



SOUTH PACIFIC NURSES FORUM

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CONSTITUTION

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CONSTITUTION OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC NURSE FORUM

THE SPNF / FORUM

1. Name

- 1.1. The name of the federation shall be the South Pacific Nurses Forum (**SPNF**).
- 1.2. The SPNF was established in 1982 by a group of nurses from the South Pacific who attended the 1980 International Council of Nurses in Los Angeles and who had a common vision to establish a South Pacific forum of National Nursing Associations (NNAs) located in the South Pacific region.
- 1.3. The SPNF consists of a grouping of representatives from NNAs from each of the participating countries located in the South Pacific region. A register of existing SPNF Members is attached to this Constitution at Schedule 1.
- 1.4. The SPNF holds a Conference every two years to meet and discuss topical issues for nurses working in the South Pacific region and to progress the Objectives of the Forum.

2. Interpretation

- 2.1. 'Biennial General Meeting' or 'BGM' shall mean a meeting open to all Members that is held by the Forum every two years on or about the same time as the Conference.
- 2.2. 'Conference' shall mean the meeting of representatives from the NNAs of the member countries.
- 2.3. 'Forum' shall mean the SPNF.
- 2.4. 'Hosting Country' shall mean the country that is elected at the Conference to be the location for the next Conference.
- 2.5. 'Indigenous' nursing workforce for each SPNF 'Member' is as defined in Schedule 1 of the constitution.
- 2.6. 'Majority Vote' shall mean a vote made by more than half of the Members who are present at the Biennial General Meeting or a Special General Meeting, and who are entitled to vote and are voting upon a resolution put to that meeting.
- 2.7. 'Member' shall mean a member of the Forum who has met the membership requirements set out at clause 8.
- 2.8. 'Midwife' shall mean a person who has completed a program of midwifery education and is qualified and authorised in his or her own country to practice midwifery.
- 2.9. 'NNA' shall mean the National Nursing Association from the relevant participating country as appropriate. NNA shall mean must be an Approved Entity that is relevant, legitimate, operating in the country in which it is located, which represents nurses, midwives and the indigenous nursing workforce in the relevant country.
- 2.10. 'Nurse' shall mean a person who has completed a program of basic nursing education and is qualified and authorised in his or her own country to practice nursing.

- 2.11. 'Objectives' shall mean the objectives of the Forum as set out at clause 3
- 2.12. 'Secretariat' shall mean the NNA that is elected to the position of Secretariat of the Forum at the Biennial General Meeting and whose obligations are set out at clause [6].
- 2.13. 'Special General Meeting' shall mean a meeting that is called by the Steering Committee upon receipt of a written request signed by at least 51% of the Members.
- 2.14. 'Steering Committee shall mean the committee that is responsible for governance and other matters of the Forum. In this Constitution, any term implying the feminine gender shall be deemed to include the masculine, where singular is used, plural forms of the noun are also inferred and headings are a matter of reference and not a part of the constitution.

3. Objectives

- 3.1. To arrange, promote and establish a Conference of Members that shall be held at least every two years.
- 3.2. To assist each other in promoting and improving health services for the public.
- 3.3. To assist each other to ensure the establishment and maintenance of the optimum
- 3.4. Standards of professional nursing and midwifery practice in the South Pacific supported by appropriate nursing education and research.
- 3.5. To encourage the establishment of national nurses' associations in those South Pacific countries where none exist, and to assist and advise nurses in the countries concerned in establishing such associations.
- 3.6. To assist each other in improving the professional, social and economic positions of nurses.
- 3.7. To further the development of nurses and midwives and nursing and midwifery internationally.
- 3.8. To effect closer links between nurses and midwives in the South Pacific as a means of providing mutual problem solving, help and support and facilitating personal contact between nurses and midwives in the various countries.
- 3.9. To promote cooperation and coordinated activities between nurses in the South Pacific for the exchange of knowledge, strengthening cultural exchanges and the sharing of ideas. These activities are to include the organisation of conferences and seminars in the South Pacific.
- 3.10. Pecuniary gain is not an objective of the Forum.

4. Language

- 4.1. The official language of the Forum for the purpose of recording and documentation shall be English.

5. Powers

- 5.1. The Forum shall do all such lawful things as may be deemed incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objectives.
- 5.2. The forum shall do anything necessary or helpful to the objectives set out in clauses [3.1-3.9] above.

MANAGEMENT OF THE FORUM

6. Secretariat

- 6.1. At the Biennial General Meeting the Members will appoint by majority vote a specific NNA to the position of Secretariat. The relevant NNA will then designate an individual to act as the key point of contact for the Secretariat.
- 6.2. The position of Secretariat will be held for a period of four years (**Secretariat Term**).
- 6.3. The position of Secretariat will cease at the Biennial General Meeting immediately following expiration of the Secretariat Term unless it is reappointed at the Biennial General Meeting in accordance with the provisions of clause 6.1.
- 6.4. The role of the Secretariat is to:
 - 6.4.1. provide administrative support to the Hosting Country and the Steering Committee (for example, organise meetings, take minutes, deal with communications etc.)
 - 6.4.2. be the main point of contact for the Forum during the period between Conferences;
 - 6.4.3. provide governance support and other relevant support to the Steering Committee which will provide oversight in the implementation of the Forum's agreed activities; and
 - 6.4.4. provide direction and advice to the Forum and the Hosting Country with respect to the next scheduled Conference as required.

7. Steering Committee

- 7.1. The Forum shall have a Steering Committee, comprising the following persons:
 - 7.1.1. The Secretariat;
 - 7.1.2. The President of the NNA hosting the Conference;
 - 7.1.3. The President of the NNA nominated to host the next Conference ;
 - 7.1.4. The President of the NNA providing the Secretariat; and
 - 7.1.5. Such other Members as the Forum shall decide.
- 7.2. At the Biennial General Meeting the Members will appoint by majority vote Members to positions on the Steering Committee.

- 7.3. There shall be a minimum of 3 Steering Committee members in addition to the Secretariat. Only Members of the Forum shall be Steering Committee members.
- 7.4. The role of the Steering Committee is to:
 - 7.4.1. Administer, manage and control the Forum;
 - 7.4.2. Act to carry out the objectives of the Forum;
 - 7.4.3. Be responsible for the governance of the Forum and oversee its activities;
 - 7.4.4. Delegate responsibility and co-opt members where necessary;
 - 7.4.5. Ensure that all Members are aware of the Objectives and constitution of the Forum;
 - 7.4.6. Advise the Forum on how a person becomes a Member, and how a person stops being a Member;
 - 7.4.7. Decide the times and dates for the Conference and the Biennial General Meeting, in collaboration with the hosting country, and set the agenda for these; and
 - 7.4.8. Decide the procedures for dealing with complaints.
- 7.5. Steering Committee meetings will be held at least every three months via teleconference. An agenda will be circulated in advance of the teleconference and minutes will be taken at the meeting and circulated as the Committee deems appropriate.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE FORUM

8. Types of Members

- 8.1. Membership may comprise different classes of membership as decided by the Forum.
- 8.2. Members for a country may, at the discretion of the Forum, comprise more than one NNA from each country.
- 8.3. Members have the rights and responsibilities set out in this constitution.

9. Membership Requirements

- 9.1. The Forum reserves the right to consider and approve the relevant group or NNA (including multiple groups and/or NNAs) in relation to each country (**Approved Entity**);
- 9.2. To become a Member, the group or NNA must fulfil at least one of the following requirements:
 - 9.2.1. Be an Approved Entity;
 - 9.2.2. Be a relevant, legitimate and operating NNA in the country in which it is located;
 - 9.2.3. Where more than one NNA exists in a country, be the NNA which represents the most nurses in the country in which it is located;

9.2.4.. Where no NNA exists in the relevant country, be a relevant, legitimate and operating group of nurses and/or midwives who are working to establish an association; or

9.2.5. Be a relevant, legitimate and operating nurses and midwifery group representing the indigenous workforce in the relevant country.

9.3. Where a nurses group representing the indigenous people exist in a country, that group shall be included as an additional Member for that country, provided they are also an NNA Approved Entity.

9.4. All Members must promote the Objectives of the Forum and shall do nothing to bring the Forum into disrepute.

10. Admission of Members

10.1. To become a Member, a NNA or group must:

10.1.1. Complete an application form provided by the Steering Committee as set out at Schedule 2; and

10.1.2. Supply other information as the Steering Committee requires.

10.2. The Steering Committee may interview the applicant when it considers the membership application.

10.3. The Steering Committee shall be authorised by the Forum to make decisions on whether or not to allow an organisation or group to become a Member. The organisation/group will be advised of the decision and the decision shall be final.

10.4. The Steering Committee shall keep a register of Members which shall contain the details of each Member including the name, email address and phone number of the Member and the date upon which they became a Member. The register shall be included as Schedule 1 to this Constitution. Members shall have access to this register upon request.

11. Cessation of Members

11.1. Any Member may resign by giving written notice to the Steering Committee.

11.2. Membership can be terminated in the following way:

11.2.1. Where the Steering Committee has determined that a Member is in breach of the Objectives (as set out at clause 3 of this Constitution) or acting in a manner that is inconsistent with the Objectives then:

11.2.2. The Steering Committee shall give that Member written notice that the Membership and any associated rights including voting rights, are temporarily suspended;

11.2.3. The Steering Committee shall prepare a resolution to the effect that it considers that the Member's membership should be terminated, giving reasons why and explaining how the Member is breaching and/or acting inconsistently with the Objectives;

- 11.2.4. The Steering Committee shall submit the resolution at the next Biennial General Meeting for consideration and voting by all Members;
- 11.2.5. At the Biennial General Meeting the Members will determine by majority vote whether the Member's membership is to be terminated. The Members' decision will be final;
- 11.2.6. The Member will be notified in writing by the Steering Committee of the outcome of the vote and in any case within one month of the Biennial General Meeting taking place.

MEETINGS OF THE FORUM

12. Conference

- 12.1. A Conference shall be held at least every two years, or as decided at the previous Conference. The date of each Conference will be determined by reference to the starting date of the previous Conference and will be set down at that time and subsequently notified to all Members.
- 12.2. Each Member can send as many delegates as it wishes to the Conference
- 12.3. Each Member shall send up to four delegates to the Conference to cast a vote at the Biennial General Meeting. Observers may be admitted by arrangement with the host country, however where observers are permitted, they are not eligible to vote at the Conference or at the Biennial General Meeting unless they are Members.
- 12.4. The country which is hosting the next conference shall be responsible for providing the officers for the period from the closing of the previous conference to the closing of the one they are hosting and will work with the Secretariat as required.

13. Biennial General Meeting

- 13.1. The Biennial General Meeting (BGM) of the Forum shall be held on or about the same time as each Conference.
- 13.2. The date of each BGM shall be the same as the Conference for that biennial time period. The BGM shall, if possible, be held immediately following the completion of the Conference.
- 13.3. The date of the BGM shall be notified to all Members at least [three (3)] months in advance.
- 13.4. All BGM's shall be chaired by the Chairperson of the Forum (Chair).
- 13.5. The Chair shall be shared between all member countries and will be the President or Vice President (or their nominee) of the relevant NNA hosting the Conference.
- 13.6. If the Chair is absent then the Forum shall elect a temporary Chair. The Chair has the casting vote if necessary.

14. Voting

- 14.1. Matters at the Biennial General Meeting, Conference, or a Special General Meeting will be decided by a Majority Vote of all Members eligible to vote.

14.2. Each Member shall have one vote, irrespective of the number of delegates sent on behalf of that Member.

14.3. Voting shall be taken by show of hands.

15. Conduct of the Forum Meetings

15.1. The meetings of the Forum shall include the Biennial General Meeting and any Special General Meeting (together the Forum Meetings).

15.2. The Biennial General Meeting shall be held in accordance with the provisions of clause 13 of this Constitution.

15.3. A Special General Meeting must be called by the Steering Committee upon receipt of a written request signed by at least 51% of the Members.

15.4. The Steering Committee will give all Members written notice of the business to be conducted at the Forum Meetings.

15.5. All members may attend and vote at the Forum Meetings.

15.6. For all Forum Meetings the minimum number of Members present must constitute 10% of all registered Members.

15.7. The Biennial General Meeting and the Special General Meeting shall be chaired by the Chair who is appointed in accordance with clause 13.5.

15.8. Voting at the Forum Meetings will be in accordance with clause 14.

15.9. The business of the Forum Meetings shall be:

15.9.1. Receiving and approving the minutes of the previous Forum Meeting;

15.9.2. Receiving the report from the Secretariat and the Steering Committee on the Conference and other business of the Forum;

15.9.3. Considering any financial reports;

15.9.4. Election of Steering Committee Members if required;

15.9.5. Resolutions and/or motions to be considered and voted on if required;

15.9.6. General business.

FINANCES OF THE FORUM

16. Finance and management

16.1. Each member country shall be responsible for expenses incurred by its Members.

16.2. Each conference host country shall charge a conference registration fee to cover costs involved in hosting the conference.

16.3. Any surplus money following payment of expenses for the conference shall be passed to the next host country as seeding money.

- 16.4. Each conference host country shall appoint an auditor who shall be a qualified accountant who does not hold any other office in the national nurses' association.

ALTERATION OF THE CONSTITUTION AND DISSOLUTION

17. Alteration of the Constitution

- 17.1. This Constitution may be altered, added to, or rescinded only by resolution at a Biennial General Meeting or a Special General Meeting that is passed by a Majority Vote of those Members present and voting.
- 17.2. Written notice of any proposed amendment shall be forwarded to the Secretariat for the attention of the Steering Group two months prior to the Biennial General Meeting or Special General Meeting, giving reasons for the proposal and any recommendations. The host country shall circulate any such proposal to all Members not less than one month prior to the date of the Biennial General Meeting or Special General Meeting.

18. Dissolution

- 18.1. The Forum may be dissolved by resolution to this effect determined by a Majority Vote at a Biennial General Meeting or Special General Meeting of the Forum.
- 18.2. Any surplus money or other assets belonging to the Forum shall be allocated as decided by resolution at that meeting.
- 18.2.1. If the Forum is dissolved then the Forum's debts, costs and liabilities (if any) shall be paid as agreed by resolution at the Biennial General Meeting or Special General Meeting;

SCHEDULE 1

Definition of indigenous nursing workforce for each SPNF Member

Member	Definition of indigenous nursing workforce
Australian Nursing & Midwifery Federation	
Cook Islands Nurses Association	
Fiji Nursing Association	
Kiribati Nurses Association	
Nauru Nurses Association	
Niue Nurses Association	
Samoa Nurses Association	
Solomon Islands Nurses Association	
Tonga Nurses Association	
Tuvalu Nurses Association	
Papua New Guinea Nurses Association	
New Zealand Nurses Organisation	
Vanuatu Nurses Association	

