



Terms of reference for the Communications Task force

1. Introduction

In order to clarify working methods and ensure that the Communications Task Force (the Task Force) effectively contributes to the work of MHE, the following Terms of Reference are suggested by MHE and will have to be adopted by the MHE Board. The Terms of Reference outline the aims of the Task Force, the profile of members of the Task Force, rules regarding participation, the role of the Chair and working methods.

2. Aims and role

According to the Internal Rules, MHE Task Forces have a temporary character and deal with specific topics, limited in time, scope and depending on the needs.

According to the Internal Rules, Task Forces can:

- Prepare MHE position papers;
- Gather expertise in specific areas;
- Prepare proposals for project applications;
- Support MHE's work on specific issues

Task Forces can make proposals, but decisions shall be taken by the Board.

The Communications Task Force undertakes to work on the following:

- Communicate efficiently on mental health and well-being at European level,
- Improve understanding of the link between mental health services at the grass root level and European policy making
- Improve human-rights based communications and understanding of mental health, including the social approach to mental health
- Support MHE's work on communications, including the organisation of MHE's 25th Anniversary in 2020, the European MAD PRIDE, the European Mental Health Week as well as the production of various ad hoc communication materials such as videos, infographics etc.
- Regular sharing of communications best practices and tips between members of the task force (e.g. relations with the media, new media and communications trends etc.)

3. Membership

In line with the Internal Rules, Task Forces will be composed of 3 experts coming from MHE's broad membership, one Board member and one Senior Policy Adviser. Members of the Task Force should be communications professionals or have knowledge in communications at national, regional, local and/or European level.

Corresponding members can also be appointed to the Task Force; their number will be limited to 5. Corresponding members will be kept up to date with the activities of the group and can provide their views on initiatives of the Task Force and MHE, however they will not be required to attend meetings.

Participants should be ready to devote time to the work of MHE and show a willingness to respond rapidly to consultations, usually within approximately 10 working days.

Members agree to respect confidentiality on draft documents and to report in writing to MHE and the group when asked to represent MHE in technical meetings or conferences.

Members will sit on the Task Force for a period of two years when the members will be discharged from their duties and a new call for applications for membership will be launched.

As is stated in the Internal Rules, Task Forces are temporary in character. The Task Force will continue its activities for as long as the Board considers that the Task Force is relevant to the work of MHE. If the Board no longer sees the need for the Task Force, it can decide to end the activities of the Task Force and relieve members of their duties in respect of the Task Force.

4. The role of the Chair

The Chair of the Task Force is appointed by the Board. The position of Chair will rotate every 2 years in order to allow other members the opportunity to lead the Task Force, however the previous Chair is eligible for re-appointment.

The Chair is responsible for coordinating the work of the Task Force in collaboration with the responsible member of the Secretariat. The Chair will report on the work of the Task Force to the Board once a year at one of the Board meetings. On the occasion of this meeting, the Chair will prepare a short note (1/2 page) on the activities of the Task Force.

5. Working Methods

The Task Force will usually meet once a year at the General Assembly but most of the work of the Task Force will be done via e-mail or skype unless other meetings are necessary.

Consultation periods will be at least 10 days unless a response is needed urgently. The team will endeavour to give the Task Force as much time as possible in cases where responses are needed urgently.

The work within the Task Force requires continuity and active participation from all participants. In case a participant expresses the wish not to be involved anymore, or in case a participant has remained inactive for significant period (i.e. over one year), the Chair will engage with the participant in relation to their continuation on the Task Force. If the participant would like to vacate his/her position or remains inactive, MHE will seek to fill the vacant position by launching a new call for participation.

If the Task Force proposes any actions, this should be done in consultation with the MHE team to ensure that the proposal aligns with MHE's priorities and work programme and that there is capacity to execute the proposal.

An annual review of the work of the Task Force will be carried out by the Board.

6. Working language

All participants of the Task Force must be able to communicate in English.

7. Support from the MHE Secretariat

In cooperation with the Chair, a member of the MHE Team will support the work of the Task Force.