

HIS Guidelines Committee – Terms of Reference 2021

1. Purpose

The Guidelines Committee is a standing committee of the Healthcare Infection Society (HIS) whose purpose is to make recommendations to HIS Council regarding the preparation and updating of clinical guidelines and guidance produced in accordance with NICE methodology, and in keeping with the strategic aims of the Society.

The Guidelines Committee is responsible for the overall monitoring and review of the working parties who produce guidelines and guidance.

Their role is to preserve and enhance the reputation of HIS as a producer of high quality, robust and relevant guidelines and guidance relating to healthcare-associated infections that will evidence and drive best clinical practice and promote patient safety.

2. Activities

- Establish and approve the HIS Guideline development strategy.
- Decide and review the clinical priority for guideline production with oversight of the guideline production schedule.
- Approve and support the development of working parties for the production of NICE accredited guidelines, rapid guidance and advice documents relating to IPC and nosocomial infections.
- Maintain the NICE methodology guide and NICE accreditation.
- Contribute to the reviewing and updating of all existing HIS guideline documents.
- Propose topics for new guidelines or advice documents.
- Facilitate and contribute to NICE, The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and UK SMI consultations as required.
- Contribute to the planning of the scientific programme for the biennial FIS/HIS conference.
- Oversee the content of the consultations and working party pages of the HIS Website.
- Collaboration with the Journal of Hospital Infection (JHI) and Infection Prevention in Practice (IPIP) to identify publications from working parties and grant recipients.
- Contribute to the development of specialist advisory groups.
- Oversee the research projects undertaken by the Committee, e.g. prevalence surveys.
- Regularly review outputs of the Committee, including guidelines, supplements and other articles for JHI, recommendations to the Research Committee for potential topics for research awards.
- Contribute to reviewing the resources to make HIS guidelines recommendations more accessible.
- Contribute to guidelines webinars and other guidelines-related events.
- Support guidelines implementation activities.

3. Responsible to

The Healthcare Infection Society Council.

4. Membership

4.1 Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair roles

- **Chair:** A member of Council (ideally as a trustee, or as a co-opted member), appointed by Council for a **three-year term**, which can be extended by Council by up to a further **two years**. When appointing a new Chair, to ensure we are inclusive to all Committee Members, this should be included as an agenda item for a Committee meeting to inform members that the position of Chair will become vacant. Ideally, the Chair will have experience of clinical guideline production and Grading of Recommendations, Assessment, Development and Evaluations (GRADE).
- **Vice-Chair:** Appointed by Council for a **three-year term** which can be extended by Council by up to a further **two years**. When either the Chair or Vice-Chair demits there will be an open call to all Committee Members for the position. The Vice-Chair will not automatically succeed the Chair. If the Chair and Vice-Chair roles are not filled by existing Committee Members, an open call to members will be made.

The role of Chair or Vice Chair is available as an individual position or as a role-share, and single or joint applications from committee members for the role will be accepted.

If appropriate, Council may decide to offer the roles on a co-Chair or co-Vice-Chair basis. This should be made clear in the call for the position and applicants may apply with another Committee member for a joint role.

Application process: Applications will be managed in confidence by the HIS staff lead for the relevant Committee and reviewed by HIS Council. Applicants will be asked to submit an expression of interest of between 500 and 700 words stating why they are applying for the Role of Chair or Vice-Chair and their experience to support their application. As part of the process, applicants will be asked to consider whether they would agree to be appointed as a co-Chair or co-Vice-Chair should the opportunity arise. Council will take this into consideration when reviewing applications.

Extension after a first term will be voted on during a Committee meeting and the opportunity to apply for the Chair or Vice-Chair role opened up.

4.2 Appointment of individual Committee Members and terms of office

Individual members will be recommended to Council by the Chair of the Committee for an agreed time period of up to **three years**, which can be extended by a further term of **two years** and in **exceptional circumstances, a third term of one year** on the Chair's recommendation, if agreed by Council. Individual members must be members of HIS. Nominations for membership of the Committee will be sought via an open call to HIS members three times a year with a clear deadline, **only if there are vacancies on the Committee**. Members will be asked to self-nominate with an expression of interest using the relevant application form.

All nominees will be asked to declare potential conflicts of interest during the application process.

After the deadline, applications will be sent in confidence firstly to the Chair and Vice-Chair and, assuming the applicant meets the eligibility criteria, then to the entire Committee for comment. All applicants to Committees will be invited to meet the Chair and HIS staff lead for the Committee in advance of their application being considered. They may also be invited to observe a meeting.

A start of a new position within the committee will be considered a new term which lasts up to three years and can be extended. There is a maximum cap of 8 years for committee membership regardless of position within the committee.

Comments from the Committee on individual applications will be collated by the Chair and Vice -Chair of the Committee who will decide on whether to make a recommendation to Council for membership of the Committee. Successful applications will be ratified at the next meeting of Council.

4.3 Committee membership categories

Members of the Committee must represent the membership categories and professional roles of HIS members. Individual members must be members of HIS in order to serve on the Committee. Ideally, members should include at least one of the following:

- Consultant
- Trainee Committee member
- Associate member
- Biomedical, Healthcare or Clinical scientist
- Member of the microbiological scientific research (academic or industrial) community
- Editor-in-Chief or another Editor of the JHI/IPIP
- Infection Control Nurse (where the Associate member does not have this professional role)
- Ideally, a lay representative (lay representative does not need to be a member of HIS)

The minimum number of voting members shall be 10.

Other individuals who may attend meetings:

- The HIS Researchers in Evidence Synthesis will attend meetings as Society representatives. They do not have voting rights.
- Other individuals (e.g., trainees and new consultants), who are not the Committee members, may also attend in an observational capacity to gain expertise. This role does not have voting rights.

5. Meetings

5.1 Frequency of meetings

The Guidelines Committee will meet at 3-month intervals, in video-conferencing format with work continuing between meetings by email as and when required. Any member of the Committee is expected to attend a minimum of 50% of scheduled meetings of the Committee annually unless agreed by the Chair and apologies are noted in advance of each meeting.

Additional business will be carried out via email as far as possible. The Chair may convene additional meetings as they deem necessary.

5.2 Quorum

A quorum shall be 7 members.

5.3 Agenda and papers

An agenda, along with documentation/information/reports supporting the items under discussion will be agreed with the Chair and circulated to members of the Guidelines Committee a minimum of seven (7) calendar days before a meeting by email. In the absence of return communication outlining errors

in the delivery of email, the agenda and papers will be considered received by all parties unless otherwise notified.

It is essential that all papers are read and considered by the Committee members in advance of the meeting.

5.4 Minutes

Formal minutes recording the proceedings of meetings will be taken by the Guidelines team and distributed to the Chair for review within fourteen (14) calendar days of the meeting taking place. Final minutes will be circulated to all Committee members, and others in attendance, as close to three (3) calendar weeks after the meeting takes place as is practicable.

6. Decision making

Where possible, a general consensus identified by the Chair of the Committee will be sufficient to consider a matter passed, rejected, or deferred. Where consensus is not possible, all decisions will be made by a vote. Where an equity of votes occurs, the Chair may cast an additional vote to finalise the decision or may defer the decision for later action.

7. Conflicts of interest

Members will be asked to verbally declare any interests at the beginning of each meeting and will be asked to complete a written declaration annually.

Members with a conflict of interest must absent themselves from any related decision making. On the occasions where the Chair declares an interest, they will absent themselves from the decision making and Vice-Chair will chair the meeting. Please refer to the HIS [conflicts](#) of interest policy for further information.

8. Reporting to Council and delegation of responsibility

8.1 HIS Council

The Guidelines Committee will report to the HIS Council on all matters related to their remit, and will advise on the contribution of the Society's activities to the greater Society strategy.

One member of the Guidelines Committee (usually the Chair or Vice-Chair) is a member of HIS Council.

The Guidelines Committee will make recommendations to Council regarding the organisation of new initiatives.

After the adoption of any new guideline development methodology, the Guidelines Committee are delegated the responsibility to make decisions regarding guideline production and working parties. All decisions must be formally reported during a meeting of Council.

The Chair of the Guidelines Committee will report verbally at Officer and Chairs teleconferences.

8.2 Annual General Meeting

The Chair of the Guidelines Committee will attend the Annual General Meeting of the Society held in November/December of each year to represent the Guidelines Committee. If this is not possible, a further member of the Committee may be nominated to stand in their stead.

The terms of reference will be reviewed every two years.

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