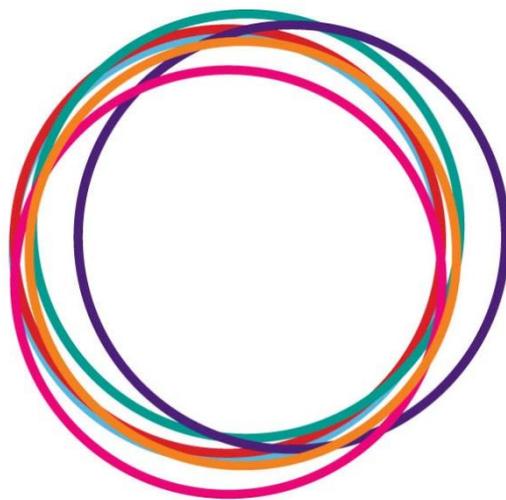


Coalition of National Nursing Organisations

Terms of Reference



CoNNO
Coalition of National **Nursing** Organisations

Endorsed December 2014

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The Coalition of National Nursing Organisations acknowledges the traditional owners and Elders past and present of the land on which we meet across Australia

Supported by the Australian Government Department of Health

Coalition of National Nursing Organisations Terms of Reference

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Coalition of National Nursing Organisations Terms of Reference

1 Preamble

The Coalition of National Nursing Organisations (CoNNO) is made up of more than 50 national nursing and midwifery organisations that work collectively together to advance the nursing and midwifery professions and to improve health care. The Coalition is funded, through the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation, as a program within the Workforce Reform Division of the Australian Government Department of Health (DoH).

1.1 Terms

ANMF – Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation

Auspicing Body – is the ANMF in accordance with the Funding Agreement.

CoNNO – Coalition of National Nursing Organisations.

Coalition – a combination or alliance of groups, factions or parties for a specific reason.

Consensus – an agreed view of parties.

Council - the CoNNO Council, elected by Coalition membership to support the work of the CoNNO.

DoH – Commonwealth Department of Health (formerly the Department of Health and Ageing).

2 Role and Objectives

2.1 Role

CoNNO enables national nursing and midwifery professional organisations in Australia to come together to share information, learn from each other, support and mentor one another in building capacity, and, at times, to act as a conduit to influence and give voice on matters of mutual concern for the nursing and midwifery professions.

2.2 Objectives

In order to achieve its purpose, CoNNO will:

- Promote recognition of nursing and midwifery as essential to the health and wellbeing of the Australian community
- Provide a forum for national debate on health and public policy
- Be a forum for discussion and consultation on professional matters
- Facilitate communication between members and other stakeholders
- Be a recognised conduit for access within and to the nursing and midwifery professions
- Assist the development of governance and capacity of member organisations
- Ensure CoNNO remains robust using good governance practices

CoNNO aims to work together with coalition members to:

- Encourage collaboration across the nursing and midwifery professions, with health consumers, and other stakeholders in health and aged care
- Be transparent about CoNNO's purpose and outcomes and communicate and engage effectively with all member organisations and stakeholders
- Demonstrate accountability through clearly defined functions and roles
- Make informed and transparent decisions
- Engage effectively with member organisations and stakeholders
- Develop the capacity and capability of the CoNNO Council and members to conduct CoNNO Council and member meetings

3 Structure and membership

3.1 Structure

The structure of CoNNO is represented in Diagram 1 (see Appendix 1) and comprises CoNNO member organisations and Council, acting as a representative committee of CoNNO. Council includes a permanent position for a representative of the ANMF, as the auspicing body for CoNNO. The secretariat services for CoNNO are provided by the ANMF.

3.2 Council

CoNNO Council is a representative committee elected by CoNNO member organisations. The Council is responsible for developing and maintaining the strategic plan, terms of reference and CoNNO position statements, as agreed to by member organisations.

3.3 Membership of the Council

The Council consists of the following members:

- Chairperson
- Deputy Chairperson
- ANMF representative (permanent position)
- Six additional CoNNO representative members

3.4 Secretariat

As the original sponsor and auspicing body of CoNNO, the ANMF acts as the Secretariat. The Federal Office Professional Team of the ANMF is responsible for the day to day operations of CoNNO.

3.4.1 Roles and functions of the Secretariat

The Secretariat is responsible for:

- Organising two meetings each year – one in Melbourne and one in Sydney
- Preparing materials for meetings
- Organising venues and catering
- Updating the membership database
- Managing and updating the CoNNO website
- Organising and distributing other publications
- Organising the meeting agenda in consultation with Council
- Organising CoNNO members and guests
- Preparing meeting papers and submissions
- Attending meetings and taking minutes
- Preparing minutes and organising action requested by CoNNO
- Maintaining a database of correspondence
- Securely storing all documents and securities
- Managing the election of Council members and the Chair and Deputy Chair of Council

3.5 Working Groups

The Council, in conjunction with CoNNO member organisations, may create ad-hoc, time-limited, working groups to address specific issues and projects.

3.6 Criteria for membership of CoNNO

CoNNO is made up of organisations that have members in four or more states/territories. Members are either:

- all registered nurses and/or enrolled nurses and/or midwives and/or students of nursing or midwifery
- the nursing and/or midwifery section of a multidisciplinary group
- a clear network of nurses or midwives within such groups who can ensure a nurse or midwife representative and feedback to nurses and midwives in their organisation

Organisations not meeting the membership criteria may apply to attend CoNNO meetings as observers following prior approval by Council. Organisational observer status will be considered on a case by case basis and must be approved by CoNNO member organisations.

3.7 Application for Membership

The Council will consider applications for membership and make recommendations to CoNNO, guided by the criteria for membership.

3.8 Register of Members

The Secretariat will maintain a register of all CoNNO member organisations that will include details of:

- the name and business address of each member organisation
- the date on which that organisation became a member
- any name changes
- reason and date of cessation of membership.

The Register of Members database will be open for inspection, free of charge, to any member of CoNNO.

3.9 Responsibility of member organisations

CoNNO member organisations must ensure:

- that their elected representative, a nurse, midwife or student of nursing or midwifery, attends the two scheduled CoNNO members meetings that are held annually
- continuity of representation at CoNNO, or ensure that new representatives or delegated representatives are well briefed prior to meetings and have the authority to speak on behalf of their organisation and make decisions at CoNNO member meetings
- representatives of CoNNO member organisations must declare any conflicts of interest that may arise from political or commercial interests and close personal relationships
- they notify the CoNNO Secretariat, in writing, if there is any change to their organisation name, structure or role

3.10 Orientation for new members

An information package will be sent to all new member organisations, by the Secretariat. The package will include:

- a statement of welcome
- the Terms of Reference for CoNNO
- CoNNO Strategic Plan
- information about bi-annual meetings
- CoNNO travel policy
- the link to the CoNNO website

3.11 Cessation of membership

An organisation ceases to be a member of CoNNO if one of the following applies. The organisation:

- resigns from membership in writing
- is expelled from membership due to factors such as non-viability or major loss of membership
- is wound up

Membership of CoNNO cannot be transferred to another organisation. Should a member organisation merge with another organisation or significantly change its profile and role, the new organisation/s will be required to inform the Secretariat in writing and make a new application/s for membership.

3.12 Member expenses

Membership of CoNNO is free of charge. Reimbursement of any member expenses must be consistent with the Funding Agreement and the CoNNO Travel Policy.

4 Meetings of CoNNO

4.1 Frequency of CoNNO meetings

Representatives from CoNNO member organisations meet face to face bi-annually, once in Sydney and once in Melbourne.

4.2 Chair of meetings

The Chair of the Council will preside over meetings, assisted by the Secretariat.

Should the Chair not be available for the CoNNO member meeting, the Deputy Chair of the Council or delegated member of the Council will preside as Chair at the meeting.

4.3 Notices of meeting and agendas

Meeting dates will be set annually at a CoNNO member meeting twelve months in advance. The Secretariat will be responsible for:

- organising each meeting and notifying member organisations of the date, time and venue for the meeting at least two months in advance of the meeting
- inviting member organisations to contribute to the agenda and setting the agenda for each meeting
- taking the Minutes of meetings and circulating to member organisations in a timely manner

4.4 Role of member organisations at meetings

Member organisations should:

- keep 'business without notice' items to a minimum
- notify the Secretariat prior to the commencement of the meeting if any urgent last minute items of 'business without notice' should arise so that adequate time can be set aside at the meeting
- ensure that the representative member sent to the meeting is well informed of the issues to be discussed and has the authority to speak on behalf of their organisation and make decisions if called upon to do so at the meeting
- declare any conflicts of interest prior to the commencement of the meeting

4.5 Appointment of proxies

Should a person who represents a member organisation be unable to attend a CoNNO member meeting, the member organisation may appoint a proxy. The proxy must be another member of that member organisation. Proxies are eligible to apply for travel funding.

4.6 Observers at member meetings

CoNNO member organisations can request for an observer/s to attend member meetings. The observer/s should be a member/s of the CoNNO member organisation. Observers are not eligible to apply for travel funding.

4.7 Minutes and outcomes of meetings

Minutes of Meeting will be documented and circulated by the Secretariat to all CoNNO member organisations within three weeks of the meeting. Minutes will also be made available on the CoNNO website.

4.8 Travel costs associated with attending member meetings

Representatives of CoNNO member organisations or their proxies are entitled to funding to cover the cost of attending CoNNO member meetings (as per the Funding Agreement and the CoNNO Travel Policy). Members must complete the CoNNO travel application form and return to the Secretariat by the allotted time. The Secretariat will book all flights.

4.9 Special meeting procedures

A special meeting can be requested by member organisations if funding is available. If there is insufficient funds in the budget to cover the cost of these meetings, member organisations may be asked to cover the associated costs of the meeting.

4.9.1 Quorum for special meetings

A quorum for a Special Meeting must be fifty percent plus one (50% + 1) of the current CoNNO member organisations. If within half an hour after the appointed time for the commencement of a Special Meeting of CoNNO, a quorum is not present, the meeting shall be dissolved.

4.9.2 Voting and decisions at special meetings

Decisions made at Special Meetings will be by consensus. If there is a matter that requires a vote, each member organisation shall have one vote. A secret ballot will be held if a motion to that effect is made to the meeting and agreed. A majority decision will constitute 50% of the vote plus one.

4.9.3 Minutes and outcomes from special meetings

Minutes of a Special Meeting will be documented and circulated by the Secretariat to all CoNNO member organisations within three weeks of the meeting.

4.10 Urgent decision required of members between meetings

In the event of a decision of CoNNO being required urgently between meetings, Council may canvas the opinions of the member organisations via email or teleconference. Once a decision has been reached the Secretariat will circulate the results to all members.

5 CoNNO Council

5.1 Role and functions of Council

The Council, acts as a representative committee of CoNNO.

Members of the CoNNO Council are elected by CoNNO members. With the support of the member organisations the Council is responsible for developing:

- and maintaining a Memorandum of Understanding between Council and the ANMF
- and reviewing the Terms of Reference of CoNNO
- and implementing the Strategic Plan
- position statements as determined and agreed to by member organisations
- an annual work plan and
- meeting agendas.

Council members represent and act in the interest of CoNNO as a whole, rather than the individual member organisation that nominated them.

5.2 Term of Council members

The term of office for Council members is two years. A Council member may serve on Council for a maximum of three (3) consecutive two year terms.

A Council member, who has completed three consecutive terms, may be re-elected to the Council after standing down from Council for at least one two year term.

5.3 Election of Council members

At the end of their two year term, or in the event of a vacancy occurring, the Secretariat will call for nominations from member organisations and, if required, an election to fill the vacancy will be conducted.

CoNNO member organisations can nominate their representative for a Council vacancy. The election of Council members is based on one vote per member organisation. The election of Council will be conducted by secret ballot when more than one nomination is received by the Secretariat for the vacant Council position. If a secret ballot is conducted, two (2) scrutineers shall be appointed by the Secretariat to oversee the counting of the votes.

5.4 Council vacancy

The Office of any member of Council is vacated by the following events:

- resign by notice in writing to the Secretariat, or,
- cease to be the representative of a CoNNO member organisation.

5.5 The Chair

The Chair of the Council is elected by Council members for a two year term. A Chair may only preside for a maximum of two (2) consecutive, two-year terms. If more than one nomination for the position of Chair is received, the Secretariat will conduct a secret ballot with Council members.

5.5.1 Role and functions of Council

The role of the Chair is to:

- preside over all meetings of CoNNO and the Council
- act as a representative of CoNNO when agreed to, or required to do so, by CoNNO members
- speak on behalf of CoNNO in regard to agreed positions as articulated in CoNNO position statements.

The Chair may nominate the Deputy Chair or another delegate representative member of the Council to act as a representative of CoNNO when the Chair is unavailable, or when necessary as agreed by CoNNO members.

5.6 Meetings of Council

Face to face meetings of the Council, between CoNNO member meetings, usually only occur if funding is available or if there is a critical issue warranting this approach. Communication between Council members is usually via email or via teleconference.

Council decisions will be by consensus, unless the matter requires a vote. Each Council member has one vote. In the event of a decision of Council being required urgently between member meetings, the Chair and the Secretariat, may canvas the opinions of Council and formulate resolutions which will be circulated to each of the Council Members.

Minutes of each Council meeting will be taken by the Secretariat and circulated to CoNNO Council members in a timely fashion.

A quorum of five members must be present for all meetings of Council.

5.7 Orientation for Council members

An orientation package of materials on the role and responsibilities of Council is developed and kept updated by the Secretariat. The orientation package will be provided to each new member of Council.

6 Policy development and review

Policy on issues critical to the conduct of CoNNO business including the role, function and aims of CoNNO may be developed by ad hoc, time-limited, CoNNO working groups and presented to Council for review and approval.

Once approved by Council, the policy will be circulated to members for discussion at the next CoNNO member meeting. Adoption of CoNNO policy is through consensus at a CoNNO member meeting.

Council may deem it necessary to have further consultation with all member organisations prior to the final ratification of policy.

All CoNNO policies will be available on the CoNNO website and will be reviewed by Council every three years.

7 Financial management

7.1 Membership fees

CoNNO does not levy membership fees. Funds for some of the operations of CoNNO are allocated to ANMF through a program within the Workforce Division of the Australian Government Department of Health (DoH).

7.2 Funds management

The ANMF, as the auspicing body, is responsible for the management of CoNNO funds.

The ANMF will advise CoNNO Council of any changes to the funding for CoNNO and undertakes to continue to support CoNNO for a period of 12 months in the event that funding should cease.

7.3 Financial overview

The ANMF will provide CoNNO with a financial overview at each face to face meeting of Council. This overview will provide relevant information while complying with the terms of the confidential Funding Agreement.

7.4 Insurance

At a minimum the ANMF, as the auspicing body, will hold the following insurances for CoNNO:

- Workers compensation insurance
- Professional indemnity insurance
- Public liability insurance

The cost of the insurance will be met from the program funds, in accordance with the terms of the Funding Agreement.

7.5 Payment of Council and members

CoNNO Council or representatives of member organisations will not be paid sitting fees or any other payment, other than payment of travel expenses to attend meetings in line with CoNNO policy.

7.6 Audit

The ANMF will audit program funds in accordance with its obligations set out in the Funding Agreement.

8 Alterations to the Terms of Reference

CoNNO Council shall make a recommendation in writing to the member organisations regarding any proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference. The Terms of Reference shall be formally reviewed every four (4) years.

9 Dispute and grievance resolution

The Council will take all reasonable steps to resolve any disputes or grievances involving CoNNO using the principles of natural justice.

Independent mediation, at the expense of each party involved, should be sought if differences are irreconcilable.

Appendix 1

CoNNO ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

