



The PECSIG Constitution

(PECSIG: Paediatricians with Expertise in Cardiology Special Interest Group)

The expanding role of PECSIG and increasing membership necessitates a revision of the existing constitution which was developed by the executive committee soon after the group formed in RCPCH annual meeting in Spring 2007. The revised constitution was discussed at the General Body Meeting at Oxford on 12th October 2012, and approved with amendments, by a majority vote. Further amendments were suggested to the constitution as per discussion in executive committee telephone conference in February 2016 and approved with majority support in General Body Meeting at Liverpool on 26th April 2016.

Article 1 – Title

The Paediatrician with Expertise in Cardiology Special Interest Group (PECSIG). This includes Paediatricians and Neonatologists who are involved in the care of neonates, infants, children and adolescents with cardiac problems or suspected cardiac problems.

Article 2 - Nature

This is a subspecialty group affiliated to the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, and will work in close association with British Congenital Cardiac Association (BCCA) which in turn is affiliated to the British Cardiovascular Society (BCS).

Article 3 – Aims

1. To improve the care of children with any cardiological condition and those suspected to have any such condition, and their family.
2. To encourage the development and implementation of managed clinical networks in paediatric cardiology, in collaboration with the Safe and Sustainable re-organisation of paediatric cardiology and cardiac surgical services
3. To enhance the training and working practices of all paediatricians working with children with heart conditions and their families.
4. To encourage greater collaboration with other disciplines, agencies and professions involved in the care of children with heart conditions, such as the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH), British Congenital Cardiac Association (BCCA), British Association for Perinatal Medicine (BAPM), Royal College of Physicians through their Specialty Advisory Committee (RPSAC), and NICHe (Neonatologists with Interest in Cardiology and Haemodynamics).

Article 4 – Membership

Membership is open to any paediatrician or neonatologist, whether in training or an established professional, who is involved in the care of children with cardiological conditions. Allied health professionals like cardiac ultrasonographers, specialist nurses and representatives from parents groups can be invited to attend our meetings and contribute to discussions, although they are not formal members.

Membership application has to be made on line through the PECSIG website, and once approved will come into effect after the doctor sets up a standing order for yearly subscriptions. Existing members will be requested to re-register through the update website link so as to enable full access to the recently created member-only pages.

A member can cease to be a member at any time by a formal letter of resignation addressed to the Chair. A member who fails to make payment of the annual subscription loses the right to stand for election or vote in any election to the post of an office bearer.

Article 5 – Subscription

The annual subscription and the due date shall be fixed by the executive committee. The current membership fee is £25 per year and shall be payable on 6th April each year.

As an ongoing working relationship with the NICHe group, a clinician who is member of NICHe group will have discounted membership of PECSIG and vice versa (currently discounted to £15).

Failure to pay within one year of the due date shall be considered equivalent to resignation of membership. Any change in subscription charges must be approved at one of the general body meetings.

Article 6 – Executive Committee

The executive committee will have at least fifteen members: Chair, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, Academic/Educational Convenor, Publication Officer, Overseas Representative, BCCA/RPCSAC Representative, Trainee representatives (at least two) and other Committee Members. Attempt will be made to make sure we have at least one neonatal member in this committee. NICHe would have one nominated member in the executive committee, and this will be reciprocated by NICHe who will have one PECSIG member on their Board.

The officers and other committee members will be elected by subscribing members either in the general body meeting or by mail (electronic/postal) as per the decision of executive committee as and when the vacancy arises. The BCCA/RPCSAC representative will be nominated by the BCCA, and the NICHe member by the Chair of NICHe.

The Executive committee may allocate specific roles to its members or to co-opted members (with established experience and expertise in such role) from the general body. The results of activity undertaken by co-opted members/sub-committees shall be submitted to the Chair for official records. Such documents will be the copy right of the

PECSIG, and the Executive committee has the sole discretion of editing/updating these documents as necessary from time to time.

The term of election of the officers (chair, secretary, treasurer, and academic convenor) and committee members will be three years. Their term may be continued until the next planned election at the discretion of executive committee. They may be reelected either as an officer or as a committee member, and maximum term of executive committee membership (without a break) shall usually be six years unless a committee member is reelected as one of the officers subsequently. A member is eligible to stand for reelection when three years elapse since he left the office.

A trainee representative once elected will remain in post for up to 6 months after completing their paediatric training, or for their term of three years, if they are still in their training period (including 6 months post CCT). There will be at least two trainee representatives in the committee and preferably they will represent different levels of trainees (ST 3-5 and ST6-8).

A new chair when elected may be considered 'chair elect' for up to 6 months during the hand over process between the existing chair and new chair. The previous chair shall be eligible for ordinary membership on the committee for three years after ceasing to be the chair without reelection. Allowing for 6 months in elect position and for up to 6 months post election of new chair elect, the chair will be able to serve a term of four years as chair, where as their defined term as any other office bearer and executive committee member will be three years (pending election).

The co-opted members will continue in the executive committee or provide reports to the chair of PECSIG executive committee, until they continue in their specified roles or until the end of their term (if they are elected PECSIG executive committee member), whichever is longer. Role of co-opted members will be regularly scrutinised and agreed by the executive committee.

Article 7 – Meetings

The group will conduct two general body meetings a year. These are usually conducted as part of the RCPCH annual meeting in spring and PECSIG annual scientific meeting in autumn. These meetings are for paid members of the PECSIG, and the Chair may invite guests to this meeting to discuss specific matters of national interest. In addition, regular executive committee meetings (Telephonic or Face to face) will be held as per the requirements. The minutes of the general body meetings will be copied to the RCPCH by the honorary secretary, when finalized and approved.

Annual scientific meeting will usually be held in the autumn at a venue agreed by the executive committee in advance. This meeting may be a stand alone meeting or a parallel meeting with BCCA as agreed by the committee. PECSIG executive committee may agree to bear losses incurred in organizing these meetings. However, 50% of any surplus from the meetings will be payable towards PECSIG account.

Any other meeting organized under PECSIG banner will have to be approved by the executive committee and a percentage of the surplus (as agreed by the executive committee) will be payable towards PECSIG account. Information about courses and scientific meetings organized by PECSIG members can be circulated to the PECSIG circulation list or advertised in the PECSIG website free of cost at the discretion of secretary and chair.

Article 8 - Finances

The PECSIG bank account will be held jointly (either or both) in the names of the Treasurer and the Chair. This will enable access to the account for two persons, in order to facilitate activities when one person is away.

The treasurer shall manage the financial affairs of the group. The subscription charges together with the surplus from scientific meetings shall form the basic source of income for the association. The treasurer has the authority to disburse funds for the benefit of the association as appropriate. He/she shall submit a statement of accounts to the general body meeting at least once in a year. The treasurer is responsible for making appropriate arrangements to audit the accounts and seek legal opinion where required on tax liability to the PECSIG. Some of the funds can be used as awards/bursaries towards academic and clinical excellence performance related to the specialty, at the discretion of the executive committee. A separate guideline is available for PECSIG bursary application process. The process to register PECSIG as a charitable Trust will be investigated. The treasurer shall email to the secretary and publication officer a list of the updated members once in 6 months to ensure all paid up members are included in the circulation list.

Article 9 – Amendments

Any proposed amendments in the constitution shall be submitted in writing to the secretary for consideration by the executive committee. The changes will then be presented to the general body, discussed and approved if two-thirds of the members present vote in favour. In some instances, where the general body feels the need for further discussion, the voting on such amendments can be left to the subsequent general body meeting, to allow for further discussion in the intervening period.

Dr Ari Kannivelu
Honorary Secretary, PECSIG