ISN Supporting Groups:

Roles and Responsibilities

Document Type	Policy
Document name	ISN Supporting Groups: Roles and Responsibilities
Version	v 2.0 23 August 2023
Effective from	Date approved by Executive Director: 23 August 2023
Review date	Annual
Owner	ISN
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Superseded Documents	To supersede document entitled: ISN Supporting Groups: Roles and Responsibilities v 1.0 23 August 2018

1. Scope

This document applies to ISN committees, working groups and advisory groups (collectively, ISN supporting groups). See definition of ISN supporting groups at Annex 1 below.

This document does not apply to the groups listed below, or external groups on which ISN has representatives:

- Awards Committee

- Kaplan Advisory Committee

- ISN Nominating Committee

- ISN Regional Boards

Such groups will, by necessity, interact with many ISN supporting groups and have individual terms of reference (TORs) and/or memorandums of understanding (MOUs).

2. Committee and Working Groups Terms of Reference & Advisory Group Notes

Committees and Working Groups

Each committee and working group must have brief TORs (please use template available from ISN Manager of Governance and Executive Affairs), which define:

- the group's purpose, objectives, composition, eligibility criteria for group members, and appointment and succession method for chair and deputy chair
- roles and responsibilities of the chair, deputy chair and members and the type of ISN staff and Executive Committee (ExCom) support, if any, that will be provided to the group
- meeting, quorum, and recommendation provisions
- standard reporting and declaration of interest provisions
- budget (if any) provisions
- feedback template for deputy chair, if modified from standard template

New or updated TORs are subject to final approval by the Executive Director and should be saved in ISN's records.

Advisory Groups

Advisory groups need not have TORs as described above. A note should, however, be created for such groups, describing the background to creating the advisory group, and the advisory group's purpose, composition, objectives, and deliverables, and saved in ISN's records.

Additionally, a brief file note of any advice provided by an advisory group or individual on it should be recorded (please use template available from ISN Manager of Governance and Executive Affairs).

3. Composition

Committees and Working Groups

- ISN committees and working groups will be made up of a chair and deputy chair plus group members. Such groups will:
  - ordinarily consist of between 10 and 12 members (including the chair and deputy chair),
  - provide broad ISN regional representation (ideally, 1 representative from each of the 10 ISN regions, with the chair and deputy chair to represent their own region)
  - ensure that one of its members is a member of the Young Nephrologists Committee
- The composition and number on a group can be modified according to need; however, this will be subject to final decision by the Executive Director.

Advisory Groups

- ISN advisory groups are informal in structure and composed of members according to ISN's needs. An advisory group should provide broad ISN regional representation as far as possible.

Supporting Groups

- The composition of ISN supporting groups should reflect ISN's geographic, ethnic, gender and age diversity as far as possible.

Committee and Working Group Leaders and Member Terms

Term start and end dates

- Terms start at the World Congress of Nephrology (WCN) following ExCom's decision and Council's approval of leaders' and members' appointments, and end at the second WCN following such appointments (e.g., if a leader's appointment is decided by ExCom and approved by Council in November 2023, that leader's term starts at WCN 2024 and ends at WCN 2026. Terms officially start and end immediately after the General Assembly at WCN).

- As one term will equate to approximately 2 years, for simplicity, it will be referred to as "2-years" for the remainder of this document.

Chair

- Will serve a 2-year term, in most cases having served as deputy chair the preceding 2 years and usually, as a committee or working group member prior to that.

- Once a chair finishes their term, they would typically rotate off a group[1].

Deputy Chair

- Will serve a 2-year term.

- Is expected to succeed the chair at the end of the chair's term. The only reason a deputy chair would not succeed a chair is where they are unwilling or unable to do so, or there has been gross under performance of duty (it is expected that this last situation would occur on the rarest of occasions).

Members

- The usual term of a member is 2 years, renewable 2 times, following recommendation by the chairs (and agreement of the individual member), decision by ExCom and approval by Council.

- Committee and working group members will retire after a maximum of 6 years. In exceptional circumstances (e.g., an individual is providing an invaluable contribution and would be difficult to replace), membership of a particular member or group of members can be extended at the recommendation of the chairs.

- Where a group will only exist for a limited duration (e.g., one year), the term of all members is limited to the duration of the group.

- The chair, deputy chair and ISN staff will review group membership every 2 years and recommend which members to renew and rotate off, and, following ISN's approach to membership appointments (see Appointment Process: Leaders and Members of ISN Committees and Working Groups, and Bodies on which ISN has Representatives for full details), the names of new members. Member appointments are subject to the decision of ExCom and approval by Council.

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[1] At times, a chair will be invited to remain as a member.

- No more than 1/3 of members will rotate off a committee or working group every 2 years. Failure to attend meetings, conference calls or respond to requests for participation would warrant proposition not to renew a member's term.

- Each committee and working group chair is responsible for respecting the terms of their members and coordinating their rotation. General membership terms are defined in this document; however, groups may deviate from this format where there is a need to, as long as the membership conditions are clearly outlined in the group's TOR.

Advisory Group Members' Terms

Term of office start and end dates

As Advisory Groups are informal groups, there are no specified terms for members. The term and rotation of members is at the discretion of ISN staff based on the advice and expertise ISN needs.

General Provisions Relating to Supporting Groups

- All group members must be ISN members in good standing. Exceptionally only and after approval from the Executive Director, working groups and advisory groups can bring in members from outside ISN membership for specialist knowledge or expertise not covered by ISN members. Such people will be appropriately identified as "external advisors" and reflected as such in ISN's records.

- All group members (including external advisors brought in from outside ISN membership for specialist knowledge or expertise) must confirm that they follow the principles laid out in the Declaration of Istanbul, World Medical Association's Declaration of Geneva, the Declaration of Helsinki, and the UN International Bill of Human Rights.

- ISN supporting group members must be e-mail accessible.

- No individual ISN member shall serve on more than 3 ISN supporting groups at any given time (except for ExCom members).

4. Appointment Process for Chairs, Deputy Chairs and Members

- The appointment of ISN committee and working group chairs, deputy chairs and members is decided by ExCom and approved by Council following ISN's approach to leader and member appointments (see document entitled Appointment Process: Leaders and Members of ISN Committees and Working Groups, and Bodies on which ISN has Representatives for full details).

- There is no appointment process for members of advisory groups with appointments and terms being made by ISN staff according to ISN's needs.

See summary of appointment process and terms for chairs, deputy chairs and members of ISN supporting groups at Annex 2 below.

5. ISN Supporting Groups: Principles of Work

- The activities of ISN supporting groups will be in alignment with the overall mission and strategy set by ISN leadership (ExCom and Council) to advance ISN's current strategy and overall vision.
- ISN supporting groups have accountability to ISN leadership, but also represent the interests of the ISN to outside parties, such as (but not limited to) related organizations, health authorities, sponsors.
- Each ISN supporting group is to carry out functions assigned by ISN leadership in accordance with ISN strategy and vision in a timely manner and in accordance with the ISN Bylaws, policies, procedures, and any TOR.
- Specific roles and responsibilities of members will be defined in the TOR.
- ISN supporting group members are expected to contribute regularly to the discussions of issues and business to be addressed at scheduled meetings, conference calls, etc.
- ISN supporting group members shall not disclose verbal or written information identified as ISN business.
- ISN supporting group members must act in the best interests of the ISN and support in a positive manner all actions taken by ISN, even when in a minority position on such actions.
- ISN supporting group members will annually be required to submit a declaration of interest form, which will be provided to the member via ISN staff, declaring any relevant interests. If an interest arises during the course of their term, these should be additionally declared. A potential or actual conflict of interest exists if an ISN supporting group member might reasonably lack objectivity in their contribution to ISN because of any personal, professional, financial, or other interest or relationship they may have. If such a conflict may exist, the ISN supporting group member should inform the chair or where there is no Chair, ExCom.

6. Progress Reports

Progress reports should be produced once a year, indicating the activity taken towards fulfilling the group's objectives and achievements. Progress reports should be submitted to the ISN Manager of Governance and Executive Affairs by the chair on behalf of the ISN supporting group 1 month before the face-to-face Council Meeting held during ASN Kidney Week, using the template provided by the ISN Manager of Governance and Executive Affairs.

7. Meetings

- ISN supporting groups may be invited to organize a meeting at the annual WCN or another major congress a year at which good attendance by the ISN supporting group can be expected. Onsite costs related to these meetings (room, equipment, catering) may be covered by ISN if required yet in the case of meetings taking place through a regional society, could be provided as a support to ISN by the regional society itself. ISN staff must be informed of a supporting group's desire to hold such a meeting at least 3-5 months prior to the meeting for approval by ISN Executive Director, as appropriate.

- ISN supporting group chairs are encouraged to be realistic in the planning of their meetings, so that resources are not spent unnecessarily to organize poorly attended meetings. The purpose, agenda, and need for a face-to-face meeting should be considered before automatically booking one. ISN supporting groups may consider using the context of another international meeting for their meeting (for example, the International Society for Peritoneal Dialysis Congress for the Dialysis Committee).

- Each ISN supporting group meeting should have an agenda in order for business matters to be efficiently discussed. A brief meeting report or minutes which reflect decisions and recommendations should be submitted to ISN staff. An ISN staff member, when present at a meeting, will usually be assigned to take the minutes. In the case of meetings taking place at regional or international meetings that do not have the presence of an ISN staff member, the chair of the ISN supporting group itself will appoint a member to prepare a report or minutes of the meeting.

- ISN supporting group leaders and members are requested to attend the meetings prepared to contribute to the discussions, having read the agenda and all background supporting materials, if available.

- In addition to scheduled meetings, ISN supporting groups are requested to work regularly by email, and conference calls.

- No reimbursement for any direct expenses such as travel, accommodation, food, or beverages linked to ISN support group meeting attendance can be provided. If any will be provided, ISN staff will specifically confirm this in writing with the group prior to the meeting.

Annex 1: Types of ISN Supporting Groups

Committee	Working Group	Advisory Group
Structured	**Structured**	**Unstructured**
Chair	Chair	No Chair
Defined schedule	Defined schedule	Schedule
Agenda required and reviewed	Agenda required and reviewed	Very simple agenda only to set expectations
Minutes recorded	Minutes recorded	Notes taken only for benefit of person/group needing advice
Defined terms of reference	Defined terms of reference	Terms of reference only describes advice/expertise required
Defined workplan	Defined workplan	No workplan
Defined deliverables	Defined deliverables	No deliverables
Role & scope of responsibility	**Role & scope of responsibility**	**Role & scope of responsibility**
Provides third party review/oversight resource	Provides additional resource and expert help	Resource to utilize expert knowledge and experience
Role is to review, analyze and recommend	Role is to review, analyze, investigate and sometimes take action within limits defined in terms of reference or as directed by other governing body (ExCom/Council)	Role is to provide advice only
Standing Committee - within governance model to enable decision making by another Governance group (e.g. ExCom/Council) - examples are Finance & Audit committee, Nominations committee etc. Ad-Hoc committee - created to enable decision making by HQ Staff/ExCom on specific subject matter (e.g. Fellowships)	Enables specific review and reporting of subject matter to inform wider decision making by other person or group (e.g. HQ Staff or ExCom)	Informs decision making by other person or group (e.g. HQ Staff or ExCom)
Work on multiple topics within defined subject area	Work on multiple topics within defined subject area	Usually work on single topic
Membership and longevity	**Membership and longevity**	**Membership and longevity**
Standing committee - ongoing and as defined in bylaws Ad-Hoc committee - reviewed each year and continues as determined necessary by HQ Staff/ExCom	Defined time period	Ad-hoc
Members of committee come from within ISN membership	Can bring in members from outside ISN membership for specialist knowledge/expertise	Can bring in members from outside ISN membership for specialist knowledge/expertise

Annex 2: Summary of Appointment Process and Terms for Chairs, Deputy Chairs and Members of ISN Supporting Groups

	Appointment process	Duration of Office	Comments
Committees & Working Groups			
Chairs	Deputy chair to become chair after 2-year term (unless exceptional circumstances dictate otherwise). Succession of deputy chair to chair recommended by chair and decided by ExCom	Starting at the WCN after decided by ExCom and approved by Council and ending at the second WCN after the appointment.	Chair & deputy chair will not leave a group at the same time
Deputy chairs	Selected via Appointment Process: Leaders and Members of ISN Committees and Working Groups, and Bodies on which ISN has Representatives. Recommended by chairs, decided by ExCom & approved by Council	Starting at the WCN after decided by ExCom and approved by Council and ending at the second WCN after the appointment. Succeeds chair after 2 years (unless exceptional circumstances dictate otherwise).	Chair & deputy chair will not leave a group at the same time
Members	Recommended by chairs following Appointment Process: Leaders and Members of ISN Committees and Working Groups, and Bodies on which ISN has Representatives, decided by ExCom & approved by Council.	Starting at the WCN after decided by ExCom and approved by Council and ending at the second WCN after the appointment. Reappointment for maximum of 2 more terms – total 6 years. Cannot then be reappointed until 4 years has elapsed. Where a group exists for limited duration, membership linked to duration of group.	No more than 1/3 of members will stand down every 2 years
Advisory Groups			
Members	Appointed by ISN staff based on the advice and expertise ISN needs	As Advisory Groups are informal groups, there are no specified terms for members	