ABN Advisory Groups – SOP

Advisory Groups are formed in key neurological areas comprising ABN members. They are appointed by and accountable to council. Their primary role is to support the ABN in the preparation of informed and balanced responses to consultations affecting the practice of neurology.

1) There are currently eleven groups representing the main sub specialties
   a) Cognitive disorders
   b) Epilepsy
   c) Headache and Pain
   d) Movement disorders
   e) MS & neuroinflammation
   f) Neurogenetics
   g) Neuromuscular disorders
   h) Neuro-oncology
   i) Neurorehabilitation*
   j) Stroke
   k) Traumatic Brain Injury

2) Cross cutting sub specialties, eg Neurogenetics, Neurorehabilitation, Neurodegeneration, Neuroinflammation, affect a number of advisory groups.
   a) Within each group, 2-3 members as appropriate should be identified as representing the relevant cross cutting sub specialties.
   b) They will bring their expertise to the main sub specialty group consultations and activities but will also form a separate group for broader consultations affecting the cross cutting sub specialty.

3) Structure of groups: each group should have
   a) Up to 12 members.
      i) These are typically ordinary members of the ABN but 1-2 associate members per group may be considered.
      ii) Actual number of members should be influenced by the number of people active in that area and the volume of expected consultations. Some groups may need only 4-5 members, others the maximum 12.
   b) One chair
   c) One deputy chair
   d) Media representative
   e) Nominated lead for guidelines
   f) Related specialist e.g. BPNA, BASP. To be nominated by advisory group chair, ratified by the Hon. Sec and to provide comments on relevant topics as appropriate.

4) Appointment of chairs and committee members
   a) The tenure of each Chair and Advisory Group member is three years renewable for a maximum of two further terms of three years. No individual can be a committee member for more than six years or chair for more than six years.
      i) Where members retire or resign before 3 years the standard process detailed below will be followed to appoint new member. However the new member will serve only until the end of original tenure date after which they will be eligible to stand again.
   b) Members will be invited to nominate themselves for consideration as chair or members of a specific advisory group
c) Nominees will be asked to submit a CV plus a short (300 word max) statement summarising their interest in the sub specialty and the particular skills and experience they would bring to the group.

d) The Honorary Secretary will review applications and recommend suitable chairs to the Council for approval.

e) The Honorary Secretary will then work with the individual chairs to select and recommend individual members for approval by council.

f) Once the advisory group members are in place, the chair will work with members to agree individual responsibilities within the group – including deputy chair, media representative, guidelines representative.

5) Management of consultations: all consultations are managed via the ABN office.

a) All members will be asked to provide a list of any possible conflicts of interest on appointment and at the start of each consultation.

b) Once consultations are received they are forwarded by the ABN office to the Chair of the relevant advisory group and copied to the members of that group as well as to the Honorary Secretary.

c) Responses must always be sent via the Advisory Group chair initially and then the ABN office. Comments must be kept within the Advisory Group - members should not respond directly to the consulting body or other external body.

d) A deadline for responses will be given to allow time for discussion and ratification by council if required.

i) Members will typically be asked to send responses via the chair 9 days in advance of the formal deadline

ii) Chairs will collate comments before returning to the Honorary Secretary, c/o the ABN office, typically 7 days in advance of the formal deadline.

iii) Should chairs be uncertain of meeting this deadline, it is their responsibility either to appoint a deputy to take responsibility in their place or to advise the office in good time of any issues so that alternative actions may be taken.

e) The Honorary secretary will review and confirm the response on behalf of the ABN Council before authorising for submission by the ABN office.

f) The ABN office will circulate a copy of final comments to the advisory group members. Comments will also be included in weekly Executive committee papers.

6) External roles

a) Practical Neurology editorial board: Advisory group chairs are automatically members of the Practical Neurology editorial board. As such they are expected to participate in reviewing papers submitted for publication within an agreed timescale.

b) EAN Scientific committee: Additionally, some groups will provide a representative to the appropriate EAN Scientific committee. These roles are offered and accepted on a case by case basis.