

Adopted by the assembly at a closed meeting in Malaga, October 2010

1. Name

The name of the organisation is the European Society for Quality in Family Practice, acronym EQuiP.

2. Aims

The general aim of EQuiP is to foster and maintain high standards of quality in European general/family practice. Its mission is to promote education, training, research and implementation of quality development in European primary health care. The strategic goals are specified every third year.

3. Position

With the formation of the European Society of General Practice/Family Medicine (WONCA Europe) EQuiP has become a network organisation of that body, independent but in close collaboration, dealing with the issues of quality in primary care.

EQuiP is not a legal body that can have any property rights. Resources for running EQuiP are handled according to paragraph 9.

4. Language

The official language of EQuiP is English, and all meetings, notes and minutes are held in English language.

5. Representation

5.1. Representation of the national organisations of general practitioners

Each country from the region of WONCA Europe can nominate two persons to be the national delegates in EQuiP through the national society (-is) of general practitioners. All national societies and associations of general practitioners active in quality development are eligible to be represented in EQuiP.

If more than two representative bodies of GPs are willing to participate the one with WONCA membership will be preferred. It is up to the organisations of that country to find a solution to the controversy. If no consensus can be reached within the country, the EQuiP Assembly will decide, which societies can represent the country.

5.2 The procedure to become an organisation within EQuiP

All national organisations that want to be represented in EQuiP, must apply for that from the EQuiP Assembly. The application must comprise information about the number of members and the quality development activities of the organisation.

The EQuiP Assembly will decide if the applying organisation qualifies as a member organisation and thus is given permission to send a delegate to EQuiP Assembly meetings.

If an application from an organisation is received after the country already has appointed two EQuiP delegates, the assembly judges the representativity of the new organisation. If that exceeds that of an organisation that is already sending a representative to EQuiP, the new organisation will replace the former when the sitting delegate's three-year period is over.

If the delegate representing the national organisation does not attend three consecutive assembly meetings without an acceptable explanation, the assembly can regard the society as no longer represented in EQuiP. The Assembly will inform the national society in question and subsequently the national society must send a new application for representation.

5.3 The procedure to become a delegate within EQuIP

The national society accepted by the Assembly of EQuIP to represent the country can nominate a delegate for a three year period.

If the national nomination is in accordance with the EQuIP bylaws, the EQuIP Assembly will confirm it.

At the end of a period in office or in case of resignation of the delegate, the national society of the resigning delegate must nominate a successor to be approved by the Assembly. If the national society does not nominate a new person in time, EQuIP will call for a nomination by sending a letter to the national society or WONCA individual members through WONCA Europe secretariat.

5.4 Former EQuIP delegate

When EQuIP delegates resign from their posts, they become former EQuIP delegates.

Former EQuIP delegates are entitled to receive minutes of all meetings and will be invited to open meetings organised by the EQuIP.

Former members are obliged to inform the honorary secretary about any changes in their contact information.

6. Collaboration

6.1 Collaboration with WONCA Europe

EQuIP is a network organisation of WONCA Europe. It will advice and help WONCA Europe in all matters of quality development in primary health care.

The Assembly nominates two delegates, of whom the WONCA Europe council elects one to act in the Executive Board of WONCA Europe, and an observer to the council of WONCA Europe for a period of three years. This person will function as a liaison officer reporting matters both in WONCA Europe and EQuIP.

6.2 Other Organisations

EQuIP can cooperate with any organisation in Europe whose goals are in compliance with the aims of EQuIP. Cooperation can be initiated by EQuIP or the other organisation. The Assembly decides about the cooperation and its contents.

6.3 Sponsoring

Organisations or companies who wish to support the meetings of EQuIP may do so through supporting the national organisation responsible to organise an EQuIP meeting. The national organisation is responsible for producing a transparent budget for meetings hold to be approved by the Assembly.

7. Governing of EQuIP

7.1 The Assembly

The governing body of EQuIP is the Assembly and all decisions are made by it.

The Assembly has a quorum if 10 countries are present in the meeting.

All decisions are made by simple majority.

The Assembly will meet twice a year. The meeting time and place is decided on at the previous Assembly meeting. The meeting time and place can be changed only in force major situations by the Board and approved by two thirds majority of the meeting Assembly for the decisions to be valid.

If a delegate wishes to bring a new item for decision in the Assembly, it must be announced to the Executive Board not less than 30 days before the meeting.

7.2 The Executive Board

The Executive Board comprise six members, the President, the Honorary Secretary, the Honorary Treasurer and three members at large. The Board members are elected by the Assembly for a three-year period among the assembly delegates. The offices of Board members may be renewed once for a further three-year period. Membership in the Board will be for a maximum of twelve years.

If a member of the Board leaves the office before the three-year period is over, a new member is elected for a normal three-year period.

Any delegate can volunteer for a position in the Board. For a nomination the support of another present EQuIP delegate is required.

The Board will enact the decisions of the Assembly.

The Assembly can leave defined matters to be decided by the Board.

The Board will prepare, organise and call up the Assembly meetings and all other meetings in conjunction with it.

7.3 Preparatory organs

The Assembly can set working groups, task forces or persons to report on preparatory tasks.

Working groups and task forces choose a chair person for consolidation in the Assembly once a year. Maximum period for chairing a group is six years.

Each preparatory task when placed gets a time table and clear goals.

The placements of persons in preparatory work are named in the first meeting of EQuIP Assembly each year.

Each preparatory body will report to the Board before the meeting of the Assembly.

7.4 The President

The President of EQuIP chairs the meetings of the Assembly and the Board. The President also represents EQuIP in meetings and acts as a spokesman if the Board or Assembly has not pointed another delegate to do that.

If the President is hindered to lead a meeting, Honorary Secretary can replace him/her until the Assembly or the Board can choose a temporary replacement.

7.5 The minutes

Minutes are kept of all the meetings of EQuIP. The Honorary Secretary will keep the minutes in the Assembly and in the Board.

All the minutes are sent to the participants of the organ within two weeks for comments. If there is no disagreement to the action points in the minutes within the next two weeks, they are considered to be approved and will be placed to the EQuIP web site. If there are disagreements, the minutes are to be approved at the following Assembly meeting.

7.6 Invitations

The Assembly can decide to invite persons or organisations to attend the Assembly meeting or other meetings in conjunction with it.

8. Open meetings

EQuIP can organise open meetings on national or international level. The aim of these meetings is to carry out the aims of EQuIP.

Invitation to these meetings can be totally open or directed to a certain group.

9. Financial matters

Financial resources of running EQuIP (mainly Assembly meetings and web pages) will be placed in the bank account of the national association of the honorary treasurer. Records of the financial affairs of EQuIP will be kept by the honorary treasurer and will be reported at every Assembly meeting.

Any charges for functioning are collected in conjunction with the meetings. All payments are decided in the assembly when the budget of a meeting is presented. Budgeting of EQuIP meetings follows the ethical rules of WMA.

If functioning of EQuIP ceases, any property left is given over to the WONCA Europe.

10. Other matters

The EQuIP Constitution becomes effective when the Assembly accepts it by simple majority. The delegates, Executive Board or Assembly can propose changes to the Constitution. Changes to the Constitution are made effective in the same manner as changes to the minutes.

Present EQuIP delegates can keep their position as national delegates until their national societies replace them or for a maximum of three years after the EQuIP Assembly meeting, where the Assembly agrees on the EQuIP Constitution. After this period national societies must present their nomination of national delegates in accordance with the article 5.

Matters not specifically covered in the preceding paragraphs will be considered by the Assembly and appropriate by-laws enacted.