

# National Forum for Hospice at Home

# Constitution

Amended November 2008, approved 25 March 2009

A Professional Association within Help the Hospices  
Company Registration No. 2751549, Registered Charity No. 1014851

**The National Forum For Hospice at Home**

## 1. Name

The name of the Forum shall be **The National Forum For Hospice at Home.**

## 2. Definitions

### **'The Forum'**

The National Forum For Hospice at Home.

### **'Services'**

The National Forum for Hospice at Home recognises that there are a variety of models of Hospice at Home, many of which will provide services in line with the following definition. The Forum also recognises that Hospice at Home is a growing area of care, and that there are services which will provide some, but not all of the elements as defined.

#### Aim

Hospice at Home aims to enable patients with advanced illness to be cared for at home, and to die at home if that is their preference. Care may be provided to prevent admission to or facilitate discharge from an inpatient unit, for respite or crisis management, or for longer periods of time. Care is intended to be of the highest possible standard so as to enhance the quality of life of patients, carers and families.

#### Philosophy

Hospice at Home is an integral component of palliative home care, bringing the skills, ethos and practical care associated with 'Hospice' into the home environment and putting the patient and those who matter to them at the centre of care. Palliative home care forms a spectrum from advisory and educational roles to hands-on care, in response to the changing needs of the patient and carers.

#### Service Components

Hospice at Home is provided by a skilled multi-professional team, integrated with local health, social care and specialist palliative care providers to ensure that patient and carers needs are met. Elements of the service may include:

- One or more nurses who hold a specialist practitioner recordable qualification in palliative care, who will normally carry out initial assessments and may provide leadership and supervision to the team.
- Nurses with suitable qualifications and /or experience to provide hands-on nursing and basic psychological and social support.
- 24-hour access to specialist, palliative medical advice.
- Easy access to other professionals, and in particular to social work and counselling skills.
- The professional staff may be supported by volunteers who have had appropriate training.

## Operational Requirements

Hospice at Home provides hands-on expert nursing care, on up to a 24-hour basis, along with other appropriate elements of palliative care including:

- Emotional, psychological and social support, with clear protocols for referral as necessary to specialist colleagues in social work, counselling, spiritual care, psychology and psychiatry.
- Access to specialist colleagues in other disciplines, such as physiotherapy, as required.
- Provision of information, support, education and training where needed to all carers, both lay and professional.
- Close collaboration and communication with the primary care team, the patient's acute hospital specialists if appropriate, and other agencies.

### **' Forum Member'**

An organisation providing all or some of the Services regardless of source of funding.

### **'Representative'**

A senior employee or Trustee of a Forum Member.

### **'Management Committee'**

Shall be selected from Representatives of Forum Members or co-opted from areas of special expertise, except for one member who shall be nominated by Help the Hospices.

There shall be no more than 10 members of the Management Committee, but of these there should be a minimum of 6 Representatives of Forum Members, so that up to 3 members of the Management Committee may be co-opted.

At any one time there can be no more than one representative from a national organization on the Management Committee

### **'Honorary Officer'**

The Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and such other officers of the Forum as appointed by the Management Committee.

### **'Help the Hospices'**

Charity no. 1014851 whose registered office is as Hospice House, 34-44 Britannia Street, London WC1X 9JG.

### 3. Objects

The Forum is the national umbrella and representative body for Hospice at Home in the United Kingdom. It is established within Help the Hospices in pursuance of the charitable objectives of Help the Hospices for the benefit of Forum Members and the public by promoting the development, extension and improvement of the Services.

Forum Members will work in partnership through the Forum to:

- Share information and expertise.
- Promote and encourage the evidence base upon which world class Hospice at Home services are built.
- Develop and publish guidance on all aspects of Hospice at Home.
- Collaborate in joint action relevant to the objects of the Forum.
- Communicate on Hospice at Home issues with The National Council for Palliative Care, the NHS End of Life Care Team, the Departments of Health and other statutory, regulatory and voluntary bodies throughout the U.K.

In furtherance of these objects, and recognising the independence and autonomy of individual Forum members which are individual hospices, the Forum may:

- By prior agreement with Help the Hospices, accept gifts and raise money in furtherance of such objects on such terms (and on such security) as may be thought fit providing that in raising funds the Management Committee shall comply with any relevant requirements of the law and the constitution of Help the Hospices.
- By prior agreement with Help the Hospices, procure contributions to the Forum by personal or written appeals or by subscription or otherwise.
- Establish and promote a forum for discussion and education between Forum Members.
- Publish and otherwise disseminate to Forum Members and to others information concerning Hospice at Home.
- Do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the attainment of the foregoing.

But in exercising the powers set out above in furtherance of its objectives, the Forum recognizes:

- That it must at all times act in a manner consistent with its establishment within Help the Hospices and is subject to the governance of Help the Hospices
- That its use of names, logos and other Intellectual Property which is owned by Help the Hospices must be subject to prior approval of Help the Hospices and is at the absolute discretion of Help the Hospices, and
- Where the Forum undertakes fundraising activities and/or has raised or received any funds (from any source) and/or wishes to use or apply any such funds, and/or intends to acquire, dispose of or deal in any way with any assets, it may only do so with the prior approval of Help the Hospices and in accordance with Help the Hospices' financial procedures, policies, controls and systems and that ultimate governance and control over the use of such funds lies with the Board of Trustees of Help the Hospices
- In commissioning any work, project or undertaking from, or collaborating for any purpose with, third parties it may only do so with the prior approval of Help the Hospices and in accordance with Help the Hospices' procedures and policies and ultimate governance and control over such activity lies with Help the Hospices

The role of the Management Committee is to co-ordinate the activities in relation to achievement of the Forum's objectives.

## **4. Membership**

Membership shall be open to any organisation satisfying the definition of 'Forum Member' set out in 2 above, and any determination as to eligibility of an organisation in accordance with this definition shall be made by the Forum's Management Committee. No change may be made to the status or definition of 'Forum Member' without the prior approval of the Board of Trustees of Help the Hospices.

Ongoing membership is dependent on payment of the annual subscription which is due on joining or within 3 months of the renewal notice being sent out.

Each Forum Member shall nominate one Representative to represent it at the Forum and may also nominate a Substitute, for occasions where the original Representative might be unable to represent the Forum Member. The names of both Representative and Substitute will be notified in writing to the Management Committee and may only be changed upon receipt by the Management Committee of written notice of the change from the Forum Member.

The Management Committee shall have the right:

- To approve or reject applications for membership.
- Terminate the membership of any Forum Member provided that the Forum Membership concerned shall have the right to be heard by or make representation to the Management Committee before a final decision is taken.

## **5. Management Committee and Honorary Officers**

At the meeting adopting this Constitution and thereafter at each Annual General Meeting (unless there shall be less than six months between such Annual or other Extra General Meetings) there shall be elected (in accordance with Clause 2) new members of the Management Committee to replace those who have stood down or retired. Retirement shall take place at the conclusion of the relevant Annual General Meeting.

Each member of the Management Committee shall serve for a term of three years upon completion of which they may stand for re-election, subject to ratification by the AGM for a further term.

Honorary Officers will be appointed on a three yearly basis by the Management Committee from its membership.

Retiring Honorary Officers shall hold office until the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting.

Any member of the Management Committee and any Honorary Officer who is for any reason unable to continue as a Representative shall resign forthwith as a member of the Management Committee and from any office held.

The Management Committee shall have the power to co-opt, to a maximum of 3 but so that there are no more co-opted Management Committee members than are needed to ensure the Management Committee has its minimum membership of 10. Co-options shall continue until the next AGM, when in the case of necessity (to be reviewed at that and any subsequent GM) a further period of co-option may be effected.

## **6. Meetings and appointment of sub-committees**

Not less than one General Meeting (which may be the Annual General Meeting) for all Forum Members shall be held in each calendar year. At least 21 days notice of General Meetings including the agenda shall be given in writing to all Forum Members by the Secretary.

An Annual General Meeting will be held every year the business of which shall include:

- Election of the new members to replace retiring members of the Management Committee and Honorary Officers, including the review of co-options (see clause 5 above)
- The Chairman's report on the activities of the Forum during the preceding year.
- Presentation of the annual accounts of the Forum which have been drawn up in accordance with Clause 9 below.
- Any other matters properly required to be included on the Agenda by Forum Members (see 7 below).

The Chairman of the Management Committee may at any time at his/her discretion, and the Secretary shall within 21 days of receiving a written request to do so signed by not less than half of then current number of Forum Members and giving reasons for the request, call a General Meeting of the Forum giving 21 clear days notice in writing to each Forum Member, and such notice will identify clearly the purpose of the General Meeting

Meetings of the Management Committee shall be held not less than 3 times in each calendar year. Provided that all participants may communicate simultaneously with all other participants, Management Committee Meetings may be held by telephone or video conference or such other means as the Executive Committee may decide.

The Management Committee may appoint such special or standing committees as it may from time to time deem necessary, and shall determine their terms of reference, powers, duration and composition. All acts and proceedings of such committee meetings shall be reported back to the Management Committee meeting immediately following. A copy of all minutes shall be forwarded to Help the Hospices.

## **7. Nominations and proposal of resolutions**

Nominations for the Management Committee and Honorary Officers, and proposed resolutions for any matter to be considered at the Annual General Meeting, shall be made in writing addressed to the Secretary to the address given on the notice of Annual General Meeting for this purpose so as to arrive at least 14 days before the date of such meeting and shall be signed by a Proposer and Secunder each of whom must be a Representative or a member of the Management Committee. Special provisions apply in relation to the matters dealt with in 11 & 12 below.

Nominations and proposed resolutions must then be notified in writing to Forum Members not less than 7 days before the Annual General Meeting.

## **8. Proceedings at Meetings**

### **QUORUM:**

Unless and until so determined at a General Meeting at which due notice of the proposal has been given, the quorum at a General Meeting shall be not less than one third of Forum Members and at a Management Committee meeting not less than one third of Committee Members.

## **VOTING:**

At General Meetings each Forum Member shall have one vote to be cast on its behalf by its Representative or in his/her absence by its Substitute. Where provided by the Notice convening any meeting, postal voting shall be permitted. All matters shall be decided by a simple majority (other than matters decided under clause 11 and 12).

If at any General Meeting where a resolution is put to the vote there is an equality of votes, whether on a show of hands or poll, the Chairman of the General Meeting shall be entitled to a casting vote. The Chairman of the General Meeting shall not be entitled to a vote at any other time.

In Management Committee meetings the Chairman of the Forum (or whoever is acting as chairman of that particular Management Committee Meeting) shall have a first vote and in the event of a tie a second casting vote.

## **STANDING ORDERS AND RULES:**

The Forum acting through the Management Committee shall have power to adopt and issue standing orders and/or rules. Such standing orders and/or rules shall come into operation immediately provided that they shall be subject to review at a General Meeting and shall not be inconsistent with the provisions of this Constitution or the constitution of Help the Hospices.

## **9. Finance**

All monies raised by or on behalf of the Forum shall be applied to further the objects of the Forum and for no other purpose but subject always to the ultimate governance and control of the Board of Trustees of Help the Hospices. Nothing herein shall prevent the repayment to members of the Management Committee or other committee properly appointed under Clause 5 hereof of reasonable, documented out-of-pocket expenses subject always to compliance with the financial procedures, policies, controls and systems of Help the Hospices

## **ACCOUNTS:**

Help the Hospices shall ensure that proper accounts are kept of the finances of the Forum. These accounts will formally be part of the Help the Hospices' accounts and audited as such. The accounts will be made available by Help the Hospices as agreed with the Management Committee of the Forum.

## **FINANCIAL ASSETS:**

All financial assets of the Forum shall be held by Help the Hospices on behalf of the Forum as "restricted funds" as defined by the Charity Commission SORP. Requests for payments and current financial information will be processed by Help the Hospices on the signed authority of two designated members of the Management Committee and otherwise subject to Help the Hospices financial procedures, policies, controls and systems.

## **10. Trust Property**

The title to all real or personal property, which may be acquired in furtherance of the objectives of the Forum, will be vested in Help the Hospices provided that the consent of the Board of

Trustees (acting in their absolute discretion but always in accordance with applicable charity law) of Help the Hospices is obtained in advance.

## **11. Amendments to the Constitution**

All proposals for amendment to this constitution shall be submitted to the Secretary clearly in writing at least 21 days prior to an Annual or Extraordinary General meeting at which the proposal is required to be discussed. To become effective, such proposals must be consistent with the constitution of Help the Hospices and be approved by the Board of Trustees of Help the Hospices. It will also require the assent of not less than two thirds of Forum Representatives present and entitled to vote.

## **12. Notices**

Notices and other communications shall be sent:

By a Forum Member to the Secretary of the Forum

To a Forum Member to the Representative for the time being of that Forum Member by the Secretary of the Forum

by first class prepaid post and any letter so sent shall be deemed to have been received within 2 days (excluding Saturday, Sundays and Bank Holidays) of posting. A notice in writing may also be given by electronic mail but only from and to the email addresses which (as the case may be) the Management Committee has identified prior to adopting this form of communication to Forum Members and the Forum Member has identified to the Management Committee prior to accepting this form of communication from the Committee. Email addresses from and to which notices may be served may themselves be changed by service of appropriate prior written notice. Where the Management Committee or a Forum Member has not identified an email address for service of notices in this way then notices must be served by post.

## **13. Dissolution**

If the Management Committee by a two-thirds majority decides at any time and on any ground that it is advisable to dissolve the Forum it shall call a meeting of all Forum Members on not less than 21 days written notice and the notice shall state the terms of the resolution for dissolution to be put to such meeting. Postal and proxy voting may be permitted by the notice calling the meeting. Dissolution of the Forum shall require a decision confirmed by a two-thirds majority of Forum Members.

Help the Hospices may dissolve the Forum immediately if the Forum does anything which brings or is likely to bring the reputation of Help the Hospices into disrepute or otherwise in the proper exercise of its governance responsibilities

The Management Committee may recommend to the Board of Trustees of Help the Hospices that any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to the Forum as the Management Committee may determine. However, the final decision will be made by the Board of Trustees of Help the Hospices.

In the event of the Forum wishing to become independent of Help the Hospices, this will require a two-thirds majority vote of the Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Forum called with 21 days written notice for this purpose.

In this event and subject always to any supervening legal requirements (including, but not limited to any necessary consents required from Help the Hospices and from the Charity Commission) assets of the Forum held by Help the Hospices would be duly deposited in bona fide bank, building society etc. accounts and arrangements for independent management and auditing of accounts would be put in place. The Forum would then take appropriate steps to register as an independent charity.

\*\*\*\*\*