

POLICY STATEMENT

Wonca International Classification Committee (WICC)

December 2007

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WICC POLICY STATEMENT

(November 2006)

1. DEFINITION

The Wonca International Classification Committee (WICC) is a Working Party of the World Organisation of Family Doctors (Wonca).

2. LANGUAGE OF WORK

The working language of WICC shall be English.

3. GOVERNANCE

The affairs of WICC shall be governed in accordance with this Policy Statement. Matters not mentioned in this Policy Statement shall be referred to the Wonca Bylaws and their accompanying Regulations of Council. If disagreement appears between WICC Policy Statement and the Wonca Regulations and Bylaws the latter shall be applied.

4. ETHICAL PRINCIPLES GOVERNING WICC

WICC and its members (in respect to their WICC related activities) will at all times adhere to the Declaration of Helsinki.

5. OBJECTIVES of WICC

The objectives of WICC shall align with the Wonca Mission statement provided below:

*‘The mission of **Wonca** is to improve the quality of life of the peoples of the world through defining and promoting its values, and by fostering and maintaining high standards of care in general practice/family medicine by promoting personal, comprehensive and continuing care for the individual in the context of the family and the community, encouraging and supporting the development of academic organizations of general practitioners/family physicians, providing a forum for exchange of knowledge and information between member organizations of general practitioners/family physicians, and representing the educational, research and service provision activities of general practitioners/family physicians before other world organizations and forums concerned with health and medical care’.*

The objectives of WICC shall be:

- To develop, update and distribute tools which support clinical practice and enable international communication about the work with patients in general/family practice and primary care.
- To develop and promote appropriate classifications, definitions and other tools needed for general practice/family medicine and primary care, and to advocate for the use of such classification tools and definitions.
- To represent the interests of general practitioners/family doctors in establishing and maintaining international classification standards in primary care.
- To maintain and/or harmonize relationships between classifications and terminologies used in general/family practice.

6. STRUCTURE

WICC shall be made up of Full and Associate members (see 7.1). It shall be led by a Chair appointed by Wonca Council who shall be assisted by a Deputy Chair.

There shall be two standing committees, an Executive Committee responsible for overall guidance of the full Committee and a Nominations Committee responsible for identifying and screening applications from potential new WICC members and for nominating members for the Chair and the two committees.

WICC members shall be organized into several Working Groups in order to achieve defined tasks.

7. MEMBERSHIP

WICC shall be made up of experts in classification systems and other tools for primary care/general practice/family medicine.

7.1 Membership categories

There shall be two levels of membership: Full membership and Associate membership.

7.1.1 Full member

Full members shall be individual members or representatives of National Organizations or a group of national organizations which are representative of general practitioners/family doctors. Full members shall have the right to vote, forward and second proposals for voting, and claim financial support when made available by WICC. The number of Full members shall be not more than is reasonably necessary to achieve the allotted task of WICC. Only under exceptional circumstances should there be more than two Full members from any one country¹.

7.1.2 Associate member

Associate members shall be individual members who participate in WICC affairs but who either:

- do not seek Full membership, *or*
- are waiting to be awarded/apply for Full membership *or*
- do not fulfil the requirements for Full membership.

7.2 Becoming a member of WICC

Persons accepted as members of WICC must be a member of a Wonca Member Organisation AND/OR an individual Direct Member of Wonca.

Applicants for membership of WICC must apply in writing to the Chair of WICC who shall refer the application to the Nominations Committee for its consideration.

Applicants should include a Curriculum Vitae and a covering letter describing their interest and experience in Wonca or their member organization and may provide evidence (through published papers, presentations and research funding) of their interest and involvement in this field.

¹ All WICC members active at the time of acceptance of this document shall be accepted as full members.

Endorsement of the application by a Member Organisation of Wonca and/or by a current member of WICC shall be regarded favourably.

Applicants must demonstrate they are:

- Knowledgeable about and interested in classifications in primary care that include ICPC and related classifications in the WHO family of classifications.
- Knowledgeable about family practice/general practice/primary care epidemiology, clinical work, research and quality development.
- Willing to contribute to the activities of WICC.

The Nominations Committee shall consider the application and may ask the applicants for further information if required. The matter shall be submitted to all Full members of WICC who shall be free to comment on the applicant's suitability, before a recommendation is forwarded to the Chair by the Nominations Committee within 3 months (13 weeks) of receipt of the application by the Chair. All applicants accepted as new members to WICC shall be "Associate members" for a period of two years, after which time they can apply for Full membership.

The final decision regarding acceptance of a new member shall be made by the Chair after consulting the Executive Committee. Applicants shall be notified of the result of their application within 4 months of submission of their application to the Chair.

7.3 Termination of membership

Membership of WICC shall terminate upon the occurrence of any of the following:

- Resignation.
- Failure to maintain membership requirements in accordance with this Policy Statement.
- Revocation of membership by the Executive.

7.3.1 Revocation of membership

A Full or Associate member of WICC who no longer fulfils the requirements for membership stated in this Policy Document will have their membership status reconsidered by the Executive. The Executive may then recommend that membership be revoked. Such a recommendation shall be presented to the full committee for approval before membership is revoked.

8. THE EXECUTIVE

WICC Executive shall consist of the Chair, the Deputy Chair and three other elected members drawn from the list of Full WICC members.

8.1 The Chair

The Chair must be a Full member of WICC and be a qualified physician. S/he should preferably be a primary care clinician.

8.1.1 Appointment of Chair

The Chair of WICC is appointed by Wonca Council, and shall serve in three-year terms of office corresponding to the three-year Wonca World organizational cycle. The position of Chair can be held for a maximum of three consecutive three year periods. WICC shall forward a nomination for the Chair to the Wonca Executive, who shall present it to Wonca Council for formal appointment to the position.

An election for the Chair shall be conducted at least 3 months prior to each triennial Wonca World meeting, and the nomination of Chair shall be submitted to Wonca Executive at least 6 weeks prior to the triennial Wonca World meeting.

Unless the Wonca Council decides otherwise, at the end of each three year period the appointment shall be automatically extended for a further three years if there are no other Nominees for the position, and/or the incumbent is re-elected to the position.

The Chair shall take up the position at the conclusion of the Wonca Council meeting at which he or she is approved, except in a year where the WICC Annual Meeting falls on a date later than that of the Wonca Council meeting. In that case, the new Chair shall take up the position at the end of the WICC annual meeting.

8.1.2. Vacation of the Chair

When resigning, the Chair shall inform WICC early enough so that the nomination process for a new Chair can be completed in time for the nominee to be formally approved and appointed by Wonca Council at the next meeting held in conjunction with the triennial Wonca world conference.

If for any reason the post of Chair becomes vacant at any time other than the anticipated triennium end date of the appointment, the Deputy Chair shall take on the Chair's responsibilities for a period of up to 6 months, during which time an election shall be held by email/post for a new Chair in line with the methods described for normal election of Chair, for a period equal to the time remaining of the previous Chair's three year appointment. The new Chair shall be recommended to Wonca Executive who shall put forward the recommendation to Wonca Council for formal appointment to the position.

8.1.3 Election of the Chair

Election of the Chair shall be by a preferential secret ballot vote of all Full WICC members (one vote per Member). **Preferential voting:** voters rank each candidate in order of preference. In other words (on the most common kind of ballot paper used) the voter writes a '1' beside their first choice, a '2' beside their second preference, a '3' beside their second preference. Where there are only two candidates for a position, a vote placed for one automatically gives the preference of '2' to the second candidate, and so results in a 'first past the post' result. However, where there is more than two candidates a preferential ballot paper can be redistributed according to the voter's expressed preference in a single voting round. All '1' votes are counted initially, and the candidate with the least first preferences is excluded from the ballot, and the second preference (the '2' votes) from his/her first preference votes, are re-allocated to the other candidates, as specified by the voters. This process continues until there are only two remaining candidates and the candidate with the most votes wins.

Nominations for the Chair may be put forward by any Full member of WICC and must be seconded by another Full member of WICC prior to submission.

Nominations must be submitted in writing to the Returning Officer of the Nominations Committee prior to the final date for nominations set by that Committee.

The Nominations Committee must receive written acceptance by the nominated member that they are willing and able to be nominated, prior to the final date for nominations.

This written acceptance must be accompanied by notification of the name of the nominees deputy chair and by a letter of acceptance by the named Deputy.

The Nominations Committee shall check that all nominated members qualify for the position of Chair, according to the specified requirements for Chair described in this document.

The Nominations Committee shall distribute the list of accepted Nominees for the position of Chair, to all Full Members of WICC and call for votes by a set date not less than one month after notification.

Voting shall be compulsory for all Full members.

Each Full member of WICC shall be entitled to one vote.

All votes shall be sent by mail, email or other written format acceptable to the Nominations Committee, with a clear statement of the identity of the voter. Votes shall be counted by the Returning Officer of the Nominations Committee and cross checked by the Scrutineer of the Nominations Committee.

The successful candidate for the position of Chair shall be the one with the highest number of votes after the distribution of preferences.

The successful candidate shall be announced to all members on WICC web site immediately on completion of the count.

The Nominations Committee shall put forward the recommendation for the appointment of the new Chair to Wonca Executive.

8.2 Deputy Chair

The Deputy Chair shall be selected by the Chair, from the Full members of WICC. His/her name must be put forward as 'running mate' for a nominee to the position of Chair prior to election of the Chair. S/he must also provide written agreement to take up the position if his/her 'running mate' is successful, to the Nominations Committee prior to the election.

S/he will take up the position of Deputy if his/her running mate wins the position of Chair.

8.3 Other Executive Committee members

Three Executive Committee members shall be elected from the roster of Full members of WICC. All Executive Committee members must be Full members of WICC. At least one member shall be elected at WICC Annual Meeting each year.

In the first instance at the time of establishing the Executive Committee, nominations shall be called at the Annual Meeting from the floor.

In the first instance, members shall be elected to a one-year, two-year, or three year term so that subsequently at least one Executive position shall be up for election at every WICC Annual Meeting. The nominated person with the most votes shall be appointed to the Executive Committee for a period of three years. The person with the second highest number of votes shall be appointed to the Executive Committee for a period of two years. The person

with the third highest number of votes shall be appointed to the Executive Committee for a period of one year.

Subsequent nominations for a position on the Executive Committee must be submitted in writing in response to a call from, and prior to the closing date set by, the current Executive Committee. In a year in which there is no WICC Annual Meeting, a nominating deadline shall be set by the Executive Committee on the advice of the Chair.

The Executive Committee members shall be elected through ‘first past the post’ secret written ballot vote of WICC Full members in attendance at WICC Annual Meeting. Each Full member present at the meeting shall have one vote. In a year in which there is no WICC Annual Meeting, a [voting] ballot deadline shall be set by the Executive Committee on the advice of the Chair.

The term of office shall be three years. Newly-elected Executive Committee members shall take up their position at the end of the Annual Meeting at which she or he was elected. In a year in which there is no WICC Annual Meeting, a newly-elected member shall take up the position immediately after the election.

An Executive Committee member can be re-elected once for a total maximum service of 6 years.

If, due to unforeseen circumstance, an Executive member resigns from his/her position during his/her 3 years appointment, a new member shall be elected at the following WICC Annual Meeting for the remainder of the term set for the member leaving the position.

8.4 Complaints against members of the Executive.

Any Full member of WICC may file a written complaint or statement of no confidence against the Chair or any other member of the Executive. The complaint or statement is to be sent to and considered by the Wonca Executive with a copy to WICC Executive at the same time.

9. NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

The Nominations Committee shall consist of three Full members of WICC, who cannot be members of the present Executive or candidates for the next.

9.1 Election of Nominations Committee members.

Three Nominations Committee members shall be elected from the roster of Full members of WICC. At least one member shall be elected at WICC Annual Meeting each year.

In the first instance at the time of establishing the Nominations Committee, nominations shall be called at the Annual Meeting from the floor.

In the first instance, members shall be elected to a one-year, two-year, or 3 year term so that subsequently at least one Nominations Committee position shall be up for election at every WICC Annual Meeting. The nominated person with the most votes shall be appointed to the Nominations Committee for a period of three years. The person with the second highest number of votes shall be appointed to the Executive Committee for a period of two years. The person with the third highest number of votes shall be appointed to the Nominations Committee for a period of one year.

Subsequent nomination of candidates for the Nominations Committee shall occur prior to WICC Annual Meeting or from the floor at WICC Annual Meeting and the term of office of newly elected members shall be three years. In a year in which there is no WICC Annual Meeting, a nominating deadline shall be set by the Executive Committee on the advice of the Chair.

Nominations Committee members shall be elected through secret ballot vote of WICC Full members in attendance at WICC Annual Meeting. . In a year in which there is no WICC Annual Meeting, a [voting] ballot deadline shall be set by the Executive Committee on the advice of the Chair.

Newly-elected Nominations Committee members shall take up their position at the end of the yearly meeting at which she or he was elected. In a year in which there is no WICC Annual Meeting, a newly-elected member shall take up the position immediately after the election.

A Nominations Committee member can be re-elected once for a total maximum service of 6 years. If, due to unforeseen circumstance, a member resigns from his/her position during his/her 3 years appointment, a new member shall be elected at the following WICC Annual Meeting for the remainder of the term set for the member leaving the position.

10. RIGHTS OF MEMBERS

The rights of the members of WICC will be formalised through the type of membership that they have (see 7.1.1). However, all Full members (including the Executive and Office Bearers) and Associate members shall have the right to:

- Freely express opinion about any issue raised pertaining to the work of WICC
- Attend the Annual Meeting of WICC
- Publicly state they are members of WICC

11. DUTIES

11.1 Members

Members (both Full members and Associate members) will be expected to follow the Policy Statement and to promote the objectives of WICC in their own country and internationally.

All members must report in writing to WICC:

- their contribution to/involvement with the work of WICC over the previous 12 months..
- a statement of all earnings (including commercial earnings, travel funding, consultancy earnings etc) and potential conflict of interests that are materially related to WICC and/or its products, and the member, family and business and organisations with which the member is associated.
- a yearly summary of the status of WICC products, and of activities related to WICC's work and products, in their country.

These written reports shall be submitted to the Chair (or his or her delegate) at least three weeks prior to the WICC Annual Meeting. In a year in which there is no WICC Annual Meeting, a reporting deadline shall be set by the Chair.

All members must also:

- attend at least one face-to face meeting of WICC in any two year period, or provide formal explanation for their absence.
- actively contribute to the work of WICC between face to face meetings, through participation in Working Group(s), provision of general comment or debate, or arranged service on behalf of the Chair.
- submit a vote for the position of Chair at the time of such elections, or provide formal explanation for their failure to do so.

11.2 The Chair

The Chair is subject to the Wonca Council and Executive. Tasks and responsibilities for the Chair shall be to:

- manage the institutional and professional work of WICC.
- create a budget for approval by the Wonca Executive.
- manage WICC budget, being the final authority on the budget at all times.
- schedule one yearly WICC full-membership meeting (referred to above as WICC Annual Meeting) and arrange other necessary meetings.
- Chair WICC Executive Committee.
- delegate tasks and responsibilities to the Executive Committee, other WICC members and working groups.
- appoint leaders of the Working Groups.
- coordinate and do strategic planning together with the other Executives.
- report to Wonca Executive.
- participate in recruitment of new members.
- represent WICC in relevant forums and promote the work of WICC.

11.3 Deputy Chair

The Deputy Chair will be a member of the Executive of WICC and shall act as an assistant to the Chair, with specific duties determined by the Chair. He/she may deputise for the Chair when required.

If, due to unforeseen circumstance, the Chair resigns from his/her position during his/her appointment, the Deputy Chair shall act in his/her position until the next election can be held (maximum 6 months).

11.4 The Executive Committee

The duties of the other Executive Committee members shall be those of the Chair delegated by the Chair. Among the other Executive Committee members a treasurer and a secretary shall be appointed by the Chair. Other tasks of the members of the Executive shall be to:

- plan and lead sessions during WICC meetings.
- monitor the progress of Working Groups.
- identify potential new WICC members.
- assist the Chair in management of WICC budget, through provision of advice and discussion.
- assist the Chair in any other duties as requested.
- review and resolve potential conflicts of interest of WICC members involving WICC and its products.

- deal with any member for whom a conflict of interest is known but who fails to put in a conflict of interest report.

11.5 The Nominations Committee

Members of the Nominations Committee cannot be members of the present Executive or candidates for the next.

The Nominations Committee shall actively recruit suitable persons for nomination to all elected positions and will supervise voting for elected positions. During the year of an election of the Chair the Committee the Nominations Committee shall nominate from within its members a Returning Officer and a Scrutineer, who shall be responsible for the conduct of the election.

The Nominations Committee shall also identify and actively recruit applicants for membership of WICC and will screen all applications for membership.

11.5.1 Role in the election of Chair

The Nominations Committee is to work independently and shall be responsible for process of election of the Chair. The Committee shall:

- call for nominations for the Chair from all Full members, at least 6 months prior to each triennial Wonca World Conference, clearly stating the closing date for nominations. In a year in which there is no WICC Annual Meeting, a nominating deadline shall be set by the Nominations Committee on the advice of the Chair.
- ensure that nominated candidates are willing and qualified.
- where necessary actively recruit suitable nominees to the positions of Chair and Deputy Chair.
- require a written statement from candidates agreeing to stand for the position of Chair and written confirmation of agreement to run as Deputy Chair (i.e. ‘running mate’) from the member named by the candidate for the position of Chair.
- forward a list of qualified candidates for the position of Chair, at least one month before WICC Annual Meeting. In a year in which there is no WICC Annual Meeting, the timing of the list and election shall be set by the Nominations Committee on the advice of the Chair.

11.5.2 Role in the election of Executive and Nominations Committee.

The Nominations Committee will be responsible for election of members to the Executive and Nominations Committees. The Committee shall:

- call for nominations for open elected positions from all Full members, at least 6 months prior to WICC Annual Meeting, clearly stating the closing date for nominations. In a year in which there is no WICC Annual Meeting, a nominating deadline shall be set by the Nominations Committee on the advice of the Chair.
- ensure that nominated candidates are willing and qualified.
- actively recruit nominees to positions on the Executive and Nominations Committee.
- require a written statement from candidates agreeing to stand for the position for which they have been nominated.

- at least one month before WICC Annual Meeting, forward a list of qualified candidates for open position(s), based on qualifications and taking into account the need to spread representation (region, gender, type of organisations). In a year in which there is no WICC Annual Meeting, the timing of the list and election shall be set by the Nominations Committee on the advice of the Chair.
- organise and conduct a vote by secret ballot for open positions during WICC Annual Meeting. These positions may include: the Executive Committee member(s), and Nominations Committee member(s). In a year in which there is no WICC Annual Meeting, the timing of the list and election, and the specific voting procedure to be followed shall be set by the Nominations Committee on the advice of the Chair.
- identify potential new WICC members.
- review all new applications for membership and all applications for a move from Associate to Full membership and submit to the Chair with its recommendation.

11.5.3 Other Nomination procedures

If there is only one nomination for a position, then this candidate shall be declared elected.

Nominations must be submitted on WICC nomination form. The nomination must be seconded by another member of WICC. The nominee must provide a signed statement of agreement to stand for the position for which they are nominated.

All nominated candidates can be elected and shall be voted on. The Nomination Committee may call for nominations of candidates at the election meeting if necessary (for example when a candidate withdraws from nomination, or when nobody has been nominated or willing by deadline).

12. MEETINGS

WICC meetings shall be open to Full members and Associate members. Observers welcome with prior approval of the Chair.

12.1 Annual Meeting of WICC

There shall be one face-to-face general meeting of WICC per year. The place and approximate time of a meeting shall be set two years ahead of the meeting date, at the time of WICC Annual Meeting.

The responsibility to organise the Annual Meeting is delegated to a WICC member, most often the member living in the host city or country (the “host”). The host and the Executive form the planning committee, which create a budget, an agenda and a proceeding for the meeting.

Each participating member is in principle responsible for covering his or her own expenses (travel, subsistence and lodging costs) related to meeting attendance. Where agreed by the Executive and at the discretion of the Chair, when WICC funds are available, they may be used to assist members with travel costs to WICC Annual meeting and/or to other meetings at which their presence is requested by the Chair, and for whom travel has not already been funded from other external sources. Any contribution to such travel shall be calculated and distributed relative to the economy class travel costs incurred by member.

The Executive can decide to include invited Associate members for travel reimbursement if this is important in order for them to attend WICC meeting.

12.2 Executive meetings

The Executive shall meet at least quarterly. Meetings shall generally be held by teleconference, but may include (when funds and time permit) a face-to-face meeting on one or more occasions per year.

The Executive shall keep WICC informed of discussion and decisions made at its meetings by distributing minutes through WICC website.

13. WORKING GROUPS

The primary tasks of WICC will require extensive ongoing collaborative work between Annual Meetings. This can best be accomplished through small groups carrying out specific assignments.

WICC shall create a series of specific Working Groups for this purpose. The number of persons appointed to a Working Group shall be not more than reasonably necessary to achieve the allotted task. Each group shall work independently during the year under the supervision of WICC Executive, and shall present its work product for discussion, modification, and approval at the Annual Meeting. In a year in which there is no Annual Meeting or in circumstances when the work must be completed and released before a meeting, WICC Executive shall review and approve the work product.

At any time, a Working Group can circulate its work-in-process or completed work product to the full WICC membership for comment.

Each member can only be on one, or under exceptional circumstances two, Working Groups at any one time.

Each Working Group shall have a leader appointed by the Chair, who:

- will organise the work and report to the Chair.
- is responsible for the progress and delivery of products.
- will publish the work on the web to the other members of WICC.

Working groups may put forward formal recommendations to WICC between Annual Meetings through the general section of WICC.

All members shall be free to enter discussion/debate regarding such a recommendation.

Where disagreement is strong among the members regarding a recommendation made by a Working Group, the Working Group can choose to put the recommendation to a formal vote from all Full members of WICC (see procedures for voting between meetings).

14. REACHING CONSENSUS ON ISSUES

The normal and preferred procedure for reaching consensus on all issues coming before WICC shall be through appropriate and academic discussions at all levels of the organisation. Where disagreement is strong among the members regarding a formal recommendation or decision to be made by WICC, any full member can demand a vote.

14.1 At the Annual Meeting of members of WICC

Motions may be initiated by any WICC Full member, following the principles of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (10th Edition)*.

Voting can be by any one of the following methods, according to the Executive Committee's decision:

- raised hand (preferred).
- written secret ballot.

A motion must be moved by a Full WICC member and seconded by a Full WICC member before it can be voted upon.

A quorum shall be 50% of all Full members of WICC.

Each attending Full member of WICC shall have one vote.

A motion shall be approved if 50% or more of the voting members agree.

14.2 Between annual general meetings

Where it is anticipated that a formal vote shall be required on an issue, working groups, individual Full members or the Executive Committee may put forward a formal motion to WICC between Annual Meetings through the general section of WICC webserver (or through other means agreed as they become available).

All motions put to WICC must be seconded by another Full member of WICC prior to putting forward the motion.

Any between-meeting motion must first be submitted to the Chair who shall judge it to be valid or invalid. If the Chair approves, the sponsor of the motion can submit it. If the Chair does not approve s/he must discuss this with the Executive and the refusal must be agreed by the Executive.

Motions should be reserved for the purpose of reaching a final decision after earlier discussion (i.e. to finish a discussion and come to a formal WICC decision).

Voting shall be by written e-mailed formal vote where one is required in order to come to a final Committee decision.

A period of two weeks shall be allowed after a motion is posted for debate on that motion. At the end of that two week period the motion shall be submitted for e-mailed vote.

All Full members shall have the right to vote within two weeks after the motion is put to the vote. Each full member shall have one vote.

A quorum for making a decision on any motion shall be 50% of all Full members of WICC.

A motion shall be passed if a simple majority of voters approve the motion.

The votes shall be by direct email to WICC web server. The web master shall inform the Chair of the final vote and the Chair shall inform WICC within 2 weeks of the closing date for voting.

Prepared for the Wonca International Classification Committee
by WICC Executives, Chair and Deputy Chair. December 2007