

# **POLICY STATEMENT**

## **Wonca International Classification Committee (WICC)**

# Table of contents

## [Revision history](#)

### [1. Definition](#)

### [2. Language of work](#)

### [3. Governance](#)

### [4. Ethical principles governing WICC](#)

### [5. Goals of WICC](#)

### [6. Structure](#)

### [7. Membership](#)

#### [7.1. Membership Categories](#)

##### [7.1.1. Full member](#)

##### [7.1.2. Associate member](#)

#### [7.2. Becoming a member of WICC](#)

#### [7.3. Termination of membership](#)

#### [7.4. Rights of Members](#)

#### [7.5. Duties of members](#)

### [8. Other participants](#)

#### [8.1. Observers](#)

#### [8.2. Former Members](#)

### [9. The Executive Committee](#)

#### [9.1. The Chair](#)

#### [9.2. Other Executive Committee members](#)

#### [9.3. Deputy Chair](#)

### [10. The Governance Committee](#)

### [11. Elections](#)

#### [11.1. Nominations](#)

##### [11.1.1. Nominations of Chair and Deputy Chair](#)

##### [11.1.2. Nominations of Executive and Governance Committee members](#)

##### [11.1.3. Other nomination procedures](#)

#### [11.2. Elections](#)

##### [11.2.1. Election procedures](#)

##### [11.2.2. Election of the chair and deputy chair](#)

- [11.2.3. Election of the Committees](#)
- [11.3. Appointment of the Chair by Wonca](#)
  - [11.3.1. Vacation of the Chair](#)
- [11.4. Terms of Office](#)
- [12. Meetings](#)
  - [12.1. Annual Meeting of WICC](#)
  - [12.2. Executive meetings](#)
- [13. Working Groups](#)
- [14. Reaching Consensus on Issues](#)
  - [14.1. At the Annual Meeting of members of WICC](#)
  - [14.2. Between annual general meetings](#)
  - [14.3. Revision of this Policy Statement](#)

**REVISION HISTORY**

Version	Date	Editor	Comments
1.0	2006	Planning Committee	
2.0	2015/11	Governance Committee (Daniel Pinto, Diego Schrans, Julie Gordon)	As voted upon, 16/11/2015 Hyderabad.
2.1	2016/04	Governance Committee	

## **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 the WICC Policy Statement and the Wonca Regulations and Bylaws then 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. GOALS OF WICC**

The goals of WICC shall align with the Wonca Mission statement.

The goals of WICC shall be:

- To create and disseminate classification tools as needed to capture and classify the complete domain of family/general practice
- To achieve widespread international use of ICPC
- To maintain and revise ICPC to accommodate expanded health care knowledge
- To develop productive working relationships with other international standards development organizations

## **6. STRUCTURE**

WICC shall be made up of Full and Associate members. A Chair chosen by Full members and appointed by Wonca Council shall lead it. There shall be an Executive Committee and a Governance Committee. WICC members may be organized into Working Groups in order to achieve defined tasks. Former members will be able to participate in WICC activities and discussions in an advisory role.

## **7. MEMBERSHIP**

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

### **7.1. Membership Categories**

There shall be two levels of membership: full member and associate member.

#### **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. Persons accepted as members of WICC should be members of a Wonca Member Organisation AND/OR individual Direct Members of Wonca. Full members shall have the right to vote, forward and second proposals for voting.

#### **7.1.2. Associate member**

Associate members shall be individual members or representatives of National Organizations or a group of national organizations which are representative of general practitioners / family doctors 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**

Applicants for membership of WICC must apply in writing to the Governance Committee for its consideration. Applicants should include a Curriculum Vitae, a conflict of interest statement and a covering letter describing their interest and

experience in the field of classifications and may provide evidence (through published papers, presentations and research funding) of their interest and involvement in this field. 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 two or more of the following:

- Knowledge about and interest in classifications in primary care that include ICPC and related classifications in the WHO family of classifications.
- Knowledge about family practice/general practice/primary care epidemiology, clinical work, research and/or quality development.
- Knowledge about developing electronic health records, managing population databases and a background in information technologies
- Willingness and ability to contribute effectively to the activities of WICC.

The Governance Committee shall consider the application and may ask the applicant 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 the Governance Committee forwards a recommendation to the Chair within three months of receipt of the application. The Chair shall make the final decision regarding acceptance of a new member after consulting the Executive Committee. Applicants shall be notified of the result of their application within four months of submission of their application to the Governance Committee. Membership will become effective at the beginning of the Annual Meeting after notification takes place. If there is no Annual Meeting in a year that notification occurs, membership will take effect immediately upon notification. All applicants accepted as new members to WICC shall be Associate members for a period of two years, after which time they may apply for Full membership. Applications shall be sent to the Governance Committee, who shall make a recommendation to the Executive Committee, based on the applicant's contributions to WICC during their time as an associate member. The Executive Committee will make the final decision.

### **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 section 7.5 Duties of Members
- revocation of membership by the Executive.

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

#### **7.4. Rights of Members**

All Full 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.

All Full members shall have one vote and be given the opportunity to vote in all elections.

#### **7.5. Duties of members**

All 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.

Annually, all Full members and Associate members must report in writing to WICC:

- A statement of potential conflicts of interest that are materially related to WICC and/or its products, including professional associations or businesses in which the member or the member's immediate family have a financial interest.
- The status of WICC products, and of activities related to WICC's work and products, in their country (as a country collective, if there is more than one member per country).

These written reports shall be submitted to the Governance Committee at least three weeks prior to the WICC Annual Meeting. In a year in which there is no WICC Annual Meeting, the Chair shall set a reporting deadline.

All Full Members and Associate Members must also:

- Participate in at least one face-to-face annual meeting of WICC in any three-year period, and
- All Full Members must also vote in elections and on motions put to the full membership.

## **8. OTHER PARTICIPANTS**

### **8.1. Observers**

Non-members may be formally invited through the Chair to attend and participate in the WICC Annual Meeting. They may also participate in related work, as tasked by WICC. These non-members will have the status of Observers during the meeting.

### **8.2. Former Members**

Full Members of WICC may not be able to fulfill the duties of members (in accordance with section 7.5) or wish to leave the Committee, but still be interested in following and making small contributions to WICC's activities. They may be given a special status of Former Member.

To apply for Former Member status, applicants must meet the following conditions:

- To have been a Full or Associate Member of WICC;
- To be willing to maintain some participation in WICC activities (such as participating in online discussions, acting as advisers to current WICC members, or promoting WICC activities in their region or country).

Application to Former Member status must be made in writing to the Governance Committee demonstrating how the applicant has participated in WICC activities. The Governance Committee will then forward a recommendation to approve or refuse the request to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall make the final decision whether to approve or deny the request.

Former Members will need to renew their status five years after being approved by the Executive Committee. Renewal requests should be made to the Governance Committee and will be decided by the Executive Committee. Failure to request the renewal of Former Member status will result in termination of this status.

Former Members will have the right to:

- Freely express opinion about any issue raised pertaining to the work of WICC
- Attend the Annual Meeting of WICC
- Participate in online discussion groups not reserved for current Members



Former Members will not have voting rights.

## **9. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

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

### **9.1. The Chair**

The Chair must be a Full member of WICC and should preferably be a qualified physician, and if possible a primary care clinician. The Chair is appointed by the Wonca Council and Executive, following election by the WICC membership.

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 the 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 the 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.
- Inform applicants of decisions regarding their membership or observer status
- Represent WICC in relevant forums and promote the work of WICC.
- Be responsible for providing quarterly reports on the work of the Executive Committee to WICC members

### **9.2. Other Executive Committee members**

Four additional Executive Committee members shall be elected from the roster of Full members of WICC. The duties of other Executive Committee members shall be those of the Chair, delegated by the Chair. The Executive Committee may appoint a

secretary and a treasurer from among the other Executive Committee members.

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 and help the Chair decide on their admission.
- Assist the Chair in management of WICC budget, through provision of advice and discussion.
- 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.
- Assist the Chair in any other duties as requested.

### **9.3. Deputy Chair**

The Deputy Chair will be a member of the Executive of WICC and shall act as an assistant to the Chair. He/she may deputize for the Chair when required. If, due to unforeseen circumstances, 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).

## **10. THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

The WICC Governance Committee shall consist of three Full members of WICC, who cannot be members of the present Executive. The WICC Governance Committee shall elect a chair from amongst its members. The Governance 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 the Governance Committee shall be responsible for the transparent conduct of the election. The Governance Committee shall also identify and actively recruit applicants for membership of WICC and will screen all applications for membership. The Governance Committee will supervise the requirements of membership and provide an annual report on membership to the WICC Annual Meeting.

## **11. ELECTIONS**

### **11.1. Nominations**

#### **11.1.1. Nominations of Chair and Deputy Chair**

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

The Governance Committee shall:

- Arrange for the election of the Chair every four years.
- Call for nominations for the Chair from all Full members in writing or email, at least three months prior to each WICC Annual Meeting, clearly stating the closing date for nominations.
- Ensure that nominated candidates are willing and qualified.
- Where necessary actively recruit suitable nominees to the position of Chair.
- Require a written statement from nominated candidates agreeing to stand for the position of Chair.
- Circulate a list of qualified nominated candidates for the position of Chair, at least one month before the relevant WICC Annual Meeting with a clear date for the ballot, at the latest on the penultimate morning of the WICC Annual Meeting.
- In a year in which there is no WICC Annual Meeting, a voting ballot deadline shall be set by the Governance Committee, on the advice of the Chair, for no later than 12 months from the last WICC Annual Meeting.

#### **11.1.2. Nominations of Executive and Governance Committee members**

The Governance Committee shall:

- Call for nominations for open elected positions in both Executive and Governance Committees from all Full members in writing or email, at least three months prior to each WICC Annual Meeting, clearly stating the closing date for nominations.
- Ensure that nominated candidates are willing.
- Actively recruit nominees to positions on the Executive and Governance Committee, taking into account the need to spread representation (region, gender, type of organisations).

- 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 willing candidates for open position(s). In a year in which there is no WICC Annual Meeting, the Governance Committee, on the advice of the Chair, shall set the timing of the nominations and election.
- Organise and conduct a vote by secret ballot for open positions during the WICC Annual Meeting, at the latest on the penultimate morning of the WICC Annual Meeting. These positions may include: the Executive Committee member(s), and Governance Committee member(s).

#### **11.1.3. Other nomination procedures**

The nominee must provide a statement of agreement to stand for the position for which he/she is nominated. Another Full member of WICC must second any nomination. All nominated candidates who agree to stand for election can be elected and shall be voted on. The Governance 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 the deadline). If there is only one nomination for a position, then this candidate shall be declared elected.

## **11.2. Elections**

### **11.2.1. Election procedures**

Voting shall be compulsory for all Full members. Each Full member of WICC shall be entitled to one vote. The voting procedure must allow for confidentiality. The Governance Committee shall determine the voting procedure.

### **11.2.2. Election of the chair and deputy chair**

Election of the Chair shall be by a preferential secret ballot vote of all Full WICC members. Members not attending the meeting shall also vote. Preferential voting procedure: voters rank each candidate in order of preference. In other words (on the most common kind of ballot used) the voter writes a '1' beside their first choice, a '2' beside their second preference, a '3' beside their third 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 are more than two candidates a preferential ballot 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. Votes shall be counted by a member of the Governance Committee and cross checked by a different member of the Governance 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 WICC members immediately on completion of the count and take his/her position at the end of the meeting.

The deputy chair shall be elected by the members of the executive committee among them. In this election every member of the executive committee and the chair each have one vote. The simple majority decides. If there is no simple majority on the first round of voting, a second round of voting takes place between the two candidates who received the most votes during the first voting round.

Any member of the executive may ask for a new vote at any time to elect a deputy chair. An election must take place when a new Chair is elected, or the current deputy chair end his/her term on the Executive Committee or retires.

### **11.2.3. Election of the Committees**

The Executive and Governance Committee members shall be elected through 'first past the post' secret written ballot vote of WICC Full members. Newly elected Executive and Governance Committee members shall take up their position at the end of the yearly meeting at which they were 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. If, due to unforeseen circumstance, an Executive or Governance Committee member resigns from his/her position during his/her term, a new election shall be organized as soon as possible by the Governance Committee.

The new elected member shall serve a full term.

### **11.3. Appointment of the Chair by Wonca**

Wonca Council appoints the Chair of WICC. WICC Executive shall forward a nomination / recommendation for the Chair to the Wonca Executive, three months before the Wonca Council Meeting, who shall present it to Wonca Council in a year when there is a World Conference for formal appointment to the position. In a year in which there is no Wonca Council Meeting, the recommendation shall be forwarded to the Wonca Executive for formal approval and appointment by Wonca Executive.

#### **11.3.1. Vacation of the Chair**

If for any reason the post of Chair becomes vacant at any time other than the anticipated four-year period end date of the appointment, the Deputy Chair shall take on the Chair's responsibilities for a period of up to six months, during which time an election shall be held 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 term. The new Chair shall be recommended to Wonca Executive who shall put forward the recommendation to Wonca Council for formal appointment to the position.

### **11.4. Terms of Office**

The period of WICC office-bearers terms of office shall be for four years. All office-bearers can be elected for a total maximum consecutive service of two full terms.

## **12. MEETINGS**

WICC meetings shall be open to all members. Observers are 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 the WICC Annual Meeting. Where feasible, WICC will schedule its Annual Meeting to coincide with a Wonca conference. The responsibility to organize 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, when WICC funds are available, they may be used to assist members with travel costs to the 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 the member. The Executive can decide to include invited Associate members for travel reimbursement if this is important in order for them to attend the 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 at least quarterly.

## **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 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 the Executive Committee for discussion and wider consultation.

#### **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 (11<sup>th</sup> Edition)*<sup>1</sup>.

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

- Raised hand (preferred).
- Written secret ballot.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.robertsrules.com](http://www.robertsrules.com)



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.

All motions put to WICC must be seconded by another Full Member of WICC, prior to the motion being put to the vote. 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 Executive must agree with the refusal.

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 confidential 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 online voting. 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 Executive shall arrange for a suitable online voting system and inform WICC of the result within two weeks of the closing date for voting.

#### **14.3. Revision of this Policy Statement**

The Governance Committee will review the content of this policy statement in full at

least once every eight years, from the most recent update (as listed in the revision history).

Any proposals for revisions outside this periodic update need to be tabled to the Governance Committee as clear and specific motions, proposed and seconded. This must be submitted with sufficient time before the planned voting date to allow for debate. The proposal shall be tabled for discussion through the WICC online group with specific recommendations and alternatives for each contention. A final proposal shall be developed by the Governance Committee and submitted to WICC one month before the planned voting date. Each full member shall have one vote. A quorum for making a decision on any revision shall be two-thirds of all Full members of WICC.