



# Association of Genetic Nurses and Counsellors

A constituent group of the British Society for Genetic Medicine

## New Genetic Counsellor Group Terms of reference

These terms of reference will; outline the purpose and structure of the New Genetic Counsellor Group, in addition to defining the scope of the group and providing guidance for group members.

### **Group overview**

The aim of the New Genetic Counsellor Group is to provide a supportive and confidential forum for new Genetic Counsellors to communicate within. It is hoped that this will enable the sharing of experiences and relevant information, in addition to providing an opportunity for members to seek support and advice from one another. Furthermore, the group facilitates the communication of the views, queries and concerns of new Genetic Counsellors to the AGNC committee, when requested. There is also a mailing list and a private and closed New GC Facebook group (for more social communication between members).

### **Group structure**

The group is open to all new Genetic Counsellors in research, trainee or substantive posts; who have less than three years' experience. This includes STP and MSc students in their second and third years. In order to become a member of the New Genetic Counsellor Group, you must first be a member of the AGNC.

The group is facilitated by a representative who is elected either by the members of the group or by the AGNC committee if required, on a periodic basis. The representative communicates information within the group, maintains the group register, mailing list and Facebook group, and attends regular AGNC committee meetings to feedback any issues arising from the group or the AGNC committee respectively.

### **Scope of the group**

The group is designed to facilitate the dissemination of information regarding conferences, meetings, articles of interest etc, which may be of relevance to the group members. Furthermore, the group enables links to be developed between Genetic Counsellors new to the profession, and provides the opportunity to learn and gain advice from other members. The group also provides a voice for new Genetics Counsellors to express any concerns or views to the AGNC committee. Likewise the committee provides updates to new Genetic Counsellors, which may be of relevance to their practice.

There are some areas that are beyond the scope of the New Genetic Counsellor Group.

- If members have a clinical or ethical dilemma, this should be raised with your mentor, line manager or a senior member of your departmental team.
- Likewise, if you have any concerns regarding your individual training post or role, these are best addressed locally. If you have a more general query regarding training posts, these can



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be raised with the Training Panel of the AGNC. You can contact the group representative to find out who the relevant person is to contact.

- Members with queries regarding registration should consult the GCRB website. If this does not address your query, you can contact the registration board directly. The group representative is not in a position to take routine registration queries to the AGNC committee meetings.

### **Guidelines for members**

- Correspondence within the group should not be shared with non-group members i.e. emails/circulars should not be forwarded to non-group members.
- Where information communicated within the group may be of interest to non-group members, it is appropriate to seek advice from the group representative as to whether this can be shared with non-group members. Again, the original email should not be forwarded directly to non-group members in this scenario.
- Communication items marked as 'confidential' should not be shared or discussed with non-group members.
- Communication within the group should be respectful, supportive and non-judgemental.
- Contact details of group members should not be shared outside of the group.
- Members are responsible for updating the group representative if there are any changes to their contact details or they cease to be an AGNC member.
- Members who take a leave of absence in post e.g. maternity leave or sick leave, may remain in the group until they have completed the equivalent of 3 years' experience.

### **Responsibilities of the group representative**

- To facilitate communication within the group.
- To raise any concerns from the group at the AGNC committee meetings.
- To provide feedback where appropriate from AGNC committee meetings to the group.
- To maintain the group register, mailing list and Facebook group.
- To notify and remove members after they have been in post >3 years (unless a leave of absence has been taken).
- To seek guidance from the AGNC committee in the event of queries outside of the scope of the group.
- To arrange and manage the selection of a new representative when appropriate.
- To update the AGNC website and Terms of Reference when required.