Scottish Stroke Nurses Forum

CONSTITUTION 2025-2028

1. GENERAL

This document is the revised Constitution of the Scottish Stroke Nurses Forum (SSNF). This will be displayed on our website page (www.ssnf.org.uk) and if needed a paper copy can be supplied to anyone who is a member. Any member disregarding the conditions set out in this constitution shall be subject to action after discussion by the committee and will be notified of the decision and how this has been reached.

2. TITLE

The group is called the Scottish Stroke Nurses Forum (SSNF). For the purposes of this constitution, unless otherwise indicated, forum refers to the SSNF.

3. *FUNCTIONS*

- To promote the essential role of anyone in a nursing role who works in stroke care or has an interest in stroke, including (but not limited to) stroke nurses, student nurses, health care assistants, and care home nurses, regardless of sector
- To share and develop knowledge, expertise and best practice
- To incorporate research–based evidence into practice, to promote research to improve outcomes and to be involved in research projects and initiatives
- To help develop new core competencies, help to maintain/update those already developed, and to be involved in other education and training initiatives for anyone with an interest in or working with stroke care
- To provide a professional network of support for nurses working in stroke or with an interest in stroke
- To advise and influence the provision of stroke nursing services in order to affect patient care and carers at local and national level
- To advise and influence stroke policy, guidelines and improvement plans and to be involved in their development
- To promote stroke nursing throughout Scotland and ensure the visibility of stroke nursing roles

4. MEMBERSHIP

The forum is for anyone in a nursing role who works in stroke care or has an interest in stroke, including (but not limited to) stroke nurses, student nurses, health care assistants, and care home nurses, who is living and/or working in Scotland.

Membership is currently free. Any proposed change to this must be discussed at AGM.

Members are expected to promote the forum to potential interested colleagues and actively engage with the forum, including but not limited to providing feedback on the forum's running and activities when requested where possible.

People who would like to become members of the forum should fill out the application form at the following webpage: Become a member | Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland

The forum's committee will comprise of a maximum of 26 members and the composition will be as follows: 1 member from each of the Health Boards plus representation from Argyll and Bute and the Northern Isles. While Glasgow is split into three areas generally, for the purposes of this forum, it will be divided into north and south, giving them an extra place. As such, there are 14 area representatives in total. A committee space is also allocated for a representative for health care assistants, Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland, The Scottish Research Network and the Stroke Association. Further to this, there can be up to 7 General Members and these can be filled by anyone who is a member of the SSNF and working in Scotland.

5. APPOINTMENT, TERMS AND ELECTION OF COMMITTEE AND OFFICE BEARERS

Each committee member will have a 3-year term of office commencing at the AGM. Extensions may be granted by exception and discussed at the AGM. Nominations will be sought when posts become vacant or the term expires. Self-nominated or nominated individuals can stand for election to the committee.

The AGM will take place as part of the annual conference and /or if needed in a virtual format via Microsoft Teams or any secure platform. In the event that conference is unable to go ahead then it should be held virtually on the planned conference date.

1/3 of the committee will be considered for re-election each year in a staggered membership cohort. All committee members should appoint and notify the forum of a deputy for their area.

Office bearers will be appointed at the first regular meeting held after the AGM (Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer).

Committee members (or their deputy) are expected to attend a minimum of 2 meetings annually, unless there is a reasonable cause for absence. Members of the committee may at any time, by notice to the Chairperson, resign their seat. Non attendance at meetings (without just cause) will result in the committee and chairperson seeking resignation and replacement of that member.

Casual vacancies can be filled at the discretion of the committee and the new member will hold office for the remainder of the term of office of the member they are replacing.

6. VOTING

Each member of the committee has one vote. Where votes are equal the chairperson / vice chairperson will have the casting vote

7. MEETINGS

Meetings will be held quarterly and in addition there will be an annual general meeting. Meeting dates will be set annually but may be subject to change. Meeting dates are to be added to the SSNF website in advance. Invites are to be sent at the beginning of the year. The SSNF will endeavour to support hybrid attendance wherever possible.

An agenda, notes and notices of meeting shall be sent to every committee member at least 7 days before the date of the meeting.

All Committee Members are expected to provide an update from their local area for each committee meeting.

Meeting notes will be posted on the forum website.

The meeting quorum is 6 committee members plus 2 office bearers.

Extraordinary meeting can be requested by contacting the Chairperson and it is the chairperson's decision whether this should proceed.

Action Teams of members maybe appointed to consider specific issues and will appoint a lead to report back to the chairperson and the committee. Powers of the Action Teams will be agreed by the committee.

Where necessary the Chairperson will advise on the confidentiality of documents.

8. FINANCES

The treasurer will provide a financial statement for the AGM and each committee meeting. An independent audit of finances should be carried out every two years prior to the AGM.

The forum has a responsibility to pay for adequate insurance policies for conferences. These will incur recurring costs.

There will be a charge to attend events and conferences. The SSNF will financially commit to the forum's attendance at the UKSF and endeavour to attend other high-profile events relevant to Scottish stroke nursing. The forum will endeavour to support member attendance where possible.

Reasonable expenses for travel and accommodation will be met by the SSNF for speakers. These are clearly laid out in the Conference Guidelines. If costs exceed the guideline this has to be discussed and approved by the SSNF Committee Members. Travel and accommodation will be arranged by the SSNF if needed. Charities will receive a free table at the Annual conference however they will be expected to pay the conference place fee for each charity member attending. Pharmaceutical and other product promoters will be charged at the agreed rate for their conference table.

In the event that the forum has sent a representative to an education event to present on their behalf, a committee discussion will take place and an agreed amount paid to meet their expenses.

Any profits made at educational events after all expenses have been met will be shared equally with Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland.

An annual payment of £100 in gift tokens will be paid to the UK Stroke Forum as the prize for the best poster presentation.

In the event of the forum winding up and there being surplus assets, these will be donated to Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland once all outstanding accounts have been audited and settled.

Any additional funding paid to the SSNF will be discussed at the AGM before decisions are made on how this will be used.

9. PARTNERSHIPS AND AFFILIATIONS
   The forum acknowledges the value of partnership working. The partnership with Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland should be deemed an informal affiliation with a Memorandum of Understanding in place. The forum is also supported by the Stroke Research Network, The Stroke Association and the Scottish Stroke Care Audit.
   The committee will discuss other affiliations and partnerships when required and decisions will be recorded in the appropriate meeting notes.
   These partners are welcome at all committee meetings

10. INFORMAL GUESTS
    Invited guests and observers are welcome at committee meetings with notification to the chairperson.

11. CONFLICT OF INTEREST
    Committee members should declare when they have a conflict of interest and act objectively. On occasions they may be asked to leave the meeting while points are being discussed.

12. ALTERATION TO THE CONSTITUTION
    The Constitution is to be reviewed every 3 years. The Chairperson holds the responsibility for initiating a review of the constitution.

    The Constitution can only be altered by a majority of votes passed at a meeting of the committee or at the AGM (21 days notice is needed). The option of a remote vote should be given to those unable to attend these meetings.
    Once the alterations have been made the altered constitution will be posted on the forum website to inform all forum members.

April 2025