

BRITISH AND IRISH HYPERTENSION SOCIETY - CONSTITUTION

Adopted: 21st October 1983

Amended: 24th September 1984, 15th September 2009, 9th September 2013, 22nd September 2014, 21st September 2015, 20th September 2016, 25th September 2018, 13th September 2022

1. Name:

The name of the Society shall be the British and Irish Hypertension Society (BIHS).

2. Aims and Objectives:

The Society shall promote the advancement of knowledge and dissemination of information concerning the pathophysiology, epidemiology, detection, investigation and treatment of high blood pressure and related cardiovascular diseases.

3. Membership:

(i) Membership will begin upon receipt of the annual membership fee, which will be adjusted pro rata for the first year, depending how much of that first calendar year remains.

(ii) Membership shall be open to all registered healthcare professionals providing hypertension care, or individuals active in research into high blood pressure or cardiovascular disease.

(iii) Membership will be open to students (undergraduate and postgraduate during the tenureship of their training period.

(iv) Members of a least 5 years' standing may apply to the Executive Committee for 'Fellowship' Status. Fellowship shall be granted at the discretion of the Executive Committee on consideration of the applicant's Curriculum Vitae, which should demonstrate expertise and considerable experience in the management of, or research into, hypertension and/or cardiovascular disease.

(v) Honorary Membership and/or Fellowship may be awarded, where appropriate, to distinguished individuals.

(vi) Ex-Presidents of the Society will be awarded lifetime Honorary Fellowship on retirement from their main remunerated employment.

(vii) Members and Fellows shall pay an annual subscription of an amount to be determined by the Society. The Executive Committee reserves the right to waive fees upon application.

(viii) Members and Fellows must be in good standing in order to enjoy the privileges of membership.

(ix) The Executive Committee reserve the right to review and decline prospective applications for membership at their discretion, if it is deemed that such applications do not serve the best interests of the Society.

4. Executive Committee - membership

(i) An Executive Committee of nine persons shall be formed on behalf of the Members and Fellows. This shall consist of the office bearers, namely the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, one Early Career Researcher representative and 4 other ordinary members. As required by the UK Charity Commission, all Executive Committee members must confirm that they are willing to act as a Trustee and must sign the Charity Commission Trustee Declaration.

(ii) The President of the Society shall serve as chair of the Executive Committee. In his/her absence, the chair will be taken by the Vice President. In the absence of both the President and the Vice President, the members of the Committee present shall elect an acting chair.

(iii) The Executive Committee will be formally elected at the Annual Business Meeting. Nominations for all vacant positions, with the exception of President, will be invited prior to the meeting, and in the event of more than one nomination for each position, a ballot will be held of all Members and Fellows before the meeting and the results announced at the Annual Business Meeting. Nominees will be invited to submit a one page notice in support of their nomination, which will be circulated to all Members and Fellows with the ballot notice. Subject to formal ratification by the Members and Fellows present at the Annual Business Meeting, the Vice President will assume the role of President.

(iv) Nominations for election to the offices of Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Early Career Researcher Representative and to Ordinary Membership of the Executive Committee shall be supported by at least three Members or Fellows and submitted in writing to the Secretary, at least three months before the Annual Business Meeting.

(v) Only Members and Fellows resident in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland are eligible for election to the Executive Committee.

(vii) The President shall not be eligible for re-election after two years in office. The Vice President shall not be eligible for re-election after two years. The Secretary and Treasurer shall not be eligible for re-election to the same post after four years in office. Ordinary Members of the Committee shall retire from the Committee after three years, but remain eligible for election as office-bearers. Ordinary Members who have retired from the Committee become eligible for re-election to the same post after two years have elapsed. The Early Career Researcher Representative shall retire after two years but remain eligible for election to the Committee as an Ordinary Member or office bearer after two years have elapsed.

(viii) Members of the Executive Committee who retire before the end of their term of office may be replaced by co-option at the discretion of the remaining members of the Executive Committee. Any person thus appointed shall serve only as a caretaker for the remainder of the term of office of the person whose vacancy he/she has filled. This will not count as part of the term of office.

(ix) Any Executive Committee member may serve an additional year, if extraordinary circumstances arise. This must be approved by remaining members of the Executive Committee.

5. Executive Committee - Activities

(i) The Executive Committee shall supervise the affairs of the Society and arrange the scientific and business meetings.

(ii) Five members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum for Executive Committee meetings.

(iii) A ballot may be held on any relevant issue at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

(iv) At least one scientific meeting shall be convened in each calendar year, at which a business meeting shall also be held. A quorum for business meetings shall be 25 members or Fellows entitled to vote on the business being conducted at the time.

6. Finances

(i) The treasurer shall be a signatory on the BIHS bank accounts for the duration of their term of office on the Executive Committee. Once their official term as treasurer has ended, they will remain as a signatory on the bank accounts for a further 4 years. During the last 4 years, they will have insight to the accounts and have an advisory role to the Executive Committee.

(ii) Any surplus income from the provision of education is only used in the course or furtherance of the provision of education.

7. Standing Committees and special interest groups

(i) The Society will have four standing committees focusing on core areas of activity: Research, Education, Guidelines and Blood Pressure Measurement. In addition, special interest groups and time-limited task and finish groups will be convened, at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

(ii) At least one member of the BIHS Executive Committee should sit on each standing committee and special interest group, although the Chair of these groups does not have to be an Executive Committee member. The Chair will be appointed by the Executive Committee.

(ii) The standing committee and special interest group Chair decides the membership of each group, but the Executive Committee must approve the suggested list of members and the Terms of Reference of each group.

(iii) Membership and Terms of Reference of standing committees, special interest groups and task and finish groups should be reviewed periodically at the discretion of the Chair and Executive Committee.

(iv) At least one meeting of each standing committee and special interest group shall be held annually.

(v) The expenditure of each standing committee and special interest group shall not exceed the annual limit for that group, as designated in the Society's budget for that calendar year. The Executive Committee Treasurer or another officer of the Executive Committee must approve all expenditure.

(vi) A report from each standing committee and special interest group shall be presented at every Executive Committee meeting by the Executive Committee representative on the Working Party.

(vii) The Executive Committee reserves the right to dissolve a standing committee, special interest group and task and finish group at any stage.

8. Early Career Researchers – Special Interest Group (ECR – SIG)

(i) An Early Career Researcher is defined as an undergraduate or postgraduate student or employed in a training-grade post up to and including specialist registrar level or at early career researcher level, or equivalent, as deemed appropriate by the Executive Committee.

(ii) The SIG will be led by the ECR Representative on the Executive Committee who shall also chair the ECR SIG.

(iii) A scientific meeting of the ECR – SIG shall be held annually, usually to coincide with the Society's Annual Scientific Meeting, to encourage participation of younger members in the Society's activities.

9. Constitution

(i) Changes to the Constitution must be proposed in writing to the Secretary at least one month before the annual business meeting. For an amendment to be adopted it must be passed by a two-thirds majority of the Members and Fellows present and voting at the annual business meeting.

(ii) The Constitution shall be reviewed at least every two years, to coincide with the end of the incumbent President's term of office.

10. Dissolution of the Society

The Society may be dissolved by a Resolution passed by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at a Special General Meeting convened for the purpose, of which 21 days' notice has been given to the Members and Fellows. Such resolution may give instructions for the disposal of any assets held by or in the name of the Society provided that if any property remains after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities such property shall not be paid to or distributed among the Members and Fellows of the Society, but shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to some or all of the objects of the Society as the Society may determine and if and in so far as effect cannot be given to this provision then to some other charitable purpose.