



## Terms of Reference: Forums Governance Group

### 1. Name of Committee/Board

Forums Governance Group

### 2. Purpose

- To be the regulatory mechanism for UK forums;
- To ensure that the forums work within the reporting and decision making framework agreed by Council and that the work of forums reflects the strategic objectives and priorities of the RCN;
- To ensure that good governance, financial processes and practices are adhered to by the UK forums;
- To ensure that projects allocated RCN funds are delivered in accordance with the approved brief and to agreed timescales;
- To represent the views of forum members in setting the professional agenda.

### 3. Delegated responsibilities

#### 3.1 The role of the Forums Governance Group is:

- To report to the Professional Nursing Committee (PNC) twice a year and ensure the priorities and concerns of forum members are reflected in the decision-making process of the RCN Professional Nursing Committee;
- To conduct regular reviews of the effectiveness of forums governance and the working arrangements and to make recommendations to the Professional Nursing Committee where arrangements need strengthening or changing;
- To ensure any identified risks in relation to the work of the forums are escalated to the Professional Nursing Committee;

Approved: July 2023

- To recommend to PNC changes to forums, including the development of new forums and proposals to disband forums;
- To monitor and evaluate the performance of individual forums to ensure they are complying with governance and financial stewardship guidance and delivering their annual work plans and make recommendations to the RCN Professional Nursing Committee on any area within its remit where action or improvement is needed;
- To allocate RCN funds to forum projects, provide feedback to forums on their project bids, and to ensure that these projects are managed and delivered in accordance with the agreed brief and timescales.

#### 4. Reporting and accountability

- 4.1 The Forums Governance Group is responsible and accountable to the Professional Nursing Committee.
- 4.2 The Forums Governance Group will work with Forum Chairs and will include this working relationship in reporting to the Professional Nursing Committee.
- 4.3 Formal minutes of meetings will be kept and approved at subsequent meetings of the Forums Governance Group.
- 4.4 Formal minutes of Forums Governance Group meetings and associated papers will be made available to the Professional Nursing Committee on request.
- 4.5 At the request of the Professional Nursing Committee, the Chair of the Forums Governance Group will attend two Professional Nursing Committee meetings a year to deliver an FGG update.
- 4.6 The Forums Governance Group may set up such sub-committees or other groups as it thinks fit to further its work, but these shall be approved by the Professional Nursing Committee.

#### 5. Meetings and quorum

- 5.1 The Forums Governance Group will meet at least 4 times during the year.

Approved: July 2023

5.2 Special ad hoc meetings may also be called if the business of the Forums Governance Group is of such urgency that it cannot wait until the next quarterly meeting.

5.3 The quorum for decision-making is 2 Forum Chairs (which can include the Chair of the Forum Chairs Committee) and 2 other members.

5.4 The rules and procedures in the *RCN Meetings Policy and Process* apply to the Forums Governance Group.

## 6. Membership

6.1 There shall be 8 members of the Forums Governance Group as follows:

- 1 RCN Fellow (elected by RCN Fellows)
- The Chair of the Forum Chairs Committee (ex-officio member)
- 3 Forum Chairs (who will abstain from decisions concerning their own forums) (elected by the Forum Chairs as ex-officio members)
- 1 member of the RCN Professional Nursing Committee (appointed by the Professional Nursing Committee as an ex-officio member)
- 1 member of the RCN Nursing Support Workers Committee (appointed by the Nursing Support Workers Committee as an ex-officio member)
- 1 member of the RCN Students Committee (appointed by the Students Committee as an ex-officio member)

## 7. Observers

7.1 Observers may attend meetings at the discretion of the Chair and with the agreement of the Forums Governance Group. Observers can speak and/or participate in the meeting only with the permission of, or at the request of, the Chair.

7.2 Individuals attending in observer status will receive those papers relating to the areas relevant to their observer role.

7.3 Observers will not usually attend private or confidential sessions of the Forums Governance Group.

Approved: July 2023

8. Election to the Forums Governance Group

8.1 Elections to the Group will be conducted in accordance with the *RCN's Elections and Appointments* policies and with the specific procedure for each election.

9. Terms of office

9.1 The term of office for the RCN Fellow on the Forums Governance Group shall be four years and that member shall be eligible for re-election for one further term of office.

9.2 The terms of office of ex-officio members of the Group will follow the individual member's elected term of office for their substantive Committee.

9.3 A member who has served for a total of eight years in any capacity shall be ineligible to stand for re-election to the Group until after a period of two years has elapsed. The *RCN Regulation on Terms of Office* applies in respect of serving more than one term.

9.4 Members of the Forums Governance Group are asked to commit to serving their full term once elected and not stand for another RCN role if that meant they would need to stand down from the Forums Governance Group mid-term.

10. Mid-term (casual) vacancies

10.1 A casual vacancy on the Forums Governance Group shall be filled in accordance with the *RCN's Process for Filling Casual Vacancies*.

11. Chair

11.1 In accordance with Rule 2.2 in the Royal Charter the Forums Governance Group shall have a Chair.

11.2 Meetings will be chaired by the RCN Fellow.

11.3 In the absence of the RCN Fellow, the Professional Nursing Committee member will chair the meeting.

Approved: July 2023

12. Staff support, advice and guidance

12.1 The lead Executive Director will be the UK Director of Nursing who will ensure support and advice to the Forums Governance Group as appropriate.

12.2 Group members and staff will work together positively and constructively, in line with the RCN's Respect Charter, to deliver the purposes of the Group and within the Operating Framework\*\*.

12.3 In the unlikely situation where key professional advice presented by staff is not accepted by the Forums Governance Group the advice and reasons for not accepting the professional advice will be fully documented in the minutes of the meeting. Should the responsible Director conclude this position poses a risk to the organisation and its members, the circumstances will be brought to the attention of the General Secretary and Chief Executive who will assess the seriousness of the position and advise the Chair of Council accordingly. Should a resolved position not be reached the matter will be escalated to Council for a determination on the way forward.

12.4 The Governance Support team will provide secretariat support to the Forums Governance Group.

13. Removal from the Forums Governance Group

13.1 A Forums Governance Group member may be removed before the end of their term of office if they:

- a) have exceeded their powers in a way that is detrimental to the RCN
- b) have failed to discharge their duties
- c) have acted in breach of the RCN's Code of Conduct and/or Respect Charter
- d) have acted in a manner likely to bring the RCN into disrepute
- e) they have failed to attend three consecutive meetings (excluding special ad hoc meetings)
- f) have any active cautions from the NMC, or other regulator, against their name, are currently subject to any NMC, or other regulator's, sanction, and/or they are subject to any ongoing disciplinary proceedings with any of their employers or professional disciplinary proceedings before the NMC or another regulator.
- g) are subject to ongoing disciplinary proceedings in respect of any role they hold at the RCN and/or currently subject to any RCN disciplinary sanction.

Approved: July 2023

13.2 The processes for such removal will be in accordance with the Member Resolution Policy.

Last revised: April 2023

Approved by Professional Nursing Committee: July 2023

The template for these terms of reference will be reviewed annually and was approved by the RCN Council on 27 July 2022 and amended in September 2022

They should be read in conjunction with the *Operating Framework for RCN Committees*\*\* and other documents referred to above.

*Note – these terms of reference are subject to ongoing change in line with the implementation of the recommendations of the Council-led governance review (2022). \*Scheme of delegation under revision. \*\* Operating Framework for Committees in development [July 2022]*

Terms of reference reviewed and agreed by the Forums Governance Group April 2023