# NAoS Mental Health Subgroup Terms of Reference

**Updated: 12 November 2024**

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| 1. Rationale | Given the correlation between neurological conditions and mental illness, it was agreed that mental health and wellbeing should continue to be a main area of focus for the NAoS policy group going forward.  Ultimately, we aim to articulate our position on mental health for those affected by neurological conditions to key policy makers and other stakeholders and follow through with the recommendations for better mental health support for people affected by neurological conditions (May 2024). |

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| 1. Role and Remit | The central purpose of this subgroup is to engage with the Scottish Government’s Mental Health team civil servants and invested MSPs, to build a relationship with them in order to support the implementation of our recommendations.  The group will collate data on mental health from NAoS members to build evidence to present to officials and ministers.  We want to discuss the brain/mind connection and encourage more joined up thinking in government.  We will review the role and remit of this group annually. |

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| 1. Group membership | Members agreed that a small group would be the most efficient way of operating. Members of the group can take on responsibility for different elements of the workplan, taking these out to the wider NAoS group and their communities for consultation and feedback. The minimum number for the group to operate successfully is 6 – 8 people. We don’t expect all members to attend every meeting, however all members are expected to contribute towards the outputs of the group.  The core group will consist of:  Alison Philipps, Chair, Craighalbert Centre  Steve Portelly, FND Hope  Claire Winchester, MS Trust  Katie Rigg, MSA Trust  Keith Park, MS Society Scotland  Mary Ramsay, Scottish Tremor Foundation  Kripen Dhrona, British Polio Fellowship  Alice Struthers, NAoS  TBC as of 1 October  Tanith Muller, Parkinson’s UK |

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| 1. Frequency of meetings | The group agreed to meet every 8 weeks, ideally at 9am, to feed into the bi-monthly policy group meetings. Members can report to each other via email or through ad hoc meetings between the formal MH subgroup meetings. Meeting dates will be published in advance. |

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| 1. Reporting | This group will report to the Policy Group, which meets every 8 weeks. Alison Philipps will be the Chairperson of this group and she will do the reporting to the Policy Group. |

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| 1. Ways of working | Individuals within the subgroup will take on accountability for individual work strands, taking it to colleagues and other members of NAoS. We envisage a fair bit of the work will be in taking specific ideas out to their communities to test, and reporting on the feedback back to the group. The subgroup can then make decisions based on this wider feedback |

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| 1. Aims of the group | 1. The correlation between serious mental illness and neurological conditions is higher than with the general population, and we want to raise awareness of this in order recognise the importance of better mental health support.  We also want to flag the importance of psychological support that is also often missing from the support that people with neurological conditions are able to access. 2. We want everyone to be signposted to mental health support at the point of their neurological diagnosis.  This is particularly important for those with fast progressing neurological conditions which can rapidly rob people of the ability to communicate. 3. We wish to identify areas of good practice across Scotland and use these as a benchmark for what people should expect from mental health services irrespective of where they live. |

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| 1. Secretariat | Alice Struthers, NAoS Programme Director will be responsible for minuting the meetings.  Alison Phillips, Craighalbert Centre, will be responsible for distributing the previous meeting minutes and any other papers required seven days in advance of each meeting, and for setting up the meetings. |