

APPENDIX 2

ERA-EDTA SCIENTIFIC WORKING GROUPS

ERA-EDTA WORKING GROUP (WG)

WG's are expected to encourage research, communication of knowledge, teaching and contribute to education.

Working groups should cover / refer to areas of large interest for nephrology.

They are created for the following reasons:

- a) To improve the outcomes of renal patients and/or to promote and facilitate research in specific fields.
- b) To foster communication among specialists with similar interests, with various other ERA-EDTA WG's and/or Committees;
- c) To collaborate in the organization of educational activities of the ERA-EDTA;
- d) To foster communication with other Scientific Societies, and with other bodies that may support research in the field.

An ERA-EDTA Working Group (WG) must follow the rules outlined in this document.

CREATION OF A WG

The creation of a WG should be approved by the ERA-EDTA Council.

For the creation of a working group, the Council must receive a list of at least 50 ERA-EDTA supporting members and the list of the Board members. Supporting letters of all 50 ERA-EDTA members must be sent together with the list of names.

The "Candidate WG" should present its proposals to the ERA-EDTA Secretary-Treasurer, who must then submit it to the Council for final approval.

There should be a maximum number of ERA-EDTA WGs. The ERA-EDTA Council, according to the financial status of the Society, can decide at any Council meeting - with a majority of 2/3 of the members present - to modify this number. Normally this number should be 5: only in exceptional cases, and for specific topics that are not covered by other existing WGs, a limited number of additional workgroups may be supported. If and when this happens, the Council must provide a statement regarding this exception that will be then recorded in the Minutes of the Council meeting in which this is officially approved.

Official Working Groups will have their own logo, which however must include the official ERA-EDTA logo.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The financial support to individual WG's will be decided by the Council on the basis of the quality of the proposals and on their value, also taking into consideration the scope and the programs of ERA-EDTA. This amount however cannot exceed EUR 25,000 a year.

Normally the ERA-EDTA funds must be used for CME activity and secretariat expenses (EUR 22,000 for CME activity while EUR 3,000 will be used for secretarial expenses). Exceptions are only possible through a specific request, and thus acceptance, by Council (for example for research projects). Any other kind of activity must be funded through other means (= sponsors).

If and when WGs receive support for their initiatives through sponsors, the money should be transferred to ERA-EDTA. ERA-EDTA will then earmark the amount so that it can be used by the WG for its activities (provided that the Council has approved them). ERA-EDTA may keep a small amount of the funds paid for administrative costs (the amount will be decided by the Secretary-Treasurer in collaboration with the President, but it cannot be more than 5% of the total amount). Sponsorship money can be transferred to the immediate future year, if not spent in the year in which it is granted, but not to any subsequent years.

Normally unused budgeted amounts cannot be transferred to a future year, unless they are funds received through an external sponsors. As an exception, and upon specific request to the Chair of the Administrative Offices as well as the Secretary-Treasurer, and subject to Council approval, and finally if requested by May 1st, any left over funds from a specific year can be carried over to the next for well defined initiatives. If however this amount is not used within the immediate future year, it can no longer be used.

COMPOSITION AND TERMS

The Working Group consists of a Chair, a Vice-Chair, board members and ordinary members.

CHAIR

The Working Group is directed by the Chair. The Chair is proposed by the WG Board and nominated by the Council. He/she serves for 3 years and represents the Working Group with the Council. The Chair can be re-elected for another 3-year mandate. After the end of the tenure of office, the past Chair remains a member of the Working Group Board for maximum one other 3 year mandate, after this he/she can become an ordinary member of the Working Group.

During elections/voting held within the Board, in case of an equal number of votes, the Chair has the casting vote.

The Chair, together with the Vice-Chair, is responsible for the scientific and financial output of the Working Group.

VICE-CHAIR

The Chair will propose the name of the Vice-Chair, who should be a Board member, and is elected by the Board. The Vice-Chair will assist the Chair in his/her duties and will also act as the Chair if the Chair cannot be present. Similar to the Chair, the Vice-Chair can be re-elected for another 3-year mandate. After the end of the tenure of office, the past Vice-Chair remains a Board member for maximum one other one 3 year mandate, after this he/she can become an ordinary member of the Working Group.

The Vice-Chair, together with the Chair, is responsible for the scientific and financial output of the Working Group. They are also responsible for the annual reports that must include a working plan and detailed list of costs and budget for future initiatives of the Working Groups; they must make sure that the Working Group follows the regulations outlined in this document and supervise the election procedure of the Board members.

SECRETARIAL ASSISTANCE (Administrative Coordinator)

The ERA-EDTA Headquarters will provide secretarial support to each Working Group. This will include taking care of the ordinary correspondence and assisting the Chair/Vice-Chair with any other kind of correspondence; up-dating the Working Group web-page according to the Chair/Vice-Chair's instructions; assisting with the newsletters of the WG and taking care of sending them; verifying the ERA-EDTA membership of all the WG Board members, when applicable; organizing the Board meetings and informing the Board members accordingly. He/she will also prepare the Minutes of the Board meetings, which must be approved by the Board members and sent to both the ERA-EDTA Secretary-Treasurer and the Chair of the Administrative Offices.

The minutes should also be posted on the ERA-EDTA web-site, in a restricted and dedicated area for the WG, so that all the WG Board members can view them.

He/She must support the Chair and Vice-Chair with regard to assistance in preparing the budgets and the costs for the annual reports; informing both about the regulations and assisting with the election procedure of the Board members.

BOARD

The board is composed by 7 to 10 members including the Chair and Vice-Chair. The Board of WGs must be confirmed by the Council. After the Council's confirmation, the Chair of the WG will receive an official notification from the Chair of the

Administrative Offices; the WG Chair will then inform the single Board Members of their official Council acceptance.

All WG Board members, including the Chair and the Vice-Chair, must be ERA-EDTA Full members, exceptions are possible only for non-nephrologists.

Industry, or industry representatives/employees, cannot be a WG board member - please see below for more details regarding this specific matter:

- 1) Medical scientists - basic science scientists - technicians - engineers - employees - leaders receiving salaries and /or payments done on a regular basis directly by industry and working directly for industry will not be involved, directly or indirectly , in any ERA EDTA WG , will not participate in WGs' meetings, production of papers and/or written recommendations.
- 2) Any person receiving a salary (or part of his/her salary) or a regular payment from a company as a result of the company having purchased the property of the medical center or University where this person works, and who is active as a professional specialist physician or who is directly involved in patients' treatments may participate in the ERA-EDTA WGs. However they will not be involved in the WGs' activities which may be affected or influenced, directly or indirectly, by their personal professional industry dependent work.

If deemed essential for the WG it is possible to have "external consultants" to the Board. A secret vote must be cast by the Board members before this exception can be considered valid. External consultants have no vote within the Board. "External consultants" however cannot be industry representatives or employees.

From the fourth year of the existence of the WG onwards, new Board members will be elected by the current Board members. To be eligible for the Board a member must have been an ordinary member of the WG for at least 2 years (or from its creation) or have a proven track record of relevant scientific expertise that would justify his/her being part of the board; he/she must also be an active ERA-EDTA Full member: exceptions to this last rule can only be made for non-nephrologists. Elections will be held during a WG Board meeting, whether in person or by teleconference.

If a Board member leaves the Board before ending his/her term, the other Board members will elect his/her replacement following the indications written below. The newly elected Board member will then follow the normal term rotation as outlined previously.

Candidates for Board membership must send their application to the WG Vice-Chair, as well as supporting letters from two WG members (ordinary or Board), at least 1 month before the election date. The Administrative Coordinator will be in charge of verifying the eligibility of the candidates and informing the Board members at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting in which the election will take place. A special template must be used to submit the CV of all candidates

(http://www.era-edta.org/councilregulations/Working_Group_Candidate_CV_Template_October2015.doc).

If a person is already a Board member of a current WG, he/she cannot send his/her candidature to become a Board member in another WG, unless his/her term is ending in the prior WG. This rule however is not valid for the creation of the Board of new WGs.

Notice of any Board vacancy must be sent to all WG members, at least two months prior to the election date, by the WG Administrative Coordinator, under the supervision of the Chair/Vice-Chair.

A Board member who does not participate in at least 50% of the annual WG Board meetings, without valid reasons, can be asked to resign from the Board: a vote of the WG Board must however be done for this to become effective.

No member can remain on the Board, including the Chair and the Vice-Chair more than 9 consecutive years. When a Board members ends his/her term, a minimum break of at least 3 years is required before he/she can be re-elected as a Board member.

All WG Board members must fill in the DoI online and keep it regularly up-dated. This is especially important for those WGs in which industry is already very heavily present and/or for which it has a high interest. It is essential that ERA-EDTA's WGs are absolutely independent from industry and, therefore, the Council can, at any time, decide to substitute or change Board members or modify/cancel any other report/activity of the WG if this is in the best interest of the Society.

Keeping in mind the requirements mentioned above, if possible, a balanced geographical representation of the Board members should also be taken into consideration when the members are appointed.

TRANSITIONAL NORM REGARDING THE BOARD

Only for the first elections, in order to make sure that not all the WG Board members leave at the same time, 1/3 of the originally elected Board members must leave after their 4th year; another 1/3 after their 5th year and, the remaining 1/3 after their 6th year of service on the Board (this rule does not apply to the Chair or the Vice-Chair). After this period the normal rotation of the board members will be applied, as described above. Each time Board members leave the Board, newly elected members must replace them. The decision on who should leave the board should preferably be done by the Board members who wish to leave, however, in case of problems, the Board will vote on who will have to leave the Board upon a proposal with a list of names prepared by the Chair.

Only the Chairs of the WGs will receive a diploma (signed by the ERA-EDTA President and ERA-EDTA Secretary-Treasurer) upon ending their term. The diploma will be prepared by the ERA-EDTA Secretary-Treasurer and will be given to the person ending his/her term by the Chair Elect at the first possible face-to-face Board meeting. If this is not possible, the diplomas can also be sent by post (see also Appendix 3 item 14).

THE FUNCTION OF THE WG BOARD MEMBERS AND BOARD MEETINGS:

- To appoint the Chair.
 - To advance proposals for the scientific and educational activities of the WG.
 - The Board tenure is 3 years with the possibility for re-election for additional 3 years.
 - The Board will meet face to face no more than twice a year, while most of interaction will take place by various means of telecommunication. At the annual ERA-EDTA Congress a WG educational activity (symposium, course, workshop, lecture or other) will be included in the Scientific Program. If possible another annual WG meeting focusing on educational themes and on research proposals (Scientific Ideas Fair) will be organized using the WG funds and, if available, also external funding raised by the WG.

If a Board meeting is scheduled to take place during the ERA-EDTA Annual Congress, any ERA-EDTA Council member can participate in this meeting, upon request to the WG Chair, as an observer.

For the rules regarding the reimbursement policy for WG Board Members who participate

in the face-to-face Board meeting organized at the time of the annual ERA-EDTA Congress (if any is organized) one must refer to Appendix 18 of these Regulations. The costs related to these reimbursements will be taken from the ERA-EDTA Congress budget (see also Appendix 3 item 12). If the WG wishes to cover the costs of other guests that are not included in Appendix 18 of these Regulations, this can still be done, but, in this case, the costs will be taken from the budget of the WGs.

Normally each WG that organizes a board meeting during the annual ERA-EDTA Congress will receive: a meeting room for half day for max 20 participants and a coffee break. The meeting rooms will be allocated on a first come, first serve basis: ERA-EDTA cannot therefore guarantee the exact date/time slot requested by the WG. These expenses will be taken from the ERA-EDTA Congress budget (see also Appendix 3 item 13).

WG ORDINARY MEMBERS

Ordinary WG members must be persons with a proven interest in the research area covered by the WG.

Submission for WG membership should be addressed to the Chair of the WG, but will be processed by the Administrative Coordinator (under the supervision of the Chair/Vice-Chair).

After three years a WG Ordinary member will be asked to confirm if he/she still wishes to be part of the WG.

REPORTS AND APPROVAL BY COUNCIL OF WG ACTIVITY

When a new WG is formed, a mission statement and a three years project should be presented. After three years the Council should judge the fulfilment of the three year plan. Opinion from the SAB, external reviewers and the ERA-EDTA CME Committee are possible and may be useful for the final judgment by the Council. The report of the end of the three year WG activity should be presented to Council by the Chair of the WG.

The WG should present an annual report, which includes the CME and scientific activities as well as the accounts, to the ERA EDTA Chair of the Administrative Offices for discussion and approval by the Council at the Fall Council meeting. This report, however, must also be promptly sent to the ERA-EDTA Secretary-Treasurer as the Officer in charge of the Society's expenses. The WG's progress should normally be revised every three years by the ERA EDTA Council. In any case the Council can decide, after the presentation of each annual report, to no longer fund the WG: for this to happen a simple majority vote is required.

Participation by WG representatives in the ERA-EDTA Council will follow the following indication:

- a. Fall Council: Chairs of new WGs must be invited to present their first report;
- b. Any Council: Chairs of new and old WG can be invited only if necessary;
- c. The contact person of all WGs within the Council is the Chair of the Administrative Offices: normally he/she will represent the WGs within the Council;
- d. During the Fall Council the budgets and accounts, as well as the activity report should be presented by the Chair of the Administrative Offices, or, by the Chair of the WG, only if they are new WGs, if the three year WG report must be presented or if there is a specific reason to invite them.

OFFICIAL WG SCIENTIFIC AND EDUCATIONAL OUTPUT

WGs will produce as part of their objectives documents and articles. For certain types of documents, the ones that wish to give an "official view" on behalf of the WG, that is indeed also representing the Society, collaboration with ERBP is essential to obtain a coordinated output of scientific guidance, whilst safeguarding the individual freedom

of opinion of each of the WG, and, at the same time, avoiding that potentially conflicting messages are produced.

Below are some examples of WGs documents and how these should be addressed.

1) *A true "guidance" document/systematic review*

This type of document provides guidance on the management of a certain condition. The guidance is provided in separate statements.

This type of documents should only be produced according to the highest standards of evidence based medicine and guideline production, as described in the following methods paper (Nagler et al, NDT 2013. [European Renal Best Practice \(ERBP\) Guideline development methodology: towards the best possible guidelines.](#))

In practice this implies a close collaboration with and support from the MST (Methods Support Team), and publications of this type should always be reviewed and endorsed by ERBP. The final document should include, in the list of authors, the name(s) of the MST member(s) involved.

2) *A narrative review document*

This type of document contains opinions based on literature data, but without a true systematic literature search being done. For this type of documents, it should be avoided that they create an impression of providing guidance, e.g. by providing separate statements. They should be clearly marked as narrative reviews.

Preferentially, these documents should be reviewed by the MST of ERBP to ensure methodological quality, but this is not a prerequisite as long as the previous points are taken into account.

3) *A document presenting own original research done by the working group*

This type of document describes original scientific content as produced by the collaborative effort of the working group. Although these documents clearly mention the working group and are thus linked to the society, they merely describe facts and observations from scientific research, and thus do not represent an "official viewpoint" of the society. The MST of ERBP can provide methodological advice when requested (for clinical/epidemiological studies), but this is not necessary nor mandatory.

4) *Documents produced by members of the working group, on topics relating to the working group, but as "private" persons (so not referring to the working group)*

This type of documents do not represent an official viewpoint of the ERA-EDTA, and there is thus no role for ERBP. This type of documents are *srictu sensu* no "working group" documents.

Any publication or report of the WG should, preferably, be submitted to one of the ERA-EDTA official journals; furthermore all publications, or scientific/educational events organized by the WG must clearly mention the fact that the WG is indeed a WG

of ERA-EDTA. The sentence approved by Council related to this matter is: *“This article (to be adapted accordingly) was written by (to be adapted accordingly) on behalf of (insert name of the WG) which is an official body of the ERA-EDTA (European Renal Association – European Dialysis and Transplant Association).”*

All WGs can present their work at other national/international meetings, they must however clearly always highlight that they are an ERA-EDTA WG for visibility reasons. If however they wish to be part of an official ERA-EDTA session, held at an event that is NOT organized by ERA-EDTA, then they must send their request directly to the ERA-EDTA Council via the President.

The ERA-EDTA CME Committee will be in charge of evaluating the quality and scientific relevance of the WGs CME Courses. The post-Course evaluation will become part of the documentation requested for the annual report. Only if the CME Course is scheduled to take place after the Fall Council, and thus the CME Committee evaluation cannot be included in the WG’s annual report, will the Council evaluate, and eventually approve, this specific item of the annual report at a later date, possibly via e-mail.

(Last update: Council Meeting Montpellier, France, October 15-18, 2016).