

CANADIAN CENTRE ON SUBSTANCE ABUSE NATIONAL POLICY WORKING GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Purpose:

The National Policy Working Group [NPWG] provides a forum or focus for agencies, or individuals with an expertise in addictions to participate in a broad discussion and analyze policy issues and topics from a national perspective. This is not an advocacy group, but provides a “best practice” analysis and positions for consideration by the CCSA Board and the broader addictions community.

Linkage:

As the sponsoring agency, the CCSA assists in organizing the meetings, providing the chair and secretarial support to the NPWG.

Parameters:

The term “policy” refers to the sum of those considerations [i.e. options and recommendations] underlying a particular course of action for the control, prevention, early intervention, treatment and/or rehabilitation of harms associated with addiction problems. Policy recommendations that are developed by the group are not binding on the participating agencies.

Principles:

The working group’s discussions and activities will be guided by the following principles:

- ◆ Continuum of risk and interventions – strategies that enhance health and prevent problems related to issues of addiction including prevention, early detection, intervention and rehabilitation.
- ◆ Policy effectiveness – policy in its design and implementation needs to include the efficacy, efficiency and best practice, and be driven by sound research.
- ◆ Relevance – fostered by communication with stakeholders.

Parameters:

- ◆ Members will seek formal input from the Board of the CCSA and other stakeholders on current and emerging trends that require discussion as a potential policy issues.
- ◆ Assess the applicability of specific topics for consideration by the affiliated group.
- ◆ Discuss the issue and develop parameters and the scope under which a policy review should be conducted. This includes identifying the requirement for a national policy discussion document.
- ◆ Assign the task to a member agency and /or individual.

- ◆ Review policy discussion documents and determine the policy direction to be considered by the CCSA Board and perhaps other agencies at their request.
- ◆ Any expenses associated with the preparation of discussion papers are usually borne by the participating agency, although there may be opportunities for cost sharing depending on available resources.

Responsibilities:

1. Members and/or participating agencies are responsible for their own travel and accommodation expenses.
2. Review policy discussion documents and determine the policy direction to be considered by the CCSA Board.

Membership:

Membership on the working group will reflect the national perspective in public policy and addiction issues, as well as the diverse nature of the policy discussions. The members should determine the membership of the affiliated group and the Chair should make contact with potential candidates to solicit their level of interest and participation. The membership should include representation from the CCSA, addiction's academia, Health Canada, provincial and territorial governments, addiction agencies and the general addiction research community.

The role and responsibility of Chair is to provide a link with CCSA.

Meetings:

The National Working Group should plan on holding meetings at least twice a year, preferably in the fall and spring. They should be planned around other addiction events to minimize members travel costs. The 'next' meeting dates should be determined at the previous session.