

WONCA North America Region Guidelines

ARTICLE 1: NAME AND DEFINITION

1.1 The name of the organization is WONCA North American region (Acronym: WONCA NA region). WONCA is the acronym for the World Organization of National Colleges, Academies and Academic Associations of General Practitioners/Family Physicians, short name World Organization of Family Doctors.

1.2 The Organization is the North America Region of WONCA, regional chapter of World Organization of Family Doctors (WONCA).

ARTICLE 2: PURPOSE

2.1 Objective

2.1.1 The objective of the organization is to improve the quality of life of the peoples of the world, and in particular in North America, through fostering and maintaining high standards of care in Family Medicine/General Practice as the sole medical specialty specifically dedicated to competency in comprehensive primary health care service delivery.

2.2 Aims

The objective of the organization shall be achieved by:

2.2.1 Providing a forum for exchange of knowledge and information between Member Organizations of family physicians/general practitioners

2.2.2 Encouraging and supporting the development of academic and other organizations of family physicians/general practitioners in North America

2.2.3 Representing the educational, research and service provision activities of family physicians/general practitioners before North American organizations and/or forums concerned with health and medical care.

2.2.4 Advocating for stronger primary health care, and the role of Family Medicine/General Practice in achieving this on both domestic, regional and global scales

2.2.5 Offering a venue for engaging with other WONCA regions, countries, organizational elements (i.e. young doctor groups, working parties and special interest groups) around issues of importance to Family Medicine/General Practice

2.3 Function

2.3.1 The activities of the Organization shall be so directed that they serve the Member Organizations by collecting, collating and disseminating information concerning the educational, research and service provision aspects of Family Medicine/General Practice

2.4 Alteration to the Statement of Purpose

2.4.1 Any proposed amendments, additions or deletions to the Statement of Purpose shall be consistent with the WONCA Bylaws, except that any such duly accepted amendments, additions or deletions shall not be operative unless confirmed at the next Regular WONCA NA Council Meeting.

ARTICLE 3: MEMBERSHIP

3.1 Eligibility

3.1.1 The Membership of the Organization shall consist of

3.1.1.1 National Colleges, Academies, or Academic Associations of General Practice/Family Medicine which are representative of General Practitioners/Family Physicians of a WONCA NA member geography, and which are Full Members (WONCA Bylaws ARTICLE 3 Section 2.1), Associate Members (WONCA Bylaws ARTICLE 3 Section 2.2) or Organizations in Collaborative Relations within the WONCA NA region. This region comprises Canada, the United States of America, and the Caribbean.

3.1.1.2 Individual Members, who are Direct Members of WONCA.

3.1.1.3 Honorary Life Direct Members.

3.1.1.4 WONCA NA executive members (nine members, three from each country)

3.2 Classification

3.2.1 Full Members

3.2.1.1 Per WONCA World Bylaws, National Colleges, Academies, or Academic Associations of General Practitioners/Family Physicians representing the General Practitioners/Family Physicians of a WONCA NA member geography. There can be more than one Full Member Organization from any one country, however per WONCA World Bylaws no component member of a Full Member Organization shall hold Full Membership in WONCA in its own right. The organization's objectives shall be centered

on the advancement of the teaching, research and improvement of patient care and the discipline of Family Medicine/General Practice. The constituent voting membership of such organizations shall consist mainly of legally qualified medical practitioners or medical practitioners in training.

3.2.1.2 Each Full Member Organization shall have membership on WONCA NA Council. Each Member Organization may identify a chosen certified representative to hold office in accordance with the requirements of Article 11 of the Wonca World bylaws.

3.2.2 Associate Member Organizations

3.2.2.1 National organizations or a group of national organizations whose missions and objectives are consistent with those of WONCA and not eligible or do not seek Full Membership and of which the majority of the constituent voting membership are members of the recognized health professions as defined in these Bylaws.

3.2.3 Organizations in Collaborative Relations (OCRs)

3.2.3.1 International organizations whose missions and objectives are consistent with those of the Organization and who are not eligible for, or who do not seek Full or Associate Membership.

3.2.4 Direct Members

3.2.4.1 Individual persons who are members of a recognized health profession, and who are Direct Members of WONCA.

3.2.4.2 Direct Members shall be issued with a Certificate of Membership by the Chief Executive Officer of WONCA, shall receive copies of any newsletter or other publication which is regularly circulated by the Organization, and may be provided with some form of recognition at meetings of the Organization, the nature of such recognition being determined from time to time by WONCA NA Council.

3.2.5 Academic Members

3.2.5.1 Academic Departments/Training Programs of Family Medicine/General Practice based in North America which are actively involved in teaching and research, support the Mission of The Organization and who have been recognized by WONCA World Council and have paid the requisite dues

3.3 Application

3.3.1 Full Members

3.3.1.1 National Colleges, Academies or Academic Associations of General Practitioners/Family Physicians seeking Full Membership shall submit to WONCA World Council through the WONCA World Membership Committee an application in such form as is approved by WONCA World Council.

3.3.2 Associate Member Organizations

3.3.2.1 National Colleges, Academies or Academic Associations of General Practitioners/Family Physicians seeking Associate Membership shall submit to WONCA World Council through the WONCA World Membership Committee an application in such form as is approved by WONCA World Council.

3.3.3 Organizations in Collaborative Relations

3.3.3.1 Applications for Collaborative Relations shall be made in accordance with the relevant policies and reviewed by World WONCA Council on the recommendation of World WONCA Executive Committee.

3.3.4 Direct Members

3.3.4.1 Individuals seeking Direct Membership shall submit to the Chief Executive Officer of WONCA an application with supporting evidence of their qualifications.

3.3.4.2 Upon determination by the Chief Executive Officer of eligibility for Direct Membership, the Chief Executive Officer shall inform World Council and issue the applicant with a Certificate of Membership.

3.3.4.3 Direct Members of WONCA shall also be members of the region of WONCA where they live and offered any privileges of the region.

3.3.5 Honorary Membership

3.3.5.1 Nominations for Fellowship or Honorary Life Direct Membership may be made by Member Organizations, WONCA NA Council or WONCA Council.

3.4 Termination of Membership

3.4.1 A Member Organization's Membership in the Organization shall terminate upon the occurrence of any of the following:

3.4.1.1 Resignation.

3.4.1.2 Default in the payment of dues to the Organization or Revocation of Membership as in the WONCA Bylaws.

ARTICLE 4: ORGANIZATIONS IN COLLABORATIVE RELATIONS AT REGIONAL LEVEL

4.1 *Eligibility*

4.1.1 Organizations whose objectives are consistent with those of WONCA NA, and are centered on the advancement of the teaching, research and improvement of patient care and the discipline of general practice/family medicine, and who are not eligible for or who do not seek Full Membership. The constituent voting membership of the Governing Bodies of such organizations shall have a majority of legally qualified medical practitioners.

4.1.2 Collaborative Organizations may be represented at WONCA NA Council. The certified representatives shall have the privileges of the floor but shall not have the right to vote. The certified representatives are not eligible to hold office in accordance with the requirements of Article 11 of the Bylaws. Examples might include invited observers from representing other regional or country organizations outside of the WONCA NA region.

ARTICLE 5: FUNDS

5.1 *Regional Budget*

5.1.1 The primary source of funds will be those provided to the regional President through WONCA World and shall be allocated at the sole discretion of the President. WONCA NA may undertake additional fundraising activities as agreed upon by the NA Executive, and such funds will be held within the World WONCA financial accounts and used for activities as approved by the NA Executive.

ARTICLE 6: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND OFFICERS OF THE ORGANIZATION

6.1 *Composition*

6.1.1 The WONCA NA Region shall be run day-to-day by an Executive Committee consisting of eight members:

6.1.1.1 The Chief Executive Officer or Executive Director of each full member organization.

6.1.1.2 Two Executive Officers:

6.1.1.2.1 One regional President selected from one of the full member organizations.

6.1.1.2.2 One regional President Elect selected from one of the full member organizations.

6.1.1.3 Two additional non-CEO designees from the full member organizations that did not nominate either the current President or President Elect.

6.1.1.3.1 In the event that the President or President Elect is from the U.S., only the AAFP or STFM may appoint an additional designee, and not both.

6.1.1.3.2 Past regional Presidents may be appointed as an additional non-CEO designee by a full member organization, although they may not hold the position of President or President Elect.

6.1.1.4 The President of Polaris, the North America region's Young Doctor Movement, or a designee may participate as a non-voting member.

6.2 Duties and Terms of Officers

6.2.1 President

6.2.1.1 The President shall act as Chair of the WONCA NA Executive Committee

6.2.1.2 The President will hold the seat on the World WONCA Executive Committee and function as representative of the WONCA NA Region. They will be expected to attend WONCA world executive committee meetings regularly.

6.2.1.3 The President shall perform all other duties that custom and parliamentary practice and usage may require.

6.2.1.4 The term of office of the President shall begin at the conclusion of the WONCA World Council Meeting at which the installation as President occurs and will last until the conclusion of the next WONCA World Council Meeting in which such voting has occurred.

6.2.1.5 The President shall only be permitted to hold office for up to one full term as defined in 6.2.1.4.

6.2.2 President Elect

6.2.2.1 The President Elect shall be a member of the WONCA NA Executive Committee.

6.2.2.1 The term of office of the President Elect shall commence at the conclusion of the regular WONCA NA meeting at which election occurs and will last for the term as defined in 6.2.1.4. At the conclusion of the President Elect's term, the President Elect will take office as the new regional President.

6.2.2.2 The President Elect shall be nominated in a rotating fashion by the full member organizations based on location within the following three geographies: Canada -> Caribbean -> U.S.

6.2.2.3 The President Elect shall be nominated at least one full term as defined in section 6.2.1.4 prior to the anticipated WONCA World Council Meeting in which they would be expected to be installed as President of the WONCA North America region, except in the event of their appointment as a replacement.

6.2.2.4 In the event the President cannot be present, the President Elect may serve as Chair of the WONCA NA Executive in their stead.

6.2.3 In the event of the death, resignation or incapacity of either the President or President Elect during their term of office, the full member organization(s) from the original geography that nominated that individual may nominate a replacement to fill the same role to complete the existing term as defined in 6.2.1.4. Unanimous assent by the WONCA NA Executive shall be necessary for a finding of incapacity. "Incapacity" shall include, but not be limited to, the following situations: physical or mental health problems that prevent performance of duties, criminal or unethical behavior, disruptive or ineffective leadership, or such other conditions as decided by WONCA NA Council.

6.2.4 Executive Meetings

6.2.4.1 At least one meeting of the Executive will be held annually around the period of each WONCA World Council meeting.

6.2.4.2 Additional meetings of the WONCA NA Executive to discuss issues and manage operations of the WONCA NA region may be called anytime by the President alone or upon the written request of not less than a quarter (1/4) of the total membership of WONCA NA Executive, provided that written notice of such a meeting is given not less than 30 days thereto.

6.2.4.3 All meetings may be virtual, in-person or hybrid.

6.3 Elections and Appointments

6.3.1 As outlined above, the full member organizations of each member geography may nominate a President Elect on a rotating basis (i.e. Canada->Caribbean->U.S.), for a term as defined in 6.2.1.4. Multiple full member organizations within a single geography may determine their own internal process for nomination. Upon completion of the term, the President Elect is elevated to the role of current President.

6.3.2 The composition of the WONCA NA Executive shall adhere to the WONCA gender equity criteria as defined in the WONCA Bylaws Article 12.2.

6.4 Functions

6.4.1 The WONCA NA Executive shall focus on issues of governance, including World WONCA award selections and nominations.

6.4.2 The WONCA NA Executive will also be responsible for addressing any issues of organizational equity and/or establish an organization equity committee as a standing committee of the executive on an advisory basis.

6.4.3 The current President shall be the official representative to World WONCA Executive Committee and Council meetings.

6.4.4 The WONCA NA Executive will have governance oversight of any WONCA NA Convening, including the formation of the Program Committee. All decisions associated with meeting logistics are deferred to the host organization.

6.4.5 Other duties (recording and disseminating meeting notes or updates, financial tracking, etc.) may be distributed among the members of the regional Executive Committee as the members see fit.

6.5 Voting

6.5.1 The WONCA NA Executive Committee shall endeavor to operate whenever possible by consensus.

6.5.2 Each full member organization shall only have one vote in the Executive Committee, and the member authorized to exercise that vote shall be clearly identified to the Chair prior to the commencement of the meeting.

6.5.3 Any decisions regarding finances or resource allocation must be unanimous.

6.5.4 It should be noted, while actions may be taken as a group in respect to the WONCA NA region and its operations, no action taken by such a vote shall be binding upon the individual member organizations themselves.

6.6 Proxies

6.6.1 A Full Member Organization in good standing which is unable to send at least one member of WONCA NA Executive Committee to a meeting of the Executive Committee, may authorize another Member Organization, through one of its members of the WONCA Executive Committee, to represent it, providing that no member of the Executive Committee may normally represent more than one additional Member Organization.

6.6.2 The Member Organization authorizing another Member Organization to represent it must furnish the Chairperson of WONCA NA Executive Committee such authorization in writing signed by two officers of that Organization.

6.7 Quorum

6.7.1 A quorum for the transaction of business of WONCA NA Executive Committee shall consist of a simple majority of the members of the Executive Committee (including proxies). Meetings, and any relevant voting activity, may be held in virtual, in-person or hybrid formats.

6.8 Languages

6.8.1 The discussions at any meetings of WONCA NA Executive Committee shall be conducted in English.

6.9 Records

6.9.1 The Chair of the WONCA Executive Committee shall furnish an agenda, ideally including any anticipated decisional voting items and relevant pre-read materials, to all members prior to the commencement of any meeting of the Executive Committee.

6.9.2 A member of the Executive Committee shall keep minutes in English of each meeting of WONCA NA Executive Committee.

6.9.3 The minutes of each meeting shall be transmitted to each Full and Associate Member Organization not later than sixty (60) days following the meeting of WONCA NA Executive Committee.

6.10 Committees

6.10.1 The WONCA NA Executive Committee may establish non-decisional ad hoc committees at will and designate the structure and term as they are established.

ARTICLE 7: North America WONCA Summit

7.1 Structure and Operations

7.1.1 The Organization may hold a regular meeting each year to be designated as a WONCA North America regional summit as approved by the WONCA NA Executive Committee.

7.1.2 Any regular WONCA North America regional summit should include a non-

decisional open convening of all members the WONCA NA region, including individuals from full member organizations, associate member organizations, organizations in collaborative relationship, Polaris, Working Party and Special Interest Group chairs and members, academic members, lifetime and other direct members, and past regional officers.

7.1.3 Any regular WONCA North America regional summit should also include sufficient space and time for a WONCA Polaris meeting, as well as a meeting of the WONCA NA Executive Committee if so desired by the Executive Committee.

7.1.3 This North American regional summit may be sponsored by a WONCA NA member organization and held in conjunction with an annual meeting of one of the member organizations. This meeting should include content relevant to an international audience and those working across national borders, and ideally rotate amongst the USA, Canada, and the Caribbean geographies. Periodically, the organization is encouraged to hold a joint meeting with WONCA Iberoamericana-CIMF.

7.1.4 Content and planning will be determined by the WONCA NA Program Committee.

7.1.5 Operations will occur entirely under the auspices of the hosting organization. The hosting organization for the summit is expected to provide any necessary resources for administratively planning and hosting the meeting, and the host organization will have final decision-making over all programming, financial and resource-allocation decisions.

7.2 Program Committee

7.2.1 The WONCA NA Program Committee shall consist of one representative from the WONCA NA Executive Committee at each organization's discretion plus one designee from each of the regional associate member organizations and those organizations in a collaborative relationship as well as a designee from Polaris. A representative of World WONCA may attend planning meeting convenings at the invitation of the Program Committee.

7.2.2 The host organization of the regional summit will assign an additional representative to act as Chair of the WONCA NA Program Committee.

7.2.3 The function of the WONCA NA Planning Committee will be to advise the host organization in the planning and content of the regional summit.

7.2.4 Meetings of the WONCA NA Planning Committee will be held independent of the WONCA NA Executive Committee, but subject to any governance decisions of the Executive Committee.

7.2.5 Meetings will be called by the WONCA NA President, in consultation with the host organization.

7.2.6 As an advisory body, the WONCA NA Planning Committee will also seek to operate by consensus, but there will be no formal voting structure as binding decisional actions cannot be taken. Any binding decisional actions will rest with the WONCA NA Executive Committee and the host organization.

Figure 1: Example of WONCA NA Executive Committee and Planning Committee

