

BTS MDR-TB STEERING GROUP

CONSTITUTION 2025-2028

1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The BTS MDR-TB Steering Group is responsible for the clinical management and supervision of the Society's MDR-TB Clinical Advice Service.

The Steering Group will meet twice each year with the following remit:

- To oversee the content and direction of MDR-TB Clinical Advice Service, including advice on ethical issues;
- To advise on the development of online advice/data collection system;
- To oversee the application for ethical approval;
- To advise on communication and dissemination of information on the MDR-TB Clinical Advice Service to potential participants in the UK including the development of a network of leads in centres across the UK;
- To produce regular progress reports from the MDR-TB Clinical Advice Service for the BTS Board of Trustees, the BTS Quality Improvement Committee, the Research Ethics Committee and other BTS Committees as required.
- To advise on the content and format of reports to be produced from the MDR-TB Clinical Advice Service as feedback to participating centres and for publication where appropriate.

2. MEMBERSHIP

2.1 The membership of the Steering Group comprises the following:

- The Chair, who will hold a place on the BTS Quality Improvement Committee
- A representative from the UK Health Security Agency
- A clinical microbiologist linked to the National Mycobacterial Reference Laboratory
- The Chair or a member of the BTS TB & NTM SAG
- Two consultant members who bring relevant expertise to the group
- A representative from the Infection Disease Association (BIA)
- A representative from the British HIV Association (BHIVA)
- A pharmacy representative
- A patient or lay representative

2.2 All members, however selected and in whatever capacity, will normally serve for a maximum of 3 years from the date of taking up membership. The term of service is usually effective from the date of Society's Annual General Meeting each year. It is intended that the consultant members (as well as the Chair and TB & NTM SAG Chair/member) will also act as Clinical Service Advisors.

2.3 Members of the Steering Group other than those who are members by virtue of their position as representative of an external organisation or Chair of the TB & NTM SAG, can apply to join by volunteering annually in response to a call for volunteers. This is circulated in the early summer each year to all BTS members. The call for volunteers will clearly state the vacancies that are available; the experience and special interests sought (if any) and the arrangements for selection. If there are more volunteers than places available, selection will be undertaken by the Chair of the Group, supported by the Honorary Secretary and Chief Executive or Head of Clinical Programmes, based on the provision by volunteers of a short CV and supporting statement.

2.4 All members of BTS Groups must be members of the Society unless they have been nominated by an external organisation.

2.5 If a Group wishes to involve a member with specific skills, and that person is not therefore likely to be a BTS member; or, if a Group wishes to vary the membership as outlined above, this **MUST** be discussed first by the Chair with the BTS Board of Trustees, and agreement of Trustees obtained.

2.6 Every effort is taken to agree dates of meetings one year in advance and notify these to all members as soon as they have been agreed. Dates agreed in advance will only be changed if there are exceptional circumstances, and then at least 8 weeks' notice will normally be given. If a member misses more than 2 meetings in succession, and there are no extenuating circumstances (in relation to sickness absence, for example), then the Society will ask that member to stand down.

2.7 All members are required to conduct themselves in accordance with the Society's policies and general procedures (e.g. for travel expenses), and in particular in relation to the policy about relationships with the bio-medical and tobacco industries, and the associated Declarations of Interest Scheme (DOI) (see section 4, following). Members are especially asked to note that efforts should be made to return a completed DOI form before the end of January each year, or prior to the first meeting of the Group in every calendar year, whichever is earlier. If a form has not been completed after a reminder has been given at that meeting, the member concerned will be asked to withdraw until the information has been provided.

2.8 Chairs and members of all BTS Committees, Advisory Groups, sub-Committees and groups which produce BTS Guidelines and other publications should not accept any invitations from bio-medical industry to attend Advisory Boards or other meetings at which they are described as, and/or referred to, as representing BTS in any way. Nor should they solicit invitations in that capacity. It is up to individuals to decide whether to accept an invitation to attend such events, but this will be in an individual capacity only and should be declared under the provisions of the Society's Policy on relationships with the bio-medical industry, through the Declaration of Interests Scheme. If an individual feels any conflict has arisen, they should resign from their BTS position, or the activity in question with immediate effect.

3. STANDING ORDERS

3.1 Role of the Chair of the Steering Group

The Chair of the Steering Group will be a member of the BTS Quality Improvement Committee and will be the main link between the development and execution of the Society's objectives for the MDR-TB Clinical Advice Service and the detailed work of the Steering Group.

3.2 The Chair is responsible for the direction, conduct, moving forward and completion of Steering Group business, both during meetings and between the meetings. In this task s/he is supported by the Society's staff (who provide a full secretariat service) and other members.

3.3 The Chair will approve the Steering Group agenda and draft minutes, which are prepared by BTS staff. S/he will also prepare and/or commission papers from other Group members or BTS staff and will chair the formal meetings of the Group and any ad-hoc meetings.

3.4 While BTS staff can draft follow-up correspondence and deal with queries arising from the work of the Group on an operational level from day to day, it is anticipated that the Chair will provide advice on content and professional issues involved and, in particular, deal with peers and external organisations in relation to all areas where clinical leadership is required.

3.5 The Chair has an important role in ensuring that Declaration of Interest forms from all Group members are scrutinised and any issue of concern discussed with the individual concerned and/or the Honorary Secretary. S/he must also ensure that at the beginning of each meeting members are asked to declare any additional recently-acquired interests, and is expected to exercise judgement in the conduct of Group business in the event of any potential conflicts of interest.

3.6 Succession planning for the Chair of the Group will take place as follows. In the spring of the year when the Chair's 3 year term in office is due to end, the Society will advertise that a vacancy for the Chair of that Group will be coming up. A job description will be available. Members of the Group plus any other member of the Society will be invited to apply. All applicants will be required to send a short CV and a statement outlining why they are interested in the position and what they feel they can bring to the post. Applicants will be shortlisted (if necessary) and interviewed in line with the process for recruitment of chairs of BTS groups.

3.7 Before a Chair is appointed, s/he will be asked to submit an updated Declaration of Interest form, if this is not already available. This will be submitted to the Chair of the Board of Trustees and Honorary Secretary for approval before the appointment is confirmed.

3.8 **Frequency and conduct of meetings of the Steering Group**

The Group will normally meet twice a year. Meetings will be held as hybrid meetings online/in person at BTS Head Office.

3.9 The BTS staff member responsible for the Group will draft an agenda and discuss with the Chair no later than 3 weeks before the date of the meeting. The agenda and papers will be circulated to all members no later than 7 days (and preferably) 10 days before the meeting takes place. It is not good practice, and will not normally be possible, to table papers at meetings, especially those that contain detailed information except at the discretion of the

Chair, and taking into account circumstances involved. Authors of papers are therefore asked to submit in time according to the date given by the secretariat.

3.10 Draft minutes, including named action points, will normally be produced within 7-10 days of the meeting to be agreed by the Chair and then sent to members as an aide-memoire for those who may have been asked to carry out actions, or for information for those who were not able to attend.

4. CODE OF CONDUCT

4.1 The Society values the contribution of those members who serve on its various Committees, Advisory Groups and Working Parties. Without this service, it would not be possible to carry out the great variety of work that is undertaken and which contributes to the raising of standards of care for people with respiratory disease. BTS has a justifiably high reputation for the quality of its activities and the advice it gives to external bodies.

4.2 The Society is also proud to have been a pioneer in a number of areas, including its Declarations of Interest scheme, which has been replicated by a number of other Societies in recent years. The probity of our actions is underpinned by a number of policies and procedures which are kept under regular (annual) review.

4.3 To ensure effective functioning of the Declarations of Interest process the Chair should proactively manage declarations from Group members. This will include:

- Having declarations of interest as a standing item on all meeting agendas;
- Formally asking members whether anything has changed since they submitted their last declaration;
- Formally asking members at the start of each meeting whether there are any agenda items which may cause conflict or in which they have an interest;
- Seeking advice when required from the Honorary Secretary or Chief Executive if there are any concerns about new items mentioned under declaration of interest.

4.4 Consequently, we ask all members of Committees, Groups and Working Parties to note and abide by the following policy and procedures documents:

- **BTS and the Biomedical Industry Policy for joint working and funding arrangements and associated Declarations of Interest Scheme. This is reviewed annually by BTS Council and Trustees.**
- **BTS Policy on Inclusion, Diversity and Equality**
- **Endorsement Policy**
- **BTS Information Governance Policy**
- **Complaints procedure**
- **Media access and Communications policy**
- **Travel and subsistence policy (reviewed annually by Honorary Treasurer and Chief Executive)**

Chief Executive
July 2025