

## **The Scottish Workforce & Staff Governance Committee and Secretariat: Role, Remit and Procedures**

1. The Scottish Workforce & Staff Governance Committee (SWAG) will support the development of the workforce strategy and support the Scottish Government Health and Social Care Directorates in the development and implementation of employment policy and practice for NHSScotland.

2. The Scottish Workforce & Staff Governance Secretariat (SWAG Secretariat) is a working sub-group of SWAG. The Secretariat will support SWAG by providing a co-ordinating role to drive delivery forward on the development and implementation of employment policy and practice for NHSScotland.

### **Remit**

3. Specifically SWAG will be responsible for:

- ensuring that NHSScotland acts as an exemplary employer by developing and endorsing best employment policy and practice and monitoring its implementation;
- ensuring that NHSScotland-wide agreements on workforce issues are used across all NHSScotland employers whenever consistency is appropriate;
- developing frameworks and advice to inform the workforce strategy;
- acting as guardians of the Staff Governance Standard and maintaining close links with local Staff Governance Committees and Area Partnership Forums;
- promoting equality and the elimination of discriminatory practices in employment and enabling compliance with equalities legislation;
- helping implement the agenda of the SGHD Health Workforce;
- SWAG will act as an arbiter in the interpretation of National NHSScotland Workforce policy.

4. Specifically SWAG Secretariat will:

- consider issues, provide advice and develop policy as directed by SWAG;
- set SWAG Committee and Secretariat agendas and call meetings with due regard to guidance from the SPF Secretariat; and
- ensure the agenda and any supporting papers are circulated a minimum of seven days before each meeting.

## **Guiding Principles**

5. The SWAG Committee and Secretariat will at all times demonstrate the guiding principles underpinning partnership in NHSScotland. These are based on the core values of team working, openness and honesty, mutual respect and recognition of individual contribution.

6. These guiding principles will be used to measure the actions and decision making of any associated bodies. The following words expressing values provide further definition of the guiding principles: Inclusive; Involvement; Participation; Credibility; Transparency; Trust; Accountability; Equality; Commitment; Challenging; Best use of resources; Connectivity; and Quality.

## **Behavioural standards**

7. The SWAG Committee and Secretariat should be seen as places where effective meetings are conducted in an atmosphere of respect even when individuals are in disagreement over a specific issue. The following guidelines provide ground rules to support this environment:

- wherever possible keep the language simple and avoid acronyms. If you do not fully understand ensure that you obtain clarity and understanding before agreeing or disagreeing;
- respect other members of the committee and secretariat as individuals with equal rights. When disagreeing or exploring an idea discuss the matter in hand without taking issue with or attacking the individual making the point;
- recognise and respect the responsibilities that individuals have as representatives of their organisations;
- maintain confidentiality within the groups or any agreed parameters. If an issue is potentially sensitive agree how it will be communicated external to the forum and maintain this level of confidentiality. During the meetings individuals have the right to express opinions without being quoted to others external to the groups;
- Strive for consensus as far as possible. Sharing of information should be encouraged, sufficient time should be allowed for discussion, creativity and difference should be celebrated and participants should avoid taking a stance on issues; and
- it is acceptable to disagree. If consensus is not reached but a recommendation still has to be made then the disagreeing parties and their reasons need to be clearly noted.

## **Membership**

8. The SWAG will comprise a total of 38 participants taken from the three constituent parties – NHSScotland Employers, Trade Unions and Professional Organisations, and Scottish Government. 14 places for NHSScotland Employers; 19 places for the trade unions and professional organisations (to include the chair of the Employee Directors Group); and 5 places for Scottish Government Health and Social Care Directorate

9. The SWAG Secretariat will comprise the SWAG Co-chairs (3) and Joint Secretaries (6) plus an advisor from NHS Education for Scotland and an advisor on Regulatory matters.

10. The constituent parties are responsible for agreeing: the nominations to the SWAG; and the SWAG Co-chairs and Joint Secretaries. In so doing they must ensure that participants reflect the diverse nature of the organisation.

### **Relationship with Scottish Partnership Forum Secretariat**

11. The SWAG will be served by the Scottish Partnership Forum Secretariat which will manage and facilitate the business of the Scottish Partnership Forum (SPF), SWAG and the Scottish Terms and Conditions Committee.

12. The relationship between SWAG and other partnership forums is set out at Annex A.

### **Conduct of SWAG Committee and Secretariat Meetings and Business**

14. The SWAG Committee and Secretariat will be managed on a shared, rotational, Chair basis by the designated SWAG Co-chairs.

15. The SWAG Co-Chairs and Joint Secretaries will be responsible for:

- managing the day today business of the SWAG Secretariat;
- agreeing with SWAG an appropriate level of delegate authority to allow the Secretariat to make routine decisions on behalf of SWAG;
- agreeing when SWAG Secretariat should consider urgent issues on behalf of SWAG, where possible consulting with members before making decisions.
- conducting business and maintaining proper conduct and record of meetings;
- conducting business by means of virtual communications. The outcome of such business shall be reported at the following meeting for formal recording.
- ensuring that individual members uphold the partnership principles and the co-operative spirit of the SWAG Secretariat; and
- calling extra meetings over and above the agreed schedule if extraordinary circumstances dictate.

16. Administrative support will be provided by the Health Workforce Directorate.

### **Quorum and Attendance at Meetings**

17. There will normally be three meetings of SWAG per year. The meeting will be quorate when 33% of membership from each of the constituent groups. For SWAG Committee we require 4 Employers, 7 Staff Side and 2 Scottish Government representatives to be quorate. If all the attendees noted above attend, then the meeting will be quorate.

18. There will normally be six meetings of SWAG Secretariat per year. The meetings will be quorate when there is one representative from each of NHSScotland employers, the trade unions and professional organisations, and SG Health Directorates.

19. Members are expected to attend all meetings. In exceptional circumstances, if a member is unable to attend a meeting, then the representative body can designate a replacement representative with prior notification to the SWAG or SWAG Secretariat Co-Chairs as appropriate.

20. Meetings will be held through a combination of virtual, in person, or hybrid working practices, determined by the preferences of the SWAG committee/co-chairs.

21. All travelling and accommodation expenses relating to the agreed annual schedule of meetings are to be met by the member organisations. All travelling and accommodation expenses incurred by attendance at extra meetings, site visits or other activity will be met by SGHD.

### **Minutes and Record-Keeping**

22. A formal record of each meeting will be agreed by the SWAG Committee and Secretariat as appropriate and kept in a proper manner.

23. The SWAG Committee and Secretariat Co-Chairs will maintain the minutes so that they can be made available for inspection on request.

24. The Scottish Partnership Forum Secretariat will be responsible for joint communications on the business of the SWAG Committee and Secretariat.

### **Review of procedures and constitution**

25. The SWAG Committee and Secretariat will review their respective role, remit and procedures every two years and report formally on the outcome to the SPF

## Annex A : Map of Partnership Governance – NHS Scotland

