

External Relations Committee, Terms of Reference, October 2003

Overall purpose

The External Relations Committee is responsible for identifying opportunities for the BSR to develop valuable external relationships that will raise the profile of the society and further its work, aims and objectives.

Main responsibilities

- To identify the key issues of importance to the BSR's members of a non-clinical nature that the society should be influencing and lobbying on externally
- To identify opportunities to promote rheumatology and develop a positive external profile for the specialty
- To ensure the society develops appropriate strategies and policies to meet its strategic aims and objectives in respect of external relations activities

Main Duties

- To oversee the work of the society in respect of external relations activities and monitor its performance against agreed targets as laid out in the strategic plan.
- To ensure that external relations activities outlined in the strategic plan remain relevant to the society's membership
- To ensure that the society is effectively represented on key external bodies, organisations, committees and working groups
- To ensure that the committee receives regular reports on the activities of those external bodies, organisations, committees and working groups
- To agree on policy positions for the society on non-clinical matters of importance to the society's membership, and seek ratification from Executive and Council as appropriate
- To receive regular updates and professional advice from the external relations department on policy positions and other work as appropriate.
- To work with the external relations department to identify effective strategies to lobby on behalf of the society on key policy issues
- To take the lead in identifying opportunities to promote rheumatology as an important specialty within the wider medical community, within the health service and within primary care.
- To support and liaise with other committees undertaking this activity to ensure that such opportunities are capitalised upon.
- To identify BSR officers and members who can best represent the BSR and its policies in agreed profile raising activities
- To work in liaison with other BSR committees, external bodies and organisations where appropriate.
- To consider proposals for projects within its remit and to consider appropriate funding for such projects.
- To elect ordinary members of the committee as outlined in the BSR's constitution and co-opt additional members for the purposes of particular projects
- To implement policies or plans agreed by Executive Committee or Council, with due regard to the agreed budget
- To report regularly to Executive Committee and Council, including presentation of minutes for approval
- To safeguard the society's ethos and values and to ensure that the society's activities are in keeping with its aims, objects and resources

Membership of the Committee

The Committee should be composed of:

- a) A Chairperson
- b) A Chair Elect (for 12 months prior to current Chair's term of office ending)
- c) A Vice Chair (selected from the committee by the Chair)
- d) Up to 3 members of the Society Council
- e) A member of the society of the status of Specialist Registrar or equivalent

- f) Three other members
- g) Chairs of any society working groups or sub committees reporting to the committee
- h) Co-opted members from other organisations, bodies or committees

The term of office for the chair and ordinary members of a standing committee is 3 years.

The Committee will co-opt members drawn from other organisations, bodies or committees including:

To be agreed

The Committee will have the power to co-opt additional members as appropriate, including representatives from other BSR standing committees on mutual agreement. The Committee will aim to have an even geographical, scientific or other relevant spread of members as appropriate.

Members of the Committee will represent BSR on the following external organisations, bodies or committees:

To be agreed

Role of the External Relations Department

The External Relations Committee will work closely with the External Relations Department to ensure that actions decided upon by the committee further the work of the department and the delivery of the society's aims, objectives and targets.

- External relations department staff will attend committee meetings to give expert advice on policy and public relations activities and to provide professional guidance and support.
- The external relations department will keep the committee chair up to date with relevant current affairs information and
- Staff from the external relations department are to be kept fully informed by committee members of progress outside of committee meetings.
- It is the department's role to carry out the day to day work in external relations such as producing policy papers, negotiating with the media, writing press releases etc.