

CONSTITUTION OF IRISH HEAD AND NECK SOCIETY

Original constitution ratified 24 September 2019

Amended 30 September 2020

Amended 6 May 2023

Amended 20 April 2024

STRUCTURE

The organisation shall be called the Irish Head and Neck Society (IHNS). The IHNS is an unincorporated voluntary society.

AIMS

The objectives of the IHNS are

- (1) To provide a forum for the exchange of knowledge and skills in all areas of Head and Neck Oncology
- (2) To encourage research in all areas of Head and Neck Oncology, and provide a forum for exchange of results and ideas
- (3) To contribute to the furtherance of knowledge and care in all aspects of Head and Neck Oncology
- (4) To provide an expert voice on matters related to Head and Neck Cancer in Ireland

MEMBERSHIP

All members of the IHNS must agree with the aims of the IHNS, and must abide by the rules of the Society as set in the Constitution or by the Council. As much as possible, members should make every effort to attend Annual meetings of the IHNS.

All prospective members must fill an application, and consent for their personal and contact details to be held by the Secretariat.

Categories of membership are Full, Associate, Senior, Honorary, Affiliate, and International.

Full membership is open to clinicians working in Ireland who have a substantive professional involvement in the care of patients with Head and Neck Cancer, and are on the specialist register for their parent specialty; or to senior academic workers in areas related to Head and Neck Cancer. Full members must pay an annual subscription, set by the Council. Full members are eligible for membership of the Council, and have voting rights at the General Assembly.

Associate membership is open to non-consultant hospital doctors working in a specialty affiliated to Head and Neck Cancer, or junior academic workers in areas related to Head and Neck Cancer. They are not eligible for membership of the Council and do not have voting rights. Associate members will pay a reduced subscription, set by the Council.

Senior members are retired clinicians who have retired from full time practice in Ireland, and have devoted a significant proportion of their professional lives to the care of patients with Head and Neck Cancer. Applications for Senior Membership will be approved by unanimous agreement by the Council. Senior Members will not pay subscription and do not have voting rights.

Honorary members will be elected because they have rendered distinguished service to Head and Neck Cancer. Proposals for Honorary Membership will be approved by unanimous agreement by the Council, and then voted on by the Full membership at the General Assembly. Honorary Members will not pay subscription and do not have voting rights.

Affiliate Members is open to members of any relevant professional organisation approved by Council which has recognised involvement in Head and Neck Cancer, who have substantive professional involvement in the care of patients with Head and Neck Cancer. Relevant professions will include nursing, dietetics, speech and language therapy, dentistry, therapeutic radiography, physiotherapy, or psychology. Applicants shall give the name of the professional body of which they are members. They shall be eligible to attend all meetings of the IHNS but will not have voting rights, except that they can vote for the Affiliate member of the Council. Affiliate members will pay a reduced subscription, set by the Council.

International membership is open to clinicians or members of relevant professional organisations approved by the council who are working outside Ireland, with substantive involvement in the care of patients with head and neck cancer. They are not eligible for membership of the Council and do not have voting rights. International members will pay a reduced subscription, set by the Council.

The Secretary will review all membership applications.. In cases of applications meeting predetermined criteria, as set by council, the Secretary may, in the absence of any objections from the Council, grant expedited approval for membership. Where the application does not meet the criteria for the class of membership applied for, the Secretary shall reject the application. In all other cases, the application for membership will be discussed by the Council.

Subscribing members of whatever category whose subscriptions are in arrears by twelve months or more, shall be informed by the Treasurer, and shall cease to be a member of the Association. Re-instatement of membership is possible with consent of Council after re-application in writing, and after payment of arrears has been cleared.

Members who do not abide by the rules of the IHNS, or who otherwise bring the IHNS into disrepute, maybe removed by the IHNS, by a 2/3 majority in a vote by the Council.

GOVERNANCE BY COUNCIL

The IHNS shall be governed by a Council, which will be formed by 9 full members, exclusive of President, Secretary, and Treasurer, plus two affiliate members.

The term of office for Council members will be 3 years, and can be renewed. In order to maintain continuity for the business of the IHNS, the President will be elected in the years between election of the remainder of the council and serve as a President Elect until the election of the new council; while the outgoing President will be invited to serve for one year as the Past President. The President Elect and Past President may attend meetings of the Council and may hold other positions

on the Council. The President Elect and/or Past President will not have voting rights, unless they hold other positions on the Council. In case of a President Elect not being elected in the year before the election of the remainder of the council, then an election for the President will be held at the same time as the remaining council election.

Membership of the council should be by enthusiastic, dedicated members who are willing to dedicate themselves to furthering the aims and activities of the Society. As much as possible, the composition of the council should reflect the multidisciplinary nature of the society, and should have a balanced geographical distribution.

This Council shall be composed of:

5 members from the specialties of Otolaryngology, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, and Plastic Surgery, with at least one representative from each

2 members from Radiation Oncology and/or Medical Oncology (preferably one from each)

2 members from the Diagnostic Radiology and/ or Pathology (preferably one from each)

2 Affiliate members, representing Affiliate groups, preferably from 2 different specialties

1 further member, from a specialty not included above.

Optionally, 1 further lay member, at the discretion of the President, to assist with administrative duties, and who may take role of the executive secretary or executive treasurer, without voting council rights

The initial office holders will be nominated by the founding members, and the term of office will be until the first General Assembly. Thereafter, members interested in being members or officers of the council, should express their interest in writing or by email to the Secretary, at least 4 weeks in advance of the General Assembly. At least 2 weeks prior to the General Assembly, the secretary will distribute a list of those members who have expressed interest. At the general assembly, the suitability of interested members must be endorsed by a proposer and a seconder, followed by a show of hands. Where there is more than one applicant for one position, applicants will be invited to speak for 1 minute regarding their suitability (2 minutes for President and Secretary positions), which will be followed by a vote. If this shows a clear majority in favour of one applicant, then this person will be elected. If there is not a clear majority, then an immediate paper ballot will take place. Positions will be filled in the order: President, Secretary, Treasurer, Surgeons, Radiation/ Medical Oncology; Diagnostic Radiology/Pathology, and Affiliate member. The Affiliate member will be elected by Affiliate members.

Where there are no applications for a position, nominations will be taken from the floor, provided the nominated person is present, and/or has expressed his/her interest in being on the Council. If there are still unfilled positions after the General Assembly, the council may, by unanimous agreement, nominate a member to the Council. If a position unexpectedly becomes vacant during the term of office, the council may, after inviting expressions of interest from the Full membership, nominate a member to the Council to cover the interrupted period of service.

The Affiliate council members will be proposed by the Affiliate subgroup of the IHNS. The further member from a specialty not included above may be proposed by the President or the Council, and elected with agreement of the Council.

Once the Council has been formed, the Council will nominate from among the Council members a Conference Secretary, who will be responsible for organizing the annual Society meeting.

The Council will meet formally at least once per year at a General Assembly or virtually within 2 weeks of the annual meeting. Between these times, Council meetings may be called by the President. Teleconferencing will be permitted for gatherings outside the General Assembly. Decisions by the council passed by a vote will be considered binding where there is a quorum of 4 for the meeting at the General Assembly, and 5 for any meeting outside General Assembly. Where the quorum is not met, decisions taken by the Council can only be considered binding after consultation with the rest of the council with no objections received or a majority of remaining voting Council members in favour.

Between meetings, the Council may be consulted through electronic messaging to the Group. All members of the Council must undertake to respond to all communications from the President or Secretary in a timely fashion. Any decision made on basis of electronic messaging must have the express approval by the President, Secretary, and a majority of the remaining voting Council members. A record of all decisions made or ratified based on electronic messaging will be maintained by the Secretary.

ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The IHNS shall call an annual General Assembly, which should be coordinated with the Annual Society meeting. All members may attend this assembly. Only full members have voting rights. In extraordinary circumstances where it is not possible to hold a physical General Assembly, a virtual General Assembly may be held. In such situation, voting may take place electronically. The secretary shall prepare an order of business of the assembly. This shall include

- (1) Presentation of accounts by Treasurer
- (2) Motions for changes to the constitution
- (3) Elections to the council
- (4) Applications for membership
- (5) Other business

For motions to change the constitution, a quorum of 10 members will be required. Votes at the General Assembly will take place by show of hands or paper ballot, as advised by the President. Where votes are taken by a show of hands, and where this shows a clear majority in favour of or against a motion, then this motion will be considered passed. Where there is not a clear majority, then an immediate paper ballot will take place.

FUNDS OF THE ASSOCIATION

The funds of the Association will be managed by the Treasurer. The Treasurer will keep a full record of all monies going in and out of the Association, and will be responsible for presenting the accounts to the Full membership at the Annual General Assembly accompanied by appropriate receipts and documentation. The Treasurer must pre-approve all outgoings. The IHNS, as an unincorporated association, may not enter into any contracts, and may not spend, nor commit to spend, any funds in excess of what it has in its bank account. The Treasurer is responsible to ensure no spending commitments are made on the part of the IHNS beyond what is in the account and /or already precommitted elsewhere. In cases where members use money from their own pocket(s) for IHNS activities, repayment from IHNS account into member account must be accompanied by clear documentation relating to expense and is disclosable to all members. All membership fees are non-refundable.

PUBLICATIONS

Publications by the IHNS shall remain the copyright of the IHNS. No publications or reports of meetings of the IHNS shall be made in the name of the IHNS without approval of the Council.

PUBLIC STATEMENTS

No members of the IHNS may make public statements in the name of the IHNS without express approval of the Council. Where any statements are made by members, these will be considered not to reflect the view of the IHNS, unless the statement has been reviewed and approved by the Council. The secretary and/or nominated Council member or other IHNS member nominated by the Council may make newsletters, e-mail, WhatsApp or other electronic circulars, or maintain electronic social media sites, for the purposes of reporting on the activities of the IHNS. All such communications must be reviewed by the Secretary or nominated Council member prior to release.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION:

This Constitution may be added to, repealed or amended by resolution at the General Assembly provided that no such resolution shall be deemed to have been passed unless it is carried by at least 60% of the members voting thereon, with a quorum of 10 voting members present. Notice of any proposal to repeal, amend or add to the existing rules must be sent to the Secretary in writing not later than six weeks before the General Assembly and must appear on the Agenda of the said meeting in the form of a motion.