

Healthcare Chaplaincy Faith and Belief Group

CONSTITUTION

A. The AIM of the Healthcare Chaplaincy Faith and Belief Group ('the Group') is to promote and support religious spiritual, and pastoral care ('this care') in the NHS.

B. The objects of the Group are:

1. to facilitate a common understanding and support for this care amongst faith or belief¹ communities, chaplaincy bodies and other providers of this care, and amongst users;
2. to provide a means of consultation between the faith and belief groups about this care;
3. to work in co-operation with healthcare and chaplaincy organisations, bodies and authorities providing this care; and
4. to enable the faith or belief communities to develop this care through:
 - a) education and training;
 - b) authorisation.

C. Further objectives:

1. to provide advice to NHS England about this care with the aim of enhancing holistic care and patient experience;
2. to ensure that the various authorisation bodies² are enabled to work together as closely as possible;
3. to provide a forum for advice and support to healthcare bodies and organisations within and outside the NHS;
4. to promote the development and sharing of knowledge and good practice through research projects and conferences in this care.

D. Membership

1. Full membership of the Group is available to the recognised authorisation bodies of the nine world faiths³ in the United Kingdom, to other faith or belief bodies and to chaplaincy organisations agreed from time to time by the Council of the Group.

¹ The phrase 'faith or belief' includes religious and non-religious worldviews and approaches to life through this document.

² An Authorisation Process is developed by each community and may include such descriptors as 'accredited', 'endorsed', or 'authorised'.

³ The nine world faiths referred to in this constitution are the Bahá'í, Buddhist, Christian (Church of England, Roman Catholic and Free Church), Hindu, Jain, Muslim, Sikh and Zoroastrian faiths.

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2. Observer status is available to other bodies with an interest in this care. Those accepted may be invited to appoint observers to meetings of the Council of the Group.
3. Application for membership or observer status outside the categories set out above is decided by the existing members of the Council

E. Organisation

1. Council

- a. The Group is headed by a Council, which takes decisions on behalf of the Group. The Council comprises two representatives nominated by each member body. One representative from each member body should be a practising provider of this care and the other should be able to represent the administration or leadership of the member body.
- b. The Council meets every four months or as required and provides an opportunity for member bodies to make decisions together on matters pertaining to this care and the running of the Group.
- c. The Council or Executive, shall, from time to time, appoint 'work stream leaders' for specific tasks and projects; they will, if required, form working groups, which will report to the Executive and to the Council.
- d. The election processes and other activities of the Council are undertaken within the scope of the Council's equal opportunities policy.

2. Chair/ Vice-Chair

- a. The Council elects an Honorary Chair and Vice-Chair from members of the Council for a two year, non-renewable term of office. These honorary offices rotate between the authorisation bodies.
- b. The Chair is empowered to represent the Council at external meetings and may delegate such representation to the other honorary officers or to other members of the Executive Committee.
- c. The Chair is empowered to take decisions on behalf of the Council, which shall be subject to ratification by Council at its next routine meeting or at one called to consider the issue.
- d. The Chair shall ensure that a record is kept of the decisions made by the Council and that the governance of the Group is undertaken in accordance with good practice.

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3. Treasurer

The Council elects one of its members as Honorary Treasurer for a three year term of office to manage its accounting and financial affairs. This post may be extended for a further term by agreement of the Council. The Treasurer may stand for re-election at the end of this period.

4. Chief Officer

- a. The Honorary Officers may designate a Chief Officer to manage resources on their behalf and shall agree an annual planning brief within which the activities of the Chief Officer can be managed.
- b. The term of office of the Chief Officer will usually be two years and is renewable once. The term of the Chief officer starts at the middle of the term of the Chairman

5. Executive Committee

- a. The Honorary Officers, together with the 'work stream leaders', the Chief Officer and up to four elected members of Council, form the Executive Committee.
- b. The total membership of the Executive Committee is eight.
- c. Former Chairs of Council may be co-opted to the Executive Committee as the current Chair requires.
- d. The Honorary Officers and the Chief Officer can be removed from office by the Council for dereliction of duty, for bringing the reputation of the Group into disrepute, or by ceasing to be a nominee of their authorisation body to the Group
- e. Such removal from office shall occur at a meeting called for that purpose and at which the officer is present or has decided not to accept an invitation to be present.

6. Finance

- a. The work of the Group shall be maintained through grant aid from other bodies and, where possible, through contributions from the member bodies.
- b. The Council shall approve an annual budget for its work which shall be monitored by the Council.
- c. The work of the Council is reported to constituent organisations in a biennial review.

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- d. The Treasurer of the Group is responsible for ensuring that accounts and records of financial matters pertaining to the Group's work are maintained in accordance with good practice as currently understood.
- e. The Chair, Chief Officer and Treasurer shall be signatories to the Group's bank accounts. Any two signatories may sign cheques or approve other banking transactions.

7. Rules

- a. The Executive Committee may make and amend all Rules necessary for the conduct and operation of the Group.
- b. At least three months' notice of change should be provided to members to enable full consultation to take place provided that such Rules shall not be inconsistent with the provisions of the Constitution
- c. Decisions of the Council and Executive Committee shall normally be taken in accordance with the Chair's sense of the view of the meeting.
- d. The Chair will determine whether a ballot of members of the meeting is necessary and whether that is to be taken at the time or by postal ballot.
- f. Decisions of the Council and of the meeting taken by ballot shall be decided by a straight majority of those voting.

8. Alterations to the Constitution

This Constitution may be amended with the consent of not less than 75% of the organisations in full membership, provided that sufficient notice of the amendment (being at least two months) is given to the members to enable their decision-making bodies to consider the amendment.

9. Dissolution

- a. The Group may be dissolved by a Resolution passed by not less than 75% of the organisations in full membership by their representatives present and voting at a Special General Meeting convened for that purpose, of which at least six months notice shall have been given to the Members.
- b. Such Resolution shall give instructions for the disposal of any assets held by or in the name of the Group .

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