

**BY-LAWS
MENTAL HEALTH NURSING INTEREST GROUP**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Article I | Name |
| Article II | Mission |
| Article III | Membership |
| Article IV | Executive Committee |
| Article V | Meetings |
| Article VI | Standing & Ad Hoc Committees Including Finance Committee |
| Article VII | Rules of Procedure |
| Article VIII | Satellite Groups |
| Article IX | Revision of By-Laws |

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Article I NAME

The name of this organization is the “Mental Health Nursing Interest Group”, henceforth referred to as MHNIG.

Article II MISSION STATEMENT

Mission Statement

MHNIG promotes the health and well-being of people who are at-risk of experiencing mental illness and/or emotional distress as well as promoting mental health services which are responsive to the needs and wishes of individuals with lived experience and the community. Furthermore, the MHNIG promotes the role of the Registered Nurse in serving individuals with mental health concerns.

Interest Group Goals:

- As an interest group of the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (henceforth referred to as RNAO), to actively support the initiatives of RNAO
- To provide a forum for communication and the exchange of ideas within the mental health nursing community.
- To lobby for improved mental health care in institutions and in the community
- To collaborate with individuals with lived experience, families, and other mental health professionals
- To lobby on behalf of mental health nursing for the recognition of and positive image of mental health nursing
- To promote awareness of the roles of mental health nurses and to serve as liaison with RNAO, Canadian Federation of Mental Health Nurses (CFMHN) and the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) in promoting national certification of mental health nurses
- To provide support for mental health nurses through education and research initiatives
- To promote professional growth and adaptation to changing health care trends
- To encourage formation of MHNIG satellite groups throughout Ontario
- To support the implementation of standards of practice for mental health nursing

Article III MEMBERSHIP

- a. Members are required to pay an annual fee as determined by the membership at the annual meeting. Changes to the annual fee can be made, provided that the membership has been notified prior to the Annual meeting and these changes have been voted upon by the MHNIG membership in consultation with the RNAO.
- b. Any member wishing to use the MHNIG name, orally or written, shall obtain prior authorization from the MHNIG Chair or delegate.

- c. Persons who are not RNs, NP, or undergraduate nursing students may belong to the MHNIG. All RN, NP, MHNIG Executive and undergraduate nursing students who are members of the MHNIG are required to also be members of the RNAO.

Article IV EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. Composition

There shall be a MHNIG Executive Committee which shall be composed of the following fixed positions:

- A. Chair
- B. Chair Elect
- C. Past Chair, ex-officio (non-voting member)
- D. Communications executive network officer
- E. Social media and IT executive network officer
- F. Finance executive network officer
- G. Membership and Education executive network officers (2)
- H. Ontario Representative for the Canadian Federation of the Mental Health Nurses (CFMHN)
- I. Policy and Political Action executive network officers (2)
- J. Undergraduate Student executive network officer
- K. Satellite Region Representatives (11) (<http://rnao.ca/connect/regions-chapters>)

These positions can be shared, if agreed upon by the Executive Committee.

2. Notice

- a. Notice of regular Executive Committee meetings shall be contained in the minutes of the preceding Executive Committee meeting.
- b. Meetings are open to all MHNIG members with prior notice to the Executive.

3. Voting during MHNIG Executive Meetings: Quorum

- a. A quorum for a meeting of the Executive Committee shall be a majority of the executive members plus one.
- b. Any questions arising at a meeting of the Executive Committee shall be decided by a majority vote of the Committee members present. In case of a tie, the Chair shall have an extra vote.

4. Vacancy

- a. In the event that an officer shall cease to act, the Executive Committee shall, if the unexpired term thereof is less than one year, appoint a member of the Executive Committee or a new officer from the general membership to fill such office for the unexpired term.
- b. In the event that the unexpired term exceeds one year, the Executive Committee shall arrange to fill such vacancy by holding an election at the next Annual General Meeting (AGM).

5. Election of Officers

a. Number

- The MHNIG Executive shall consist of twenty-three (23) officers as stated in Section 1.

b. Timing of Elections

Elections are to be held between **June 1 and August 1**. A minimum of thirty days' notice shall be given to the members before the deadline for nominations.

In odd numbered years, members shall elect:

1. Chair Elect (followed by a two-year term as Chair)
2. Communications ENO,
3. Finance ENO
4. Membership and Education ENO.
5. Regions 1, 3, 5, 9, 11 Satellite Representatives.
6. Policy and Political Action ENO.

In even numbered years, members shall elect:

1. Policy and Political Action ENO
2. Social media and IT ENO
3. CFMHN Ontario Representative
4. Student liaison ENO, and
5. Regions 2, 4, 6 (and 7 representing Toronto as a whole), 8, 10, 12 Satellite Representatives.
6. Membership and Education ENO.

c. Election Process:

- i. Elections will be based on one member, one vote of their membership.
- ii. RNAO staff will assist with communications and online voting tools.
- iii. Nominations must be voted on by the membership.
- iv. A quorum for the transaction of business at meetings of the members, shall be lesser of three hundred (300) members or one per cent (1%) of all of the members of the interest group entitled to vote, and present in person, by proxy, by electronic means, or by telephonic means, if available.

d. Nominations

- i. Nominations shall be coordinated by the Membership and Education Officers who shall circulate a request form for nominations to the persons or membership two months in advance of the AGM. In addition, the nominations for the office may come from the floor in-person during the AGM.

- ii. No candidate shall be nominated unless such candidate is present at such meeting and consents, or has consented in writing to the nomination.
- iii. In addition, the Chair shall accept any volunteer as a candidate for office in the event that a position is not filled after due process has been made to fill such office.

e. Executive Term of Office

- i. Members of the executive shall each be elected for a two (2) year term of office. The Chair Elect shall be a two (2) year term followed by a two (2) year term as Chair. The Past Chair shall serve a one (1) year term, though may complete a two year term at their discretion.
- ii. The term of office starts after elections, at the AGM
- iii. Members of the executive may be elected to a maximum number of two (2) consecutive terms. Upon completion of the second term, the member will not stand for nomination for the same executive position for one (1) complete term.
- iv. No officer shall serve more than two consecutive terms in the same position on the Executive Committee, unless there are no nominations and the Executive Committee has consented to continue their term
- v. The student ENO's term of office is subject to the individual holding a student membership with RNAO.
- vi. Removal of an MHNIG executive member or Satellite Group Member may be possible by a majority vote by the executive committee. Reasons for removing an executive committee member may relate to the following:
 - Failure to comply with the conflict of interest and/or code of conduct policy requirements;
 - Undermining the unity of RNAO;
 - Compromising RNAO's reputation, values, and objectives of RNAO;
 - Failure to comply with the attendance requirements for executive committee meetings;
 - Inappropriate or disruptive participation and/or not engaging in effective discussion and decision-making;
 - Illegal, unethical or inappropriate activities, which may damage RNAO's reputation; and
 - Executive members are expected to participate in all meetings. Executive member who attend less than two-thirds of all meetings, or misses more than two consecutive meetings, he/she may be asked to resign.
- vii. Resignation from the MHNIG Board must be given no less than 30 days prior to the date of resignation.
- viii. MHNIG chair may resign his/her office by delivering a written letter of resignation to RNAO's president and RNAO's CEO, copying RNAO's board affairs coordinator. The resignation will be effective at the time it is received or at the time specified in the resignation, whichever is later.

- ix. An MHNIG Executive member may resign his/her office by delivering a written letter of resignation to the president, chair, or next responsible member of the executive, copying RNAO's board affairs coordinator. The resignation will be effective at the time it is received or at the time specified in the resignation, whichever is later.
- x. Upon resignation, members are required to destroy or return any manuals or material distributed to them in their capacity as an executive committee member to the president or home office.
- xi. Members are obligated to respect the terms of RNAO's code of conduct and conflict of interest policies indefinitely. This means adhering to full confidentiality of any and all privileged information, confidential decisions, and discussion.

1) Duties of the Executive:

a) The Chair shall:

- i) Preside at all meetings of the MHNIG and Executive Committee
- ii) Attend or designate a member to attend the RNAO meetings (i.e. Chair Meetings)
- iii) Administer the affairs of the MHNIG
- iv) Be responsible for the agenda, changes in the agenda, and new business for meetings
- v) Present an annual report at the Annual General Meeting and upon request by the Association
- vi) Develop and evaluate goals and objectives compatible with those of MHNIG and RNAO
- vii) Work with the political process to achieve these goals
- viii) Form liaisons with nursing and other organizations in support of the goals of MHNIG
- ix) Implement or delegate someone to begin the nomination process
- x) Be available to connect with RNAO Home Office when questions regarding mental health and mental health nursing issues arise

b) The Chair Elect Shall:

- i) Perform such duties as may be assigned by the Executive Committee or the Chair
- ii) In the absence of the President, perform the duties of the Chair, including attending and voting at the RNAO AGM
- iii) Attend and report at teleconferences and the AGM.
- iv) Provide leadership in communication activities regarding the newsletter.
- v) Inform the Chair and the Membership of issues relevant to Mental Health Nursing using the MHNIG newsletter, at least biannually and compose communications for submissions to the RN Journal and the web site in conjunction with the IT Officer.
- vi) Solicit material for, edit, and prepare a newsletter at least two times a year.
- vii) Encourage satellite submissions to the Registered Nurse Journal
- viii) Arrange to send a copy of the Newsletter to RNAO Home Office and to all of the Chairs of the Interest Groups of RNAO

c) The Past Chair (ex-officio) shall

- i) Act in the role of Chair should the current Chair leave the executive board until such time that the MHNIG Executive committee chooses a new Chair
- ii) Attend Executive Meetings
- iii) Act as a mentor to the Chair
- iv) Assist in the functions of the board

d) The Communications Officer shall:

- i) Attend and keep records of all proceedings of the MHNIG including of all meetings of the MHNIG and the Executive Committee
- ii) Send Copies of the minutes of any such meetings to the RNAO liaison person and to the executive members
- iii) Distribute the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting to all members, immediately after the AGM
- iv) Attend meetings at RNAO related to communications.

e) The Finance Officer Shall:

- i) Attend and report at teleconferences and the AGM.
- ii) Keep a record of all monies received and expended
- iii) Issue and sign cheques for payment of expenditures as previously authorized by the Executive Committee
- iv) Place funds in the MHNIG bank chequing account
- v) Maintain financial records and liaise with the RNAO
- vi) Report, at the request of the Chair-person, the state of the finances
- vii) Send statements and balances as requested to the Director of Finance at RNAO
- viii) Maintain a teleconference phone line and act as the moderator.
- ix) Provide the membership with a full detailed financial statement at the AGM for voting and approval

f) The Policy and Political Action Officer Shall:

- i) Attend and report at teleconferences and the AGM.
- ii) Hold regular meetings with membership, if needed
- iii) Work with the political process to achieve goals to keep members and the Executive informed
- iv) Form liaisons with nursing and other organizations as appropriate
- v) Assist with the development and evaluation of the goals and objectives of MHNIG that relate to policy and political action.
- vi) Attend political action meetings hosted by RNAO (ie. Annual Day at Queen's Park)

g) The Education & Membership Officer Shall:

- i) Attend and report at teleconferences and the AGM
- ii) Plan and coordinate arrangements for workshops and other educational initiatives

- iii) Plan and coordinate the educational component of the Annual Meeting
- iv) Compile quarterly, and make available to the Executive, a current MHNIG membership list of members
- v) Liaise with the RNAO re: its membership services to the MHNIG
- vi) Collaborate with Satellite representatives to plan and coordinate workshops.
- vii) Coordinate the bursary awards with the assistance of the Past-Chair, the RNAO and other supporting organizations (i.e. RNFOO)
- viii) Compile twice annually, and make available to the Executive, a current MHNIG membership list – either in print or an electronic file
- ix) Collaborate with Satellite representatives to plan and coordinate a membership drive with the RNAO Director of Membership
- x) Collaborative with Satellite representatives to plan educational initiatives
- xi) Actively recruit members to MHNIG through mailings and postings in the newsletter or on the web site
- xii) Attend meetings at RNAO as required pertaining to membership.
- xiii) Submit and post upcoming educational events of interest to members through the newsletter and the web site

h) The IT Officer Shall

- i) Attend and report at teleconferences and the AGM.
- ii) Post articles, employment opportunities and relevant events to the website and social media
- iii) Assist Executive in maintaining the website
- iv) Manage website email; responding to inquiries and/or forward inquiries to appropriate contacts
- v) Take minutes from Executive Meetings, AGM and other relevant meetings when Communications Officer not able

i) The CFMHN Representative Shall

- i) Attend and report at MHNIG teleconferences and the MHNIG AGM
- ii) Attend meetings of the Canadian Federation of Mental Health Nurses, acting as an advocate and representative for Ontario interests and concerns related to Mental Health Nursing
- iii) Serve as a liaison with RNAO and CNA in promoting certification of Mental Health/Psychiatric Nurses and cause to be put in place constructs to facilitate such certification

j) The Student Representative Officer Shall

- i) Attend and report at teleconferences and the AGM.
- ii) Advocate with fellow students/faculty about psychiatric/mental health nursing
- iii) Keep Executive updated about student learnings in psychiatric/mental health nursing
- iv) Recruit more students to become members
- v) Submit articles for inclusion in the newsletter and the web site
- vi) Attend the AGM

Article V MEETINGS

a. Executive Meetings

- i. The Executive Committee shall meet no less than four (4) times per year (face-to-face, audio, or video conferencing), at such time and place as the Committee shall determine
- ii. Additional meetings may be held upon resolution of the Committee, or at the call of the Chair
- iii. Each executive member is expected to attend executive meetings and to attend at least 2/3 of all meetings or they may be asked to resign unless there has been communication with the Chair
- iv. Executive to provide a minimum of two (2) communications to all members of the interest group
- v. Executive to plan and deliver local activities to members
- vi. During the meeting, if there is a need to have consensus on a question, or an issue, all members in attendance at the meeting will be eligible to have one (1) vote on the questions at the meeting; quorum of 50 percent plus 1. Ex-officio members are non-voting members.

b. Annual General Meetings (AGM)

- i. The MHNIG shall hold a minimum of one (1) membership and/or AGM per year
- ii. Additional general membership meetings may be called at any time and place at the discretion of the Executive Committee and the membership shall be duly informed
- iii. Notice of an AGM, including an agenda, shall be communicated to membership preceding such meeting, no less than thirty (30) days prior to the meeting
- iv. The Chair will send the agenda to the executive no less than three days prior to the meeting
- v. Any adjustments to the meeting minutes will be reviewed and approved at the following executive meeting

Article VI STANDING AND AD HOC COMMITTEES

1. The Executive Committee of MHNIG shall have the power to create or dissolve such committees as it may deem advisable
 - a. The Committee Chairperson shall be selected by the Executive Committee and members of such committees shall be selected from the MHNIG membership with the approval of the Executive Committee
 - b. The Chairperson shall report to the Executive Committee
2. **Finance Committee**
 - a. There may be a Finance Committee consisting of the Chair, Finance Officer, and one other member. The purpose of the Committee is to make timely decisions between Executive meetings on related financial opportunities and/or requests. The Finance Officer is the Chair of this Committee.
 - b. The signing officers shall be:

- i. The Treasurer
 - ii. The Chair or other officer as determined by the Executive Committee
- c. The following shall be prepared and presented to the MHNIG Executive for approval:
 - i. A detailed yearly budget to be presented at the first Executive Committee meeting after each Annual General Meeting
 - ii. Recommendations for financial investments shall be made to the MHNIG Executive. Decisions around investments shall be made by a majority vote.
 - iii. The Fiscal Year shall end on the 31st of each October
 - iv. Financial statements shall be sent for a “program of test checks” yearly and at other times as necessary
 - v. Executive is to control and administer funds provided by the association for interest group programs
 - vi. Expenses on behalf of the MHNIG Executive may be claimed with legal receipts on the RNAO forms according to the RNAO guidelines.

ARTICLE VII RULES OF PROCEDURE

The rules contained in Wainberg’s Rules of Order shall govern the MHNIG in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are consistent with the By-Laws and special rules of order that the MHNIG may adopt.

ARTICLE VIII SATELLITE GROUPS

1. Formation

- a. Satellite groups may be formed by a minimum of ten (10) interested MHNIG members within a RNAO Region with special consideration being given for low-density areas
- b. By-Laws and objectives of the satellite groups shall be created by these Satellite groups and be compatible with those of MHNIG.
- c. Copies of the By-Laws, objectives, and the minutes of meetings will be submitted to the MHNIG Executive.
- d. Boundaries, Limitation and Role of a Satellite Group shall be jointly determined by the Executive of the Satellite and of MHNIG.
- e. There shall be an Executive Committee of at least four members with a Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer.

2. Dissolution

- a. The Executive Committee shall, if it considers it is in the best interests of the MHNIG to do so, dissolve the satellite group if:
 - i. Such satellite group ceases to have sufficient members, or
 - ii. The majority of the members of such satellite group has indicated in writing to the Executive Committee of the MHNIG the desire to dissolve the satellite group;

- iii. The By-Laws of the satellite group are not consistent with the intent of the RNAO and the MHNIG.

3. Funding

- a. On written request by the Satellite chairperson, each satellite shall receive annually \$5.00 for each of the MHNIG members within the agreed upon geographical area to be used as an operating budget. All written submissions requesting operating funds shall be fulfilled within one month from the date received.
- b. The Treasurer of each Satellite Group shall prepare an annual financial statement and submit it according to the MHNIG By-Laws, The Financial Officer of the MHNIG and to the satellite Group membership.
- c. Upon receipt of a written request to the Financial Officer, additional funding for special purposes such as membership drives, educational events and conferences shall be negotiated with the MHNIG Executive.

ARTICLE IX REVISION OF BY-LAWS

These bylaws may be amended at an AGM of the MHNIG members, by a majority of votes cast, provided that notice of the Annual Meeting advised that such amendments would be dealt with at that meeting. Additionally, the MHNIG bylaws or amendments may be approved by electronic means. The MHNIG bylaws shall be revisited every five years by the Executive then brought forward to the Membership if no changes have been made in that time.