**Neurological Alliance of Scotland Policy Group**

**Terms of Reference // Date updated: 30 April 2025**

Date of formation

This group was created in February 2021 and has been meeting every two to three months since then.

Membership of the group:

All members of the NAoS are invited to join the Policy Group, with expectation that those with an interest in policy will join up. Members who have a wider remit than policy may nominate a policy expert from their organisation to represent their charity.

Purpose of the group:

The group has been established to identify common areas of interest that the NAoS should campaign on and consultations that we should respond to. The group participants offer to share expertise across relevant policy areas, building collective knowledge and raising awareness of key issues. Group participants acknowledge that they might be called upon to help draft consultation responses or reactions to policy announcements.

The group aims to increase awareness of policy and strengthen campaigning capacity for charities, particularly the smaller organisations who may not have policy staff, and UK wide charities who may not have separate policy expertise for Scotland thus strengthening the influencing powers of the neurological third sector as a whole

The policy group aims to provide various opportunities for engaging with key opinion leaders, by hosting external speakers, including Ministers, Parliamentarians, political candidates, committee clerks, independent reviewers and other charities at our meetings.

Management of the group:

The policy group will be chaired by a different organisation at each meeting. This gives NAoS charity members the chance to share information about their work, aims and goals, and on a professional level, it provides the opportunity for networking. We will ensure that one in every six meetings is chaired by a small organisation (e.g. sub £50,000/year reported income) to elevate both self-confidence and visibility of these important, often unfunded organisations

Each chairperson will be responsible for following the prepared agenda, facilitating discussion amongst attendees and appointing actions at the end of the meeting. All meetings will be minuted and put on our website by the NAoS Programme Director.

The NAoS executive is the final decision maker on policy.

The responsibilities of the group are to:

* Keep up to date on policy areas affecting the neurological community, which includes those living with neurological conditions, their families and carers, services they can access and grants they are entitled to.
* Agree on areas where there is common interest amongst members, and to decide on actions needed to take it forwards
* Create subgroups where there are specific areas requiring additional levels of focus. These subgroups will then report back to the Policy Group at each meeting.
* Represent the NAoS, rather than the individual member charities

Working Methods:

Meetings will be held via Teams once every two months. There will be a break over the summer holidays. To see the schedule, [click on our 2025/6 events schedule](https://neurologicalscotland.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/s/TheNeurologicalAllianceofScotlandSCIO/EYVNnJlJfMBMtfbBxI28r9oBR71xBNMw6S-C3V8lW9gQww?e=Es3oqz)

The NAoS Programme Director will appoint a Chair ahead of each meeting.

Meetings will be advertised to members through the monthly newsletter and a reminder will go out to members the week before each meeting.

Members of the NAoS will be asked to contribute topics for discussion ahead of each meeting.

The format of the meetings will be informal discussions facilitated by the Policy Group chairperson, with plenty of time for Q&A.

The NAoS Programme Director will provide secretariat for the group.

Review of the group:

The Policy Group will review their activities annually to ensure the meetings are fulfilling their original purpose.

All attendees are welcome to submit feedback after each session so we can make any improvements.

NAoS will review the Terms of Reference every year in April.