

## Guidance Notes for Health Professional Associations applying to become a EULAR Member Association

**We are delighted you are considering applying to EULAR to become a National Association of Health Professionals in Rheumatology member.**

### **What are the advantages of applying to be recognised as a EULAR Member Association for your country?**

The Health Professional Standing Committee (HPSC) will be able to share with you the benefits of the EULAR network with the aim of improving research, education whilst supporting clinical practice to ensure high quality care for people with Rheumatic and Musculoskeletal Diseases (RMDs).

Probably the greatest benefit is that of being able to work closely with other country presidents, exchange knowledge and expertise whilst also helping to form the future direction of health professional developments within Europe.

The personal and professional development of becoming actively involved in the work of EULAR also translates at a country level, informing and enabling you to be formally recognised for the wider contribution your organisation is making within Europe.

### **EULAR Definition of a Health Professional in Rheumatology**

- Is a professional involved in the care of people with musculoskeletal diseases and related conditions.
- Is not a registered medical practitioner
- Is eligible to be a member of the organisation through which a country has become a EULAR HP member.

The notes below have been prepared to help make the application as simple as possible in applying for membership.

### **What you need to consider when completing your application.**

1. Your organisation should be fully established with formal recognition that you are a health professional organisation for rheumatology in your country. Your organisation should be open to all health professional disciplines (e.g. occupational therapists, nurses, physiotherapists, chiropodists or podiatrists, pharmacists, psychologists). *See definition of a Health Professional in Rheumatology above.*
2. Although you may be open to membership by any of the disciplines outlined (point 1 above), you do not need to have all members fully represented but you should have a range of different disciplines represented in your membership before applying. That is, your organisation should not be made up of only one discipline (for example only nurses).
3. The name of your organisation must reflect the multi-disciplinary aspects of the group. So it should have health professionals in the title for example: "The rheumatology health professionals association of [country]".
4. Your organisation should have minutes of your first meeting recorded and submitted with your application.
5. You should have the documented evidence of the constitution setting out how your organisation works, its aims and objectives and how members are voted in, the responsibilities of the organisation and other aspects that govern its day to day activities.
6. The organisation should be fully independent of other professional associations. This means that the senior executive members of your organisation should have a budget and that the budget should be administered by the organisation and not through any other organisation. This can sometimes be difficult as young developing Associations often have been supported by the medical colleagues. To show you are an independent and viable organisation on your own is important if you are to represent your country as a National Association of Health Professionals in Rheumatology.

7. The senior roles within the organisation (for example chair and president) should be held by health professionals and not medical doctors. If currently you have senior members who are holding the most senior posts and are medical you will need to formally review this part of your constitution and make the necessary changes
8. If you are newly formed you may apply as long as you fulfil all the requirements highlighted. However, it will be important that you plan to develop and progress. In some circumstances new members may feel that the most effective step to their growth is to progress to being recognised as a National Association and applying to represent rheumatology Health Professionals for their country.
9. You need to be from Europe or a neighboring country.
10. The following documents should be submitted:
  - a. The completed application form found on the EULAR website
  - b. Documents setting out your constitution and the date of the forming your organisation (in original language and English translation).
  - c. The minutes of your first assembly meeting held (in original language and English translation).
  - d. Certification that you are the only organization in your country representing multiple health professionals in rheumatology or, if that is not the case, that you have informed other similar organizations about your application to become a member of EULAR Health Professionals.
  - e. Evidence to demonstrate that your organisation is financially independent, e.g. a budget including expected income and expenses (in original language and English translation).

#### **The Next Step:**

The process: Firstly all the above documents need to be submitted to: EULAR Secretariat and copied to the Vice President of the EULAR Health Professionals:

Secretariat: Patrizia Jud [patrizia.jud@eular.org](mailto:patrizia.jud@eular.org)

Vice President of EULAR HP: Prof. Tanja Stamm [tanja.stamm@meduniwien.ac.at](mailto:tanja.stamm@meduniwien.ac.at)

Once these have been received they will be reviewed initially by the secretariat and the vice president to ensure all documents are in order. If there are problems they will contact you before formal submission to the Executive Committee.

If you have a problem with any aspects of the application both the secretariat and the chair will be happy to provide guidance prior to your submission.

Please note the Executive Committee meeting documents need to be prepared and submitted and this is undertaken twice a year:

The absolute completed documents must go for final submission by either the end of January or the end of July. They will then be considered in the executive meetings in March and September.

If your application is received positively by the Executive Committee, your organisation will then be invited to attend the General Assembly meeting at EULAR Congress in June, where the General Assembly make the final decision about accepting your application following a vote.

#### **What are your responsibilities once you are recognised and voted in as a National Association representing Health Professional for your country as a EULAR member.**

Your organisation will be asked to nominate a Liaison Officer who will be the representative for EULAR activities. This is usually the President of your organisation or the General Secretary/Treasurer. Their name and contact details will be held by the EULAR Secretariat for communication purposes.

A Liaison Officer will be expected to:

1. Respond to communication from the EULAR Health Professional in Rheumatology Standing Committee (HPSC) and EULAR Secretariat.
2. Provide an overview of your organisation so that your details can be published in the EULAR National Association of Health Professionals in Rheumatology membership directory and on the EULAR website.

3. Participate with the activities of EULAR which include;
  - a. Attending the General Assembly each year and casting your vote on key decisions about EULAR and its activities as requested by the agenda
  - b. Attend a HPSC committee meeting held at EULAR Congress once a year. The committee meet to share knowledge and network with other Liaison Officers– with the aim of improving the care of patients with Rheumatic and Musculoskeletal Diseases (RMD). To work with colleagues to achieve the strategic goals of EULAR by improving education, research and patient care across Europe.
  - c. Participate when possible with aspects of the congress programme as requested by the HPSC, for example volunteering to chair sessions at congress and encourage collaboration between countries and different disciplines involved in the care of those with RMDs.
  - d. To work closely with other EULAR committees - PARE's (the patient pillar of EULAR) and the EULAR Standing Committee for Clinical Affairs (ESCCA)
  - e. Distribute the EULAR HPR newsletter (electronically) through your networks so that your membership is informed of opportunities within EULAR.
4. The Liaison Officer (or nominated representative) will be invited to attend an annual dinner for country presidents held during EULAR Congress each year.
5. The Liaison Officer (or nominated representative) may be asked to attend other strategic planning meetings or advisory meetings to provide their knowledge and expertise of care in RMDs. EULAR will reimburse travel and accommodation if this is required for a specific project/piece of work. Attendance and participation would be voluntary.