

British Society for Antimicrobial Chemotherapy  
**OPERATIONAL STANDING ORDERS FOR**  
**BSAC WORKING PARTIES AND JOINT WORKING PARTIES**

## Contents

1	<u>Definitions</u>
2	<u>Purpose</u>
3	<u>Types of guidance produced</u>
4	<u>How to submit a proposal</u>
5	<u>Topic selection</u>
6	<u>How proposals are considered</u>
7	<u>Funding and declaration of interests</u>
8	<u>Membership of working parties</u>
9	<u>Meetings and administrative support</u>
10	<u>Communication</u>
11	<u>Publication</u>
12	<u>Dissemination of guidelines &amp; reports</u>
Appendix one:	<u>BSAC guideline development methodology</u>

## 1 DEFINITIONS

- A *Working Parties*: have a defined term of existence and clear terms of reference to focus on specific issues or problems with a view to producing recommendations, reports and/or policy statements. Working parties will complete their tasks in a specific time frame, after which they will be disbanded.
- B *Joint Working Parties*: established jointly between two or more parent organisations, one of which will be the BSAC. Joint working parties will have a defined term of existence and clear terms of reference to focus on specific issues or problems with a view to producing recommendations, report and/or policy statements. Joint Working parties will complete their tasks in a specific time frame, after which they will be disbanded

## 2 THE PURPOSE OF A WORKING PARTY

Working Parties are convened to produce guidance on a specific topic(s) or area(s) relevant to the field of antimicrobial chemotherapy and in furtherance of the objectives of the Society<sup>1</sup>.

## 3 TYPES OF GUIDANCE PRODUCED

Working Parties may be convened to produce:

- A Evidence-based guidelines designed to influence clinical practice. The guidelines development methodology adopted by the Society, to which all working parties must adhere, is detailed at [appendix 1](#).
- B Technical/expert reports (e.g. on sensitivity testing, drug assays and areas of practice where there is thought to be insufficient evidence for guidelines).

All Working Parties must consider and include proposals for implementation of guidelines at the outset. From 2007 onwards the Society will not consider convening a working party that has not made clear its plans for implementation of guidance. Details of where to obtain advice on the development of an implementation plan are detailed at [appendix 1](#).

---

<sup>1</sup> To facilitate the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge in the field of antimicrobial chemotherapy

#### 4 HOW TO PROPOSE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A WORKING PARTY

Any group or individual may propose to Council that a working party be established to address a topic in the field of antimicrobial chemotherapy. Council meets 4 times each year, usually in January, April, July and October.

Proposals MUST include the following information:

- 1 Name & contact details of proposer
- 2 Topic proposed
- 3 Working party membership (areas of specialty / expertise to be represented)
- 4 Budget (meetings, review process, administration, implementation)
- 5 Timescale
- 6 Proposal for publication
- 7 Implementation plan

Proposals must be submitted on the President, BSAC, c/o [tguise@bsac.org.uk](mailto:tguise@bsac.org.uk)

#### 5 TOPIC SELECTION

Topics selected for consideration by a new working party are chosen on the basis of the burden of disease, the existence of variation in practice, and the potential to improve outcome. Other factors affecting Council's decision include educational and meetings activities approved by Council, the cost of establishing the working party and the cost of developing guidance.

BSAC supports the SIGN (Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network) for the selection of topics for guideline development. The criteria, which have been amended to reflect Society's objectives/area(s) of interest, are:

- Areas of medical uncertainty as evidenced by wide variation in practice or outcome.
- Conditions where effective treatment is proven and where mortality or morbidity can be reduced.
- Iatrogenic infections or interventions carrying significant risks or cost
- Clinical priority areas in the area of antimicrobial chemotherapy in the United Kingdom and Ireland within acute and community settings.
- The perceived need for a guideline, as indicated by a network of relevant stakeholders.

## 6 HOW PROPOSALS ARE CONSIDERED

Proposals will be issued to at least 3 major stakeholders for review. Stakeholders will include the Education and Meetings Secretaries. Other Stakeholders may be individual Members of the Society, Research Groups, Sister Societies, Royal Colleges or other relevant external organisations. Stakeholders will be asked to judge whether there is a need for a guideline in the area proposed and to offer comments on the scope of the proposed guideline.

BSAC Council will consider the proposal, together with the comments received from Stakeholders. There will be an opportunity for the proposal to be amended in light of comments received.

Queries should be addressed in the first instance to Tracey Guise, Executive Director: [tguise@bsac.org.uk](mailto:tguise@bsac.org.uk)

## 7 FUNDING AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

### Funding

The Society will support the cost of working party meetings and travel expenses for individuals appointed to serve on a working party, which must be submitted in accordance with the guidance given on the BSAC claim form. Organisations nominating individuals to represent their interests are expected to meet the travel expenses of their representatives. For joint working parties all costs apart from travel expenses will be shared. Each participating organisation will sign an agreement which will detail operational and financial arrangements, including sharing of costs if appropriate.

Council does not guarantee funding support for the development and implementation of evidence-based guidelines, although if Council supports the proposal the Society will assist in identifying appropriate sources of funding to support the work. Decisions regarding funding for working party activity will be made as part of the annual budget process. Council approves the annual budget in October each year. The number of working parties that the Society supports will depend on overall funds that are available within the budget for the forthcoming financial year,

Council does not support commercially sponsored guidelines / guidance as it is imperative that guidelines have editorial independence and that there are, as far as

possible, no perceived or actual conflicts of interest, particularly for guidelines intended to influence practice.

### **Declaration of interests**

The BSAC has an established Register of Interests, which makes provisions for declarations of interests and withdrawal from meetings to prevent individuals from being influenced, or appearing to be influenced, by their private interests in the execution of their duties on behalf of the Society. All personal or business interests that may, or may be perceived by reasonable individuals outside the Society, be perceived to influence their judgement should be declared. Such interests include, but are not limited to, involvement in the health care services, academic and research institutions and the pharmaceutical and other related industries.

Chairs of BSAC working parties and joint working parties are required to submit an entry to the BSAC Register of Interest. Members must also declare their relevant interests in issues to be discussed at working party meetings. Such declarations shall be recorded in the minutes and, if appropriate, published in the final working party reports / proceedings. Chairs of working parties will request, at the beginning of each meeting, that members declare relevant and potential conflicts of interest.

## **8 WORKING PARTY MEMBERS: NOMINATION, APPOINTMENT AND TERM OF OFFICE**

Chairs and Members of working parties and joint working parties are appointed by Council (or the Council's of parent bodies for joint working parties) and serve for the term of the working party agreed by Council.

Working Party membership should include:

- Individuals with expertise in the topic to be considered
- Representative(s) of the key stakeholder groups
- Patient representation if appropriate

Members of working parties and joint working parties can be nominated by:

- By the chair of the working party
- By stakeholders
- By members of Council or Executive Committee

- By members of BSAC (and/or parent organisation for joint working parties)

Expressions of interest to serve on working parties may be invited from the Membership.

The chair and members will serve on the working party for its entire duration. Individuals may be co-opted to attend one or more meetings to advise on specific issues.

## **9 MEETINGS & ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT**

Working parties should only meet when the amount of work justifies it. The Society encourages the use of teleconference facilities for meetings (which BSAC Secretariat will organise on behalf of working parties) and for consultations to be carried out by email if possible.

Where possible meetings should be held at BSAC Headquarters. The Society will not usually meet the cost of overnight stays or the hiring of meeting facilities away from BSAC HQ unless prior approval has been obtained from the Honorary Treasurer.

Working parties and joint working parties are self-supporting. If thought necessary the working party may choose a Secretary from within the Membership whose role will be to arrange further meetings as required, take and prepare minutes, and circulate papers. In the absence of a secretary these tasks will fall to the chair of the working party.

Secretarial, administrative or expert assistance can only be employed if included in the original proposal to Council and approved in advance. The Society will not meet any expenditure additional to that approved in the original proposal.

## **10 COMMUNICATION**

It is the responsibility of the chairs of working parties and joint working parties to keep Council regularly informed of matters under discussion. The chair should submit written progress reports each year to the July meeting of Council. Any matters of policy, changes to the terms of reference or bids for additional funding that arise in the interim should be submitted by the chair direct to the President and Honorary Treasurer for consideration.

The chairs of working parties may attend meetings of Council to present the final or an important intermediate report. They can also attend a Council meeting to seek advice.

All correspondence for working parties should be on BSAC stationery, supplies of which can be obtained from the Executive Officer. Acknowledgement of the Society is expected in all public communications.

## **11 REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS**

Working parties will be expected to produce a final report for consideration within the specified time scale set down by Council and agreed with the Chair of the working party. The agreed term will run from the date on which the first meeting of the working party is held.

Proposals for publication of working party guidance must be included in the original proposal to establish a working party. The Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Antimicrobial Chemotherapy (JAC) will be consulted on proposals regarding publication of working party reports. Decisions regarding publication will be based on the audience most likely to benefit from the information. All reports that are of benefit to the BSAC Membership must be submitted to the JAC to be considered for publication. For joint working parties the Councils and Editors-in-Chief (if applicable) of the parent bodies must consider and approve the proposal.

Reports must be approved by Council and, in exceptional circumstances; the Council may prevent reports being made public or being submitted for publication. In the event of an urgent decision being needed on publicising all or part of a report, the President of the Society may take executive action.

## **12 DISSEMINATION OF GUIDELINES AND REPORTS**

The Society reserves the right to circulate published working party reports to all Members of the Society at the time of, or immediately following, publication (unless it is published in the JAC) and undertakes to bear any costs associated with this. Reports may be circulated in printed or electronic form.

Guidelines may also be submitted for inclusion on national and international guideline databases (eg: National electronic Library for Infection, National Guideline Clearinghouse, National Electronic Library for Health). Decisions on dissemination of reports will be made by the Council of the Society in consultation with the working party

and key stakeholders, and will be included in the original proposal that is approved by Council in advance of the working party commencing proceedings.

-end-

## BSAC GUIDELINE DEVELOPMENT METHODOLOGY

The Society supports the production of guidelines that are based, whenever possible, on a systematic review of relevant literature and that include clear links between evidence and practice, and supports the SIGN methodology.

The Society recognises that this is a resource intensive process that does not necessarily result in guidelines that are radically different from recommendations developed in a traditional way by consensus among experts. However, the crucial difference is that rigorous development means that the evidence supporting the recommendation is explicit and the user can clearly assess the validity of the recommendations

A practical method for identifying the relevant literature is needed and the literature review needs a set of clearly focused key questions (usually not more than six or seven key questions in a guideline).

A useful model, recommended by the Society, for developing key questions for a guideline is "PICO":

- Population, patients: Age or risk factors (e.g. pregnancy, diabetes)
- Intervention / Exposure: Diagnostic tests, treatments or events (e.g. trauma)
- Comparison: Standard care / placebo / alternatives
- Outcomes: Survival rate, prevention of future symptoms, costs, morbidity

Working Parties are asked to visit the SIGN Website [www.sign.ac.uk](http://www.sign.ac.uk) for further information about guideline and key question development.

## BSAC GUIDELINE IMPLEMENTATION

SIGN offers practical advice on strategies that can assist practitioners, and health services to bridge the gap between guideline development and implementation. Practical advice that can assist in developing an implementation plan is published in **SIGN 50: A guideline developers' handbook** – available at the SIGN website [www.sign.ac.uk](http://www.sign.ac.uk)