

EUROPEAN SOCIETY FOR PRIMARY CARE GASTROENTEROLOGY

Constitution

Accepted at the Annual General Meeting in 2003 and amended in 2012 and 2016.

Name

The society shall be called the European Society for Primary Care Gastroenterology, hereinafter called the 'Society'. The abbreviation of the society's name is ESPCG.

Aims

To promote high standards in the management of gastrointestinal problems in primary care in Europe, through research, education and the exchange and dissemination of ideas.

To promote dialogue and collaboration across the interface between primary and secondary care in Europe.

To contribute to the development of health policy in Europe by providing information and evidence on the role of primary health care.

Membership

Membership of the Society will be open to individuals and national groups or societies able to demonstrate an active commitment to the clinical, research or educational aspects of gastroenterology in primary care or at the primary / secondary care interface. Such individuals or society members shall be general practitioners or members of a general practice/family medicine association or employed by an academic department of general practice/family medicine.

National groups and societies seeking membership of the Society will be required to demonstrate an organisational structure, and a formal or informal association with their national General Practice organisation.

Applications for membership must be submitted to the Secretary General and will be accepted by the Council at their discretion.

The Council

The governing body of the Society shall be the Council with the following members:

- The officers of the Society
- Nominated members from national groups and societies which are members of the Society
- Individual members

There shall be one representative in the Council for each country with one or more national societies. If more than one national society exists in any country, the one with the largest number of members shall nominate the representative, unless the national societies of that country agree on an alternative arrangement.

Members of the Society from countries where no national group exists shall elect one member at the time of the AGM. That person is to sit on the Council for a period of 12 months.

There shall be one representative of young doctors/researchers under the age of 40 years to be elected at the time of the AGM. That person is to sit on the Council for a period of 12 months.

Representatives of the Society on the committees of the UEG and the WONCA Europe Committee shall be co-opted to the Council if they are not already Council members.

The Council shall meet at least two times a year; before the AGM and during the annual Scientific Meeting. Eight members of the Council shall be a quorum. The Council shall be responsible for deciding the arrangements for all meetings and other business of the Society and for determining the Society's representation on other bodies. It will be responsible for the annual report presented at the AGM.

The Council shall have the power to co-opt and to set up subcommittees for such purposes and with such functions and powers as it may from time to time decide, provided that all acts and proceedings are reported back promptly to the Council.

Officers

The officers of the Society shall be:

President
Secretary General
Treasurer
Communications Officer
Research Officer
Educational Officer

Nominations for vacant offices may be made in writing to the Secretary General, to arrive not less than 35 days before the AGM. They should be supported by one other member of the Society and have the written consent of the nominee.

All officers shall be elected by a majority vote at an AGM of the Society and shall assume their duties from that date. Should the AGM not be quorate the officers should be elected through a ballot by e-mail organized by the Secretary General immediately following the AGM, allowing members 14 days to return their ballot papers. The candidate then securing the greatest number of votes will be elected.

All officers shall serve for a period of two years, and terms are renewable. The President, Treasurer and Communication Officer are elected on even years (2016, 2018, etc.), and the Secretary General, Research Officer and Educational Officer on odd years (2017, 2019, etc.). The officers will carry out those duties usually

associated with their designation, together with others that may be assigned by the Council.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall comprise the President, Secretary General, Treasurer, Communications Officer, Research Officer and Educational Officer. It is responsible for the conduct of Society business on a daily basis and shall meet as often as required by face to face or by phone/website meeting.

All meetings, research projects, educational material and statements to which the name of the Society is appended shall be first submitted to the Executive Committee for approval.

The Executive Committee will report to the Council at all Council meetings

ESPCG secretariat

The Society contract with a Secretariat is decided by the Council. The contract details shall be prepared by the Executive Committee and approved by the Council.

Society Meetings

An annual Scientific Meeting shall be held in every calendar year, the date and venue to be decided by the Council.

An Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held on the occasion of the annual Scientific Meeting, or in conjunction with the Wonca Europe conference or UEG week.

Additional scientific and educational meetings shall be held at the discretion of the Council. Formal notice of all Society meetings shall be sent to all members at least four weeks before the scheduled date of the meeting.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be open to all individual members. The business transacted at the AGM shall include:

- consideration of reports from the Council, the Treasurer and the Auditor
- election of officers and individual members of the Council
- election of auditors
- date and venue for the next AGM

Formal notice of the AGM, including an agenda paper, shall be sent to all members at least 28 days before the date of the meeting. The notice shall specify the date, time and place of the meeting. Accidental and exceptional omission to give notice to any member shall not invalidate the proceedings of the meeting. Members attending the AGM should notify the Secretary General no later than 7 days before the meeting.

The Chairman or, in his absence, a member of the Council shall preside at the AGM.

The quorum for the AGM shall be 5% of the membership. Following an AGM that is not quorate the Secretary General shall conduct a ballot by e-mail on all issues that need the approval or decision by the AGM. Members should be allowed 14 days to cast their votes, and decisions require a majority of the votes being cast.

An Extraordinary General Meeting may be convened by the Council whenever a majority of the Council thinks fit or by the Secretary General within four weeks from receipt of a request in writing signed by not less than 25% of the Society members stating the purpose for which the meeting is being requested.

General Business

The accounts of the Society shall be made up to 1st January each year.

The accounts shall be audited each year by auditors elected at the preceding AGM.

Notice of any proposal to amend or alter this constitution must be sent to the Secretary General not less than eight weeks before the AGM. Such proposals shall be circulated to all members and shall appear on the agenda of the AMG as a motion. The quorum for such motions shall be one half of the members to be present in person, the motion being decided by a two thirds majority. If a quorum is not present the Executive Committee shall conduct a ballot by e-mail including all members, the motion being rejected unless two thirds of those members voting are in favour.

The Society may at any time by a resolution passed at the AGM, or by a ballot of its members by e-mail, be wound up and dissolved. The same regulations apply as for amendments to the constitution. In the event that the Society is dissolved the books and records of the Society shall be disposed of in accordance with the directions of the Council and all other property of the Society transferred to such body or bodies as shall be specified by the resolution for winding up, provided that those bodies have aims analogous to the aims of the Society.