

## HIS Guidelines Committee – Terms of Reference 2026

### 1. Purpose

The Guidelines Committee is a standing committee of the Healthcare Infection Society (HIS) whose purpose is to oversee the commissioning, development and publication (including online dissemination) of clinical guidelines and guidance related to infection prevention and clinical microbiology.

The Guidelines Committee reports directly to HIS Council and is responsible for ensuring that the strategic aims of HIS are well represented in any guideline or guidance issued under the auspices of HIS.

The aim of guidelines and guidance produced by the Guidelines committee is to enhance and improve clinical practice, and support professional colleagues and patients, through the development and publication of timely, accurate, evidence-based information.

The publication of guidance arising from consensus or expert opinion also falls under the responsibilities of the Guideline Committee.

### 2. Remit of the committee

#### Governance and reporting

- To convene regular meetings, at 2-3 monthly intervals as appropriate, to discuss all stages of guideline and guidance development and publication.
- To inform and adhere to the HIS Research and Guidelines Strategy.
- To ensure good governance and reporting in accordance with the statutes of HIS:
  - To report on the working of the guidelines committee at HIS Council meetings.
  - To produce an annual report on the work of the committee.
- To oversee the appropriate constitution, working and reporting of the guideline working parties (GWPs).
- To ensure diversity and equity of all members of the committee and GWPs.
- To submit business cases to HIS Council for any projects requiring funding or grants for guidelines

#### Guideline development and strategy

- To oversee the online publication of guideline or guidance material in all its formats.
- To ensure that all guidelines and guidance is available in a timely fashion to both members of the profession and the public in an accessible format.
- To keep abreast of, inform the Guidelines Committee of, and implement, where appropriate, new and innovative methodologies, strategies, and technologies which could improve HIS Guidelines workflows and outputs.
- To ensure that guideline development processes are consistent, transparent, cost-effective, and aligned with internationally recognised standards.

#### Collaboration and promotion

- To liaise and collaborate with other national and international bodies, which produce clinical guidelines or guidance.
- To facilitate the process for publication and consultation to ensure it is completed in a timely manner.



- To work in tandem with the Research Committee to identify and promote both research and guidelines.
- In collaboration with the HIS Comms team, to liaise directly or indirectly with the press or public forums to promote clinical guidelines and guidance produced by HIS.
- 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 (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**. The Chair must be a member of HIS.
- **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 Vice-Chair must be a member of HIS.

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 CEO or Head of Education and Governance. 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 to other members.

### 4.2 Appointment of individual Committee Members and terms of office

The Guidelines committee will consist of representatives from the GWPs, nominated individual HIS members and a lay representative. The representatives of the GWPs will be the Chair or Vice Chair of the GWP or their nominated representative.

Nominated 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 two terms of **two years** and, in **exceptional circumstances, a third term of one year** on the Chair's recommendation, if agreed by Council. There is a maximum cap of 8 years for committee membership regardless of position within the committee.



Individual members must be members of HIS. Nominations for membership of the Committee will be sought via an open call to HIS members, as required, with a clear deadline, **if there are vacancies on the Committee.**

The Lay representative/s will be members of the public who volunteer for this role after a public call for expressions of interest for this role. Lay representatives do not need to be members of HIS.

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

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

Comments from the Committee on individual applications will be collated and considered 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 by HIS 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 to serve on the Committee.

The minimum number of voting members shall be 10. The maximum number of voting members shall be 16.

#### **Other individuals** who may attend meetings:

- Members of the HIS staff team may wish to attend meetings as Society representatives. They do not have voting rights.
- Other individuals (e.g. Trainee committee representatives), who are not Committee members, may also attend in an observational capacity to gain expertise. This role does not have voting rights.

## 5. Meetings and Responsibilities

### 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. Occasional face to face meetings may be held as required. Members of the Committee are expected to attend a minimum of 75% of scheduled meetings of the Committee annually unless agreed by the Chair.

### 5.2 Quorum

A quorum shall be 50% of voting members. Meetings may occur in the absence of a quorum of members, but in such cases, no decisions which require a vote, must be taken.

### 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. All minutes will contain an action plan arising from the minutes content with responsible members and target dates. A Gantt chart of actions will be produced and updated to summarise and track the committee's work and actions.

#### 5.5 Roles and responsibilities

- The Chair and Vice Chair will provide strategic direction for the committee. The Chair is accountable to HIS Council for the committee's work and outcomes.
- The Chair and Vice Chair will act as executive leads and serve as the main points of contact for all guideline-related matters at HIS.
- The Researcher in Evidence Synthesis and the Research and Communications Coordinator will provide professional expertise and secretariat support to the committee. Their direction, priorities, and ways of working will be agreed collaboratively with the Guideline Committee Chairs and relevant managerial leads.
- The GWP members must undertake to:
  - Attend at least 75% of all meetings
  - Report on the progress and challenges of their GWP
  - Be responsible for the completion of actions allocated to the GWP by the Guidelines Committee
  - Act as a point of contact for HIS staff regarding the working of the GWP
  - Undertake to update the GWP on the work of the Guidelines Committee
- The HIS nominated members must:
  - Attend at least 75% of all meetings
  - Take on responsibilities for projects/ roles as discussed in the committee
  - Be responsible for the completion of actions allocated them by the Guidelines Committee
  - Act as a point of contact for HIS staff
  - Undertake to support HIS in updating HIS members on the work of the committee.
- Working Parties are expert groups commissioned by the Guideline Committee to develop individual clinical guidelines. The relationship between the Guideline Committee and Working Parties is as follows:

<b>Guideline Committee</b>	<b>Working Party</b>
Sets strategic direction and priorities	Develops guideline content for a specific topic
Commissions and dissolves Working Parties	Operates within the scope approved by the Committee
Approves scope, membership, and timelines	Reports progress to the Committee



Provides methodological standards and support	Follows the Guideline Development Manual
Quality assures and approves final guidelines	Submits final guideline for Committee approval
Escalation points for Working Party disputes	Escalates unresolved issues to the Committee

## 6. Decision making

Where possible, a 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 through periodic reporting at council meetings and an annual report to Council, which will also be available to HIS members, and on request to interested parties including the general public.

One member of the Guidelines Committee (usually the Chair or Vice-Chair) is a member of HIS Council. This member should represent the Guideline Committee on HIS 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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