

CONSTITUTION OF HEALTHWATCH – Amended 28th October 2010

1. The Charity shall be called “HealthWatch.”

2. The aim of HealthWatch shall be:

The advancement for the public benefit of medical knowledge, training and care in all its branches and in particular the development of good practices in the assessment and testing of treatments and the conduct of clinical trials generally and the promotion of high standards of health care by practitioners.

The Constitution of HealthWatch may be amended as necessary by not less than two thirds of those present and voting at a properly constituted Annual or Special General Meeting of HealthWatch.

The Aims will be reviewed annually PROVIDED THAT no alteration shall be made which would have the effect of causing HealthWatch to cease to be a Charity at law.

3. Membership of HealthWatch shall be open to the following persons whose application has been approved by a properly constituted subcommittee of the Executive Committee.

- a. Ordinary Members: Ordinary membership shall be open to people who share the aims of HealthWatch. They shall have voting rights, and pay a subscription fee to be determined each year by the Executive Committee (“the Committee”). Members shall express an interest in furthering the work of HealthWatch.
- b. Student Members: Student membership will be open to bona fide students who share the aims of HealthWatch. Student members will have voting rights, and have complimentary membership for as long as they are students, receiving the Newsletter by email only. Student members shall express an interest in furthering the work of HealthWatch.
- c. Life Members: Life membership shall be conferred upon those Ordinary members of HealthWatch who have shown conspicuous performance in advancing the interests of HealthWatch. They shall be selected by a Sub-Committee appointed by the Committee, for approval by simple majority at the AGM. They shall have voting rights but pay no subscription fee.
- d. Corporate Membership: Corporate membership shall be open to companies and professional bodies, provided that they satisfy the Committee of HealthWatch and that they are interested in promoting the aims and interests of HealthWatch. Subscription fees paid by Corporate members will be subject to negotiation with the Executive Committee of HealthWatch.

4. The Annual General Meeting of HealthWatch shall be held each year, at a time and place to be determined by the Committee.

One twentieth of the members constitutionally entitled to vote shall constitute a quorum. If no quorum is formed, then the Committee shall call another AGM within four weeks of the original date.

5. Voting at the AGM shall be by Ordinary, Student and Life members. Each shall

have one vote.

6.
 - a. The business of HealthWatch shall be conducted and managed by the Executive Committee ("the Committee") who may exercise all such powers of HealthWatch and do on behalf of HealthWatch all such acts as may be exercised and done by HealthWatch and as are not by these rules required to be exercised or done by HealthWatch in general meeting.
 - b. The Committee shall consist of the officers of HealthWatch and eight other members elected from the ordinary membership.
 - c. The officers of HealthWatch shall be the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, the Secretary and the Treasurer who shall be elected annually from the ordinary members of Healthwatch, and who shall take up office immediately after the Annual General Meeting at which they are elected. Neither the Chairman nor the Vice Chairman may hold office for more than three consecutive years.
 - d. Nominations for office and for membership of the committee shall be submitted to the Secretary not less than 28 days before the Annual General Meeting. Such nominations shall be endorsed by at least two members of HealthWatch.
 - e. In the event of the number of persons nominated to be officers or members of the Committee exceeding the number of vacancies the officers and members of the Committee shall be elected by secret ballot at the Annual General Meeting of HealthWatch. Voting shall be by single transferable vote.
 - f. The Committee shall have the power to co-opt up to three members from any category of membership (other than corporate membership) and to make good vacancies on the Committee caused by death or resignation. Co-opted members and acting officers shall hold office until the next Annual General Meeting.
 - g. The Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer shall be signatories to HealthWatch's Bank Account and shall be empowered to make payments on behalf of Healthwatch. Where payments are required to the officers of HealthWatch, or for payments in excess of £500 for any purpose, two signatures shall be required.
7. As agreed at the Annual General Meeting in October 2006, independent examination of the accounts, rather than a full audit of the accounts, is sufficient under current Charity Law.
8. The Committee shall meet at least six times a year at such times and places that the committee shall determine. There shall be a quorum of four. Voting shall be by simple majority of those present. In the event of a tie the Chairman shall have a second or casting vote.
9. Healthwatch may appoint advisors. Advisors should normally be members of HealthWatch, but non-members may be recruited at the discretion of the Committee. Advisors shall be empowered to speak on behalf of HealthWatch on topics to be agreed between the advisor and the Committee.
10. Committee Members may be delegated by HealthWatch to speak on behalf of HealthWatch. Other members are not empowered to speak on behalf of, or otherwise represent, or intentionally appear to represent HealthWatch without prior agreement of the Committee.

11. A member against whom a complaint is made that they are bringing the reputation of HealthWatch into disrepute, or behaving in a manner contrary to the aims of HealthWatch, may be called before a Disciplinary Committee of four members of the Committee which shall recommend a subsequent course of action to the Committee. A complaint must be made in writing, and signed by the complainant. The Disciplinary Committee shall have the power to recommend to the Committee that the member shall be warned, suspended or expelled. The Committee shall have the power to suspend or expel members. A member whose membership is terminated by the Committee shall be barred from future membership for a minimum of three years.
12. A Special General Meeting of HealthWatch may be called by a quorum of the Committee at three weeks notice to consider any matter which they consider to be necessary. Such a meeting shall be called by the Secretary within two months of the receipt in writing of a request from six members of HealthWatch. A written statement of the business of the meeting shall be sent to all members at least three weeks before the date of the meeting.
13. HealthWatch shall be empowered to:
 - a. Raise funds and receive contributions, (not necessarily only by way of subscription) and to take and accept gifts, provided that the charity shall not undertake any permanent trading activities in raising funds for its object.
 - b. Hold conferences and meetings and to be represented by member(s) of HealthWatch at conferences and meetings of other organisations.
 - c. Promote or conduct research, and to publish the results of such research.
 - d. Collect and disseminate information.
 - e. Publish and circulate books, periodicals or films.
 - f. Issue statements of policy upon certain topics of relevance to the work, aims and objectives of HealthWatch. These will be produced as and when the Committee agrees, subject to the approval of their contents by the Committee.
 - g. Reduce or waive membership fees in special circumstances.
 - h. Do all such things as are necessary for the attainment of HealthWatch's aims.
14. In the event of HealthWatch ceasing to exist, any remaining assets shall be donated to King Edward's Hospital Fund for London ("The King's Fund") or to such other charity as the committee shall decide.
15. Changes to the constitution will require the approval of the AGM or a Special General Meeting.