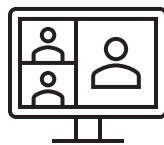




**Wonca**  
eHealth

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WORKING PARTY ON DIGITAL HEALTH



## **POLICY STATEMENT**



**WONCA Working Party on eHealth  
September 2021**

## **1. DEFINITION**

WONCA eHealth is a Working Party of the World Organization of Family Doctors. (WONCA)

## **2. LANGUAGE OF WORK**

The working language of WONCA eHealth shall be English.

## **3. GOVERNANCE**

The affairs of WONCA eHealth 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 WONCA eHealth Policy Statement and the WONCA Regulations and Bylaws, then the latter shall be applied.

## **4. ETHICAL PRINCIPLES GOVERNING WONCA EHEALTH**

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

## **5. GOALS OF WONCA eHEALTH**

The goals of WONCA eHealth shall align with the WONCA Mission statement.

The goals of WONCA eHealth shall be:

- To create and disseminate information and resources as needed to support family/general practice
- To draft guidelines on digital health interventions and innovations
- To advocate for digital health recognition in health policy, family doctor remuneration, and family doctor training.
- To develop curriculum for family doctor training and offer such training
- To accredit interventions (apps, EHRs, etc.) designed to support family doctors that meet predetermined standards

- To develop productive working relationships with other international digital health-oriented organizations
- To ensure that WONCA members are kept informed of trends in digital tools impacting primary care and family medicine.
- To advocate for high-quality digital health research and facilitate collaborations to advance research and evidence in the area.

## **6. STRUCTURE**

WONCA eHealth shall be made up of Core and Associate members. A Chair chosen by Core members shall lead it. There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of a Chair, Deputy Chair, Secretary and four additional members, with a Young Doctor Movement Representative co-opted. WONCA eHealth members may be organized into Working Groups in order to achieve defined tasks. Former Executive Committee members will be able to participate in WONCA eHealth activities and discussions in an advisory role. The chair is expected to be a family doctor.

## **7. MEMBERSHIP**

WONCA eHealth shall be made up of experts in digital health systems and other health information tools which support primary care/general practice. A comprehensive list of WONCA eHealth members will be made available on the WONCA eHealth webpage. Membership should meet WONCA's gender equity criteria as defined in the WONCA Bylaws, be inclusive of those who meet the WONCA definition of a Young Family Doctors and be inclusive of all members from all regions.

### **7.1 Membership Categories**

There shall be two levels of membership: Core Member and Associate Member

### **7.1.1 Core Members**

Persons accepted as members of WONCA eHealth should be members of a WONCA Member Organization AND/OR individual Direct Members of WONCA. Core members shall have the right to vote, forward and second proposals for voting as well as further the work of the Working Party. The WONCA President, and CEO shall be ex officio members of the Working Party and shall be included in any mailing list, google group or similar.

### **7.1.2 Associate Members**

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 WONCA eHealth affairs but who either:

- Do not seek Core membership, or
- Are waiting to be awarded/apply for Core membership or
- Do not fulfil the requirements for Core membership.

## **7.2 Becoming a Member of WONCA eHealth**

Applicants for membership of WONCA eHealth must apply in writing to the Executive Committee for 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 digital health 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 Organization of WONCA and/or by a current member of WONCA eHealth shall be regarded favourably.

Applicants must demonstrate two or more of the following:

- Knowledge about and/or interest in digital health interventions in primary care

- 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 the eHealth Working Party.

The Executive Committee shall consider the application and may ask the applicant for further information if required. The matter shall be submitted to all Core members of eHealth Working Party who shall be free to comment on the applicant's suitability before the Executive 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 Executive Committee.

Membership will become effective immediately upon notification.

### **7.3 Termination of membership**

Membership of WONCA eHealth shall terminate upon the occurrence of any of the following:

- Resignation
- Failure to maintain membership requirements in accordance with organizational policies
- Failure to accept and comply with the WONCA privacy policy
- Revocation of membership by the executive committee.

A Core member of WONCA eHealth who no longer fulfils the requirements for membership stated in this Policy Document will have their membership status reconsidered by the Executive Committee.

### **7.4 Rights of the Members**

- Attend the Annual Meeting of WONCA eHealth preferably held in conjunction with the biennial WONCA World Conference
- Publicly state they are members of WONCA eHealth.
- All Core and Associate members shall have the right to freely express opinion about any issue raised pertaining to the Work of WONCA eHealth.
- All core members shall have one vote and be given the opportunity to vote in all elections.

### **7.5 Duties of members**

All Core members and Associate members will be expected to follow the Policy Statement and organizational policies, and to promote the objectives of WONCA eHealth in their own country and internationally.

Annually, all Core members and Associate members must report in writing to WONCA eHealth:

- A statement of potential conflicts of interest that are materially related to WONCA eHealth and/or its products (including documentation), including professional associations or businesses in which the member or the member's immediate family have a financial interest.
- The status of WONCA eHealth products, and of activities related to eHealth'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 Executive Committee at least three weeks prior to the WONCA eHealth Annual Meeting. In a year in which there is no WONCA eHealth Annual Meeting, the Chair shall set a reporting deadline.

All Core Members and Associate Members must also:

- Participate in at least one annual meeting of WONCA eHealth in any three-year period, and

- All Core 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 WONCA eHealth Annual Meeting. They may also participate in related work, as tasked by WONCA eHealth. These nonmembers will have the status of Observers during the meeting.

## **9. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

WONCA eHealth Executive Committee shall consist of the Chair, deputy chair, secretary and four others elected members and YDM representative (Co-opted and shall be selected by the YDM executives) drawn from the list of Core WONCA eHealth members. Their terms shall reflect the cycle adopted for the WONCA Executive. Upon expiration of their term, they may be reappointed; however, all members of the Executive Committee, including the Chair, may serve up to two consecutive 'terms' of office.

The Chair of the WONCA Working Party on eHealth is elected by the Working Party members. However, the Chair is appointed by the WONCA Council. After elections, the WONCA eHealth Executive Committee shall forward a nomination for the Chair to the WONCA Executive Committee at least two 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.

### **A. The Chair**

The Chair must be a Core member of WONCA eHealth and should be a qualified family doctor. The Chair is appointed by the WONCA eHealth Executive Committee, following election by the WONCA eHealth Membership.

*Tasks and responsibilities for the Chair shall be to:*

- Manage the institutional and professional work of WONCA eHealth.
- Create a budget for approval by the WONCA Executive. Any non-budgeted expenses must be submitted prior for approval of the WONCA Executive Committee.
- Manage the WONCA eHealth budget, being the final authority on the budget at all times.
- Schedule one yearly WONCA eHealth full membership meeting (referred to above as WONCA eHealth Annual Meeting) and arrange other necessary and regular meetings.
- Chair the WONCA eHealth Executive Committee.
- Delegate tasks and responsibilities to the Executive Committee, other WONCA eHealth members and working groups.
- Appoint leaders of the Working Groups.
- Coordinate and do strategic planning together with the other Executives Committee members.
- Report to WONCA Executive and the WONCA World Council.
- Inform applicants of decisions regarding their membership or observer status.
- Represent WONCA eHealth in relevant forums and promote the work of WONCA eHealth.
- Be responsible for providing quarterly reports on the work of the Executive Committee to WONCA eHealth members

## **B. Other Executive Committee Members**

Four additional Executive Committee members shall be elected from the roster of Core members of WONCA eHealth. The duties of other Executive Committee members shall be 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 WONCA eHealth meetings.
- Monitor the progress of working groups.
- Identify potential new WONCA eHealth members and help the Chair decide on their admission.
- Assist the Chair in management of WONCA eHealth budget, through provision of advice and discussion.
- Review and resolve potential conflicts of interest of WONCA eHealth members involving WONCA eHealth 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 required.

### **C. Deputy Chair**

The Deputy Chair will be a member of the Executive of WONCA eHealth 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.

### **D. Secretary**

- The specific duties normally carried out by the secretary include:
  - Keeping a registry of association members
  - Lodging financial reports with the WONCA.
  - Notification of any changes in office bearers to the WONCA Executives that administers laws and regulations governing the incorporation of associations
  - Record, publish, circulate and maintain the minutes of board/committee meetings

- Maintain a calendar of association events and notify association personnel of forthcoming events in a timely manner
- Act as a focal point for the receiving and sending of correspondence on behalf of the association.
- Keep a copy of all inwards and outwards correspondence
- Maintain records of the association
- Sending out notices of general meetings to the association membership
- Compile and send out the agenda for board/committee meetings

## **10. ELECTIONS**

### **10.1 Nominations**

#### **10.1.1 Nominations of Chair and Deputy Chair**

The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the process of election of the Chair.

The Executive Committee shall:

- Arrange for the election of the Chair every two years (except in the condition where chair is reappointed)
- Call for nominations for the Chair from all members in writing or email, at least three months prior to each WONCA eHealth 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 and obtain 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 WONCA eHealth Annual Meeting with a clear date for the ballot, at the latest on the penultimate morning of the WONCA eHealth Annual Meeting.

In a year in which there is no WONCA eHealth Annual Meeting, a voting ballot deadline shall be set by the Executive Committee, on the advice of the Chair,

for no later than 12 months from the last WONCA eHealth Annual Meeting.

### **10.1.2 Nominations of other Secretary and other Executive Committee Members**

The Executive Committee shall:

- Call for nominations for open elected positions in the Executive Committees from all members in writing or email, at least three months prior to each WONCA eHealth Annual Meeting, clearly stating the closing date for nominations.
- Ensure that nominated candidates are willing.
- Actively recruit nominees to positions on the Executive Committee, taking into account the need to spread representation (region, gender, type of organizations).
- Require and obtain a written statement from candidates agreeing to stand for the position for which they have been nominated.
- At least one month before WONCA eHealth Annual Meeting, forward a list of willing candidates for open position(s). In a year in which there is no Annual Meeting, the Governance Committee, on the advice of the Chair, shall set the timing of the nominations and election.
- Organize and conduct a vote by secret ballot for open positions during the WONCA eHealth Annual Meeting, at the latest on the penultimate morning of the WONCA eHealth Annual Meeting.

### **10.1.3 Other Nomination Procedure**

The nominee must provide a statement of agreement to stand for the position for which he/she is nominated. Another Core member of WONCA eHealth must second any nomination. All nominated candidates who agree to stand for election can be elected and shall be voted on. The Executive 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.

## **10.2 Elections**

### **10.2.1 Election Procedures**

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

### **10.2.2 Election of the Chair and Deputy Chair**

Election of the Chair shall be by a preferential secret ballot vote of all WONCA eHealth 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 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 eHealth members immediately on completion of the count and take his/her positions 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.

### **10.2.3 Election of the Secretary and other Executive Committee members**

The Secretary and other Executive Committee members shall be elected through ‘first past the post’ secret written ballot vote of WONCA eHealth members. Newly elected Executive 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 WONCA eHealth Annual Meeting, a newly elected member shall take up the position immediately after the election. If, due to unforeseen circumstance, an Executive 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 until the next regular election.

The Selection of YDM representative will be selected by the YDM executives and will be opted for the YDM representative post of WONCA eHealth Executive Committee.

### **10.3 Vacation of the chair**

If for any reason the post of Chair becomes vacant at any time other than the anticipated two-year period (or if reappointed next 2 year period) end date of appointment, the deputy chair shall take on the chair’s responsibilities until the next regularly scheduled elections.

### **10.4 Terms of the office**

The period of WONCA eHealth office bearers' terms of office shall be for two years consistent with the WONCA Executive cycle. however, all members of the Executive Committee, including the Chair, may serve up to two consecutive 'terms' of office.

## **11. MEETING**

WONCA eHealth meetings shall be open to all members. Observers are welcome, with prior approval of the Chair.

### **11.1 Annual Meeting of WONCA eHealth**

There shall be one general meeting of WONCA eHealth 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 WONCA eHealth Annual Meeting. Where feasible, WONCA eHealth will schedule its Annual Meeting to coincide with a WONCA World conference. The responsibility to organize the Annual Meeting is delegated to a WONCA eHealth 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 WONCA eHealth funds are available, they may be used. To assist members with travel costs to the WONCA eHealth 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 WONCA eHealth meeting.

## **11.2 Executive Committee Meetings**

The Executive Committee 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, if possible. The Executive Committee shall keep WONCA eHealth informed of discussion and decisions made at its meetings by distributing minutes at least quarterly.

## **12. WORKING GROUPS**

The primary tasks of WONCA eHealth will require extensive ongoing collaborative work between Annual Meetings. This can best be accomplished through small groups carrying out specific assignments. WONCA eHealth 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 WONCA eHealth Executive Committee, 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, WONCA eHealth 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 WONCA eHealth membership for comment.

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

- Will organize the work and report to the Chair.
- Is responsible for the progress and delivery of products.
- Will publish the work on the WONCA eHealth Working Party webpage

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

### **13. REACHING CONSENSUS ON ISSUES**

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

#### **13.1 At the Annual Meeting of members of WONCA eHealth**

Motions may be initiated by any WONCA eHealth Full member, following the principles of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (11 th 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.

A motion must be moved by a WONCA eHealth member and seconded by a WONCA eHealth member before it can be voted upon. A quorum shall be 50% of all members of WONCA eHealth. Each attending member of WONCA eHealth shall have one vote. A motion shall be approved if 50% or more of the voting members agree.

#### **13.2 Between Annual General Meetings**

Where it is anticipated that a formal vote shall be required on an issue, working groups, individual members, or the Executive Committee may put forward a formal motion to WONCA eHealth Core Members between Annual Meetings.

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



All motions put to WONCA eHealth must be seconded by another member of WONCA eHealth, 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, she/he must discuss this with the Executive Committee and the Executive Committee 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 WONCA eHealth 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 the motion. At the end of that two-week period the motion shall be submitted for online voting. All members shall have the right to vote within two weeks after the motion is put to the vote. Each member shall have one vote. A quorum for making a decision on any motion shall be 50% of all members of WONCA eHealth. A motion shall be passed if a simple majority of voters approve the motion. The Executive Committee shall arrange for a suitable online voting system and inform WONCA eHealth of the result within two weeks of the closing date for voting.

### **13.3 Revision of this Policy Statement**

The Executive Committee will review the content of this policy statement in full at least once every four 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 Executive 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 WONCA eHealth online group with specific recommendations and alternatives for each contention.

A final proposal shall be developed by the Executive Committee and submitted to the membership one month before the planned voting date. Each member shall have one vote. A quorum for making a decision on any revision shall be two thirds of all members of WONCA eHealth.