aims and objectives

The Scottish Partnership for Palliative Care is the national umbrella body for palliative care in Scotland. It brings together statutory, voluntary and professional organisations to promote better understanding of palliative care, to make it available to all those who need it, and to improve standards of care for patients and families throughout Scotland. The Partnership contributes to national thinking and policy in relation to palliative care and promotes improvements in service delivery at local and regional level.

The Partnership is a Company Limited by Guarantee and is registered as a Scottish charity by the Inland Revenue. Its sphere of activity is defined in its Memorandum and Articles of Association, which together form the organisation's constitution. These state the objects of the Partnership to be:

“to promote, encourage, enhance, improve and extend the provision of palliative care services to people throughout Scotland with life-threatening progressive conditions and their families and / or carers.”

2. Membership

The Partnership has a membership of statutory and voluntary organisations involved in palliative care. They include:

- NHS Boards
- National Charities
- Professional Associations
- Support Organisations
- Voluntary Hospices

The constitution states that membership is open to:

- “(i) national and local voluntary or other non-profit distributing organisations, whether corporate or unincorporated, providing palliative care services in Scotland or providing care and/or support for people with life-threatening progressive conditions and their families/carers in Scotland
- (ii) bodies within the National Health Service planning and/or providing palliative care services in Scotland and bodies providing palliative care through local authority services in Scotland and
- (iii) associations of persons involved in the provision of palliative care services in Scotland and/or in the provision of education/training in palliative care in Scotland provided that all such organisations, bodies or associations as referred to in this Article are in opinion of the Council interested in furthering the provision of palliative care services in Scotland.”

3. Constituency Groups

The Partnership currently has three regional and three non-regional constituency groups:

- North of Scotland Regional Group
- South East of Scotland Regional Group
- West of Scotland Regional Group
- National Charities Group
- Scottish Hospices Forum
- Specialist Palliative Care Group

Member organisations may be represented in more than one of these as appropriate.

3.1 Regional Groups

3.1.1 The three regional groups cover the same NHS Board areas as Regional Cancer Advisory Groups:

- **North of Scotland Regional Group:**
Grampian, Highland, Orkney, Shetland, Tayside, Western Isles
- **South East of Scotland Regional Group:**
Borders, Dumfries and Galloway, Fife, Lothian
- **West of Scotland Regional Group:**
Ayrshire and Arran, Forth Valley, Greater Glasgow & Clyde, Lanarkshire

3.1.2 The majority of member organisations, with the exception of some national voluntary organisations and professional associations, are represented on regional groups. Member organisations are asked to appoint a suitable member of staff to carry out the role of nominated representative.

Representatives appointed by member organisations to regional groups:

- should have a specific role, preferably at a senior level, in relation to palliative care in their organisation;
- should identify a named deputy who will attend meetings in their absence and whom they will keep informed of the work of the Group;
- are responsible for acting as the link between their organisation and the Partnership Group and should ensure that information is passed on to the appropriate people;
- are encouraged to copy minutes of group meetings as widely as they wish within their organisation.

3.2 Non-regional groups

In addition to the regional groups, the Partnership has three Scotland-wide constituency groups:

- **National Charities Group:** which provides a forum for national voluntary organisations among the membership
- **Scottish Hospices Forum:** which provides a forum for representatives of voluntary hospices with responsibility for hospice management
- **Specialist Palliative Care Group:** which provides a multi-professional forum for specialists in palliative care.

Each of these is set up to meet the needs of its particular membership.

4. Terms of reference: constituency groups

Each constituency group of the Partnership will:

1. Elect two representatives to the Council, the governing body of the Partnership. These representatives, in addition to acting as Directors of the Partnership, will provide a channel of communication between the constituency group and the Council. (The West regional group, which is an amalgam of the previous south/central and west groups, will elect four representatives, two from each of its constituent areas.)
2. Appoint a chairman, who should normally be one of the two representatives to the Council. The other representative should normally act as vice-chairman.
3. Provide a forum for the sharing of good practice, for mutual support and for professional networking among members.
4. Provide a forum for discussion of local and national issues in palliative care across the voluntary and statutory sectors, and across the boundaries of primary, secondary and tertiary care, and of health and social care. In particular, regional groups should seek to involve representatives of primary care and of social work in their discussions where possible.
5. Provide a mechanism for collaboration and liaison with relevant external bodies. In particular, regional groups should provide a mechanism for co-operation and communication with regional cancer networks and relevant managed clinical networks.
6. Provide a forum to enable member organisations to participate in the work of the Partnership; to receive information and reports from the Partnership; to inform and influence the Partnership; to raise issues for action by the Partnership; to respond to consultation by the Partnership.

In order to carry out this remit, constituency groups should meet at least three times a year. Efforts should be made to facilitate members' participation by rotating venues between different locations and by the use of video-conferencing where appropriate.

Secretarial and administrative support for each group will be provided by the Partnership.

Note: It is important that no constituency group, or member of a group, should commit the Partnership to undertake any piece of work on behalf of other organisations.

5. Ad hoc working groups

Representatives of member and other organisations may also become involved by invitation in one or more of the Partnership's short-term ad hoc working groups, set up from time to time to address specific issues or to carry out particular pieces of work. These groups have no part in the formal structures or operation of the Partnership.

6. Council

The Scottish Partnership for Palliative Care is a Company Limited by Guarantee and is registered as a Scottish charity by the Inland Revenue.

The governing body of the Partnership is its Council. Under the terms of company law, members of Council are registered with Companies House as Directors of the Partnership.

Member organisations elect the Partnership's Council through the six constituency groups. Each group elects two representatives to the Council (four in the case of the West regional group). It is the duty of Council representatives to act as a channel of communication between their group and the Council, raising and reporting back issues as appropriate. To facilitate this process, summary reports of Council meetings and of constituency group meetings will be made available to constituency groups.

Council members are elected for a period of three years. After the first three years they may stand for re-election and may serve a total of six years. They must then stand down for a period of two years before being eligible for re-election. In addition, to meet the constitutional requirement for one third of Council members to stand down each year by rotation, each Council place must be contested in an election every three years, regardless of the length of time individual incumbents have served at that point.

The Council may also co-opt to Council membership up to two individuals whom they believe have a relevant contribution to make by virtue of their particular skills and experience.

Each year members of Council elect a Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Honorary Treasurer from among their number. These are the office-bearers of the Council and of the Partnership. They are elected for a one-year term of office, but may stand for re-election if they wish.

Invitations to appropriate individuals to serve as a President or Vice-President of the Partnership are also agreed by Council.

The Council meets four times a year to consider and direct the business of the Partnership.

The Annual General Meeting of the Partnership is normally held during the Annual Conference in the autumn of each year.