

## TERMS OF REFERENCE: CLINICAL GUIDELINES COMMITTEE

**PURPOSE:** The purpose and use of clinical practice guidelines is to promote clinical care and interventions of proven clinical benefit and discourage ineffective ones by providing current evidence and expert opinion related to a specific condition. The Clinical Guidelines Committee helps to oversee and guide this process for ISSWSH as it relates to women's sexual health clinical care.

**OVERALL RESPONSIBILITIES:** The Clinical Guidelines Committee is responsible for generating and/or reviewing proposals for consensus publications and society guideline statements on various topics of clinical relevance. The Clinical Guidelines Committee provides guidance and oversight on the execution of these projects, including but not limited to prioritization, resource allocation, involvement of external entities or collaborations, writing, and endorsement of identified projects as appropriate.

### **COMPOSITION:**

**CHAIR:** The Chair is elected by the membership to serve as a voting member of the Board of Directors. The Chair serves a two-year term unless they have been appointed by the Board of Directors to serve out a vacancy. The Chair may be re-elected for one additional two-year term. The Chair may recommend a Co-Chair at any time during their term for approval by the Executive Committee, but a Co-Chair must be in place during the Chair's final term and must be formally nominated to become Chair during the open nomination period preceding the Chair's term end.

**CO-CHAIR:** The Co-Chair will assist the Chair in managing the execution of identified projects. The Co-Chair will serve a minimum of 1 year as Co-Chair to be eligible for election as Chair. If the Co-Chair is formally nominated to become Chair, they will be considered by the nominating committee as the lead nominee for Chair to be elected by the membership. If for any reason the Co-Chair is not formally nominated for Chair, other nominees may be considered by the nominating committee.

**LIAISONS:** Liaison roles are established annually for all committees to provide a streamlined path of communication as it relates to questions, concerns, or discussions. A liaison to the Executive Committee (EC) is a member of the EC that serves as the direct contact for any issue requiring discussion or decision by the EC. The staff liaison is a person from the Executive Office that would be the direct contact on administrative support of the committee. Additional Liaisons may be assigned by the Committee Chair as needed.

- Executive Committee:
- Staff:

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**REPORTS:** The Chair must submit at least one written report a year, which is typically presented at the Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors. Additional written or verbal reports may be presented by the Chair or at the request of the Executive Committee or Board of Directors.

### **CLINICAL GUIDELINE PROCESS:**

#### **IDENTIFYING PROJECTS/DEVELOPING PROJECT PROPOSALS:**

- The Chair may identify and develop project proposals.
- The Chair may collaborate with the Co-Chair or other Committee Chairs (i.e., Education, Global Development, Advocacy) to identify and develop project proposals.
- The Chair may collaborate with other scientific sexual medicine and women's health organizations in the process of developing concepts for guidelines, proposals which may include multi-society panels and writing projects, and dissemination and endorsement of guidelines. Such organizations may include but are not limited to ISSM, SMSNA, NAMS, and IPPS.
- The Executive Committee may identify and develop a project proposal in collaboration with the Chair.
- Projects may be suggested by other members of ISSWSH to the Clinical Guidelines Committee but must be approved before a project proposal is considered.

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### **REQUIRED ELEMENTS FOR A PROJECT PROPOSAL:**

#### **Project Overview**

- Topic and Title
- Statement of need
- Key objectives
- Current evidence that will serve to inform the project
- Desired/Projected outcome (Process of Care, Expert Opinion, etc.)
- Projected timeline and budget (include potential funding opportunities - in collaboration with Global Development or other Chairs)
- Identification of potential barriers
- Additional requirements needed for the project (e.g., literature search, etc.)

#### **Committee Structure Overview:**

- Project Committee Chair(s): If ISSWSH led project, the Chair needs to be an ISSWSH Member; for multi-society projects this is not required.
- Project Committee Members: Members serve designated role such as are subject matter experts, moderator, scientific writer, etc. Members are not required to be members of ISSWSH.
- Organization of the committee meetings: virtual, live, hybrid, singular vs. periodic, etc.

### **APPROVING PROJECTS:**

- Project proposals must be developed and submitted to the Clinical Guidelines Committee for initial vetting. The project proposal will be vetted on the quality (e.g., scoping reviews vs. practical guides) and the level of evidence of the papers supporting a publication (i.e., a meta-analysis or systematic review). The committee may reject/approve a proposal or ask for additional information or editing. Final proposals are advanced to the Executive Committee for review and consideration.
- The Executive Committee reviews and approves a project proposal; a recommendation for approval will be submitted to the Board of Directors. Any suggested changes or edits must be documented in the proposal and agreed to by the Chair prior to final approval by the Board of Directors.
- Board approved projects are given to the Chair to oversee implementation.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF AN APPROVED PROJECT:**

- The Chair will coordinate with the staff liaison to invite the project committee chair(s).
- The project committee chair(s) will review and agree to project committee members. Any changes to the approved committee may be made in consultation with the Chair.
- The project committee chair(s) will coordinate with the staff liaison to invite the project committee members who will serve for the duration of the project. Any compensation will be outlined in the invitation letter and based on the approved budget.
- The project committee chair(s) will work with the Chair to identify goals, timelines, and milestones and will periodically report to the Chair any progress made on the project.
  - The Chair may serve as a project committee chair, co-chair, or panel member, as specified in the proposals for identified projects and approved by the Board.
  - If the Chair does not participate in the specific committee, the Chair will monitor the progress periodically and serve as a resource for the project committee chair and members.
- Once the project is completed, the committee for that project will be dissolved.
- A member may serve on multiple projects but needs to be approved for each.

### **OTHER REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO APPROVED PROJECTS:**

**MINUTES:** Minutes serve as a record of meetings that take place by the committee involved in each project. At the request of the Chair and with permission of the participating members, the meeting may be recorded.

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PUBLICATION: When possible and where appropriate, projects will be submitted for publication in an ISSWSH journal. If a particular project is submitted to a journal outside of an ISSWSH journal, the reasoning must be reviewed by the Executive Committee and approved prior to submission. (i.e., previous publication was published in another journal and will be re-published in the same journal(s); the project will be submitted for simultaneous publication in multiple journals; an ISSWSH journal declined to publish it).