

NOTES ON REGIONAL GROUP ORGANISATION



Mission Statement

NACTHPC is committed to the development of the use of complementary therapies in hospice and palliative care. We offer professional advice, promote good practice, and share knowledge and expertise amongst members and other professionals.

The objectives of the Association are :

- To develop a national and regional support network for members
- To encourage and promote an exchange of knowledge, experience and best practice
- To raise the profile of the use of complementary therapies at local, regional and national levels
- To provide professional advice on the development of complementary therapy services
- To collaborate with other professional bodies at regional and national levels



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Our regional groups are one of the key assets of our organisation. Without them we would certainly not be able to be aware of what is actually happening in our organisation around the country. Feedback from the regional groups is vital if we are to operate as one voice in demonstrating what we stand for nationally and it goes without saying that our regional group leads are doing a great job of keeping things together in their region.

In the past we have received enquiries from members asking how to organise an existing group or how to start a new group.

This booklet has been informed by the results of the regional group survey carried out in 2011. It is not, however, meant to tell regional groups how to run their groups. Firstly, it can help to generate thoughts on other ways of operating their groups, if necessary or desirable for the members. Secondly, it will act as a guide for any new groups wishing to start or new group members who would like some overall guidance of how other groups are operating.

Style of Operation

Generally, the style of the running of the groups is as a committee with a chair person, an agenda and minutes but with the possibility of informal discussions when appropriate. This method enables the agenda and the minutes of previous meeting to be circulated, thereby acting as a reminder to members of what occurred at the last meeting and the format for the next meeting. Usually the regional group lead would take the chair at the meetings although other members could do it either on a rota or as an alternative suggestion from the members.

The regional coordinator is usually responsible for taking minutes but this can be varied by choice.

Number of Members and Attendance

Attendance records can be kept and also a database of all members details, i.e. names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses. The e-mail address list could be circulated to all members of the group to enhance communications within the group but an option to opt out should be given.

Meetings

Groups generally meet on an average of 2-3 times per year and in all cases with existing groups the venue is changed. However this is entirely up to the members as to whether this is suitable and whether there are available venues on offer within the region.

Speakers

All groups seem to engage outside speakers at some stage and all seem to want outside speakers, or at least consider suggestions. If a regional group is finding it difficult to find a speaker then the regional group liaison will be prepared to assist where possible. Generally members should be consulted as to the type of speaker they would like. Some members may want a workshop speaker so that they can have “hands on” participation. Others may prefer a topical speaker followed by discussion. Getting the opinion of the members in advance is recommended.

Group Expenses

What expenses you can claim for:

- Administration Costs e.g. telephone, stationery, postage
- Speakers' fees
- Speakers' travelling expenses
- Cost of venue

How to claim for Expenses

To obtain expense forms contact Teresa Barr, Regional Group Liaison (nacthpcreggroups@outlook.com) prior to the event outlining who the speaker is and their topic.

Submit the expenses form as soon as possible. Expenses not claimed within 1 year after an event will be forfeit. Receipts must accompany all expense forms.

If advance notice is given, reimbursement will be made by a cheque and could be issued for speaker in time for meeting. The speaker will need to sign a payment receipt for expenses submission.

Expenses could take up to 3 – 4 weeks before they are reimbursed.

Expense Limitations

Regional groups can claim expenses up to a maximum of £50 per annum.

Units Covered

There may be Palliative Care units or Cancer Care Centres within your area who are not members of NACTHPC; you may wish to consider inviting them to your meeting. It would be worthwhile to have some spare membership forms at your meetings for non-members who may wish to join the association.

Comments / Suggestions

Encourage a member of your group to write a report of the meeting for publication in The Link and also perhaps on the website.

Encourage the group's creativity by considering leading on joint projects with the committee and other groups. For example if someone had a proposal for a bit of joint research, the committee could be approached for approval and financial support and advice.

Examples of Types of Group Meetings

These are typical outlines of how groups might operate but they are meant only as suggested methods to give some kind of guidance to aspiring group organisers.

Style A – Formal

Prior to the meeting :

- Minutes of previous meeting, date and time of new meeting with new agenda.
- Travel directions to chosen venue and suggestions how individuals might organise joint travel.

At the meeting :

- The attendees will be welcomed by someone from the chosen venue or by the regional coordinator and the chair person will take the chair.
- Apologies for absence taken and a register of attendees kept.
- Chair will outline details of “housekeeping”, health and safety, break times, etc.

- Guest speakers can be introduced and give talk before lunch.
- Break for lunch and some networking.
- Discussion on general and specific topics to follow.
- Any other business.
- Date time and venue for next meeting arranged.

This is often followed by a guided tour of the hospice or institution.

Style B – Informal

Prior to the meeting :

- There is no formal agenda and no minutes or register is taken. There is no chair other than the host member who has organised the meeting. Members can be informed by e-mail, etc.

At the meeting :

- The organiser will welcome members and a speaker if appropriate. “house keeping” details will be given to any new members.
- The meeting will then start with a speaker or with an informal “chat” style where all members will be able to bring issues.
- After a lunch break there may be a tour of the venue and then continue with as an informal “chat” or whatever the members would like to suggest.
- A date, time and possible venue can then be decided amongst members.

Style C – 50-50

With this style a mix of the other two styles can work equally as well. For example you can have a chair perhaps chosen on the day of the meeting. An agenda and register can be kept as it helps to keep in touch with members. Minutes can be taken but in a very informal way and the meeting can be directed by the chair but kept at an informal level, in accordance with the members' wishes. Minutes can also be helpful if you want to send in a report for the LINK, although this can be done by simply taking brief notes.

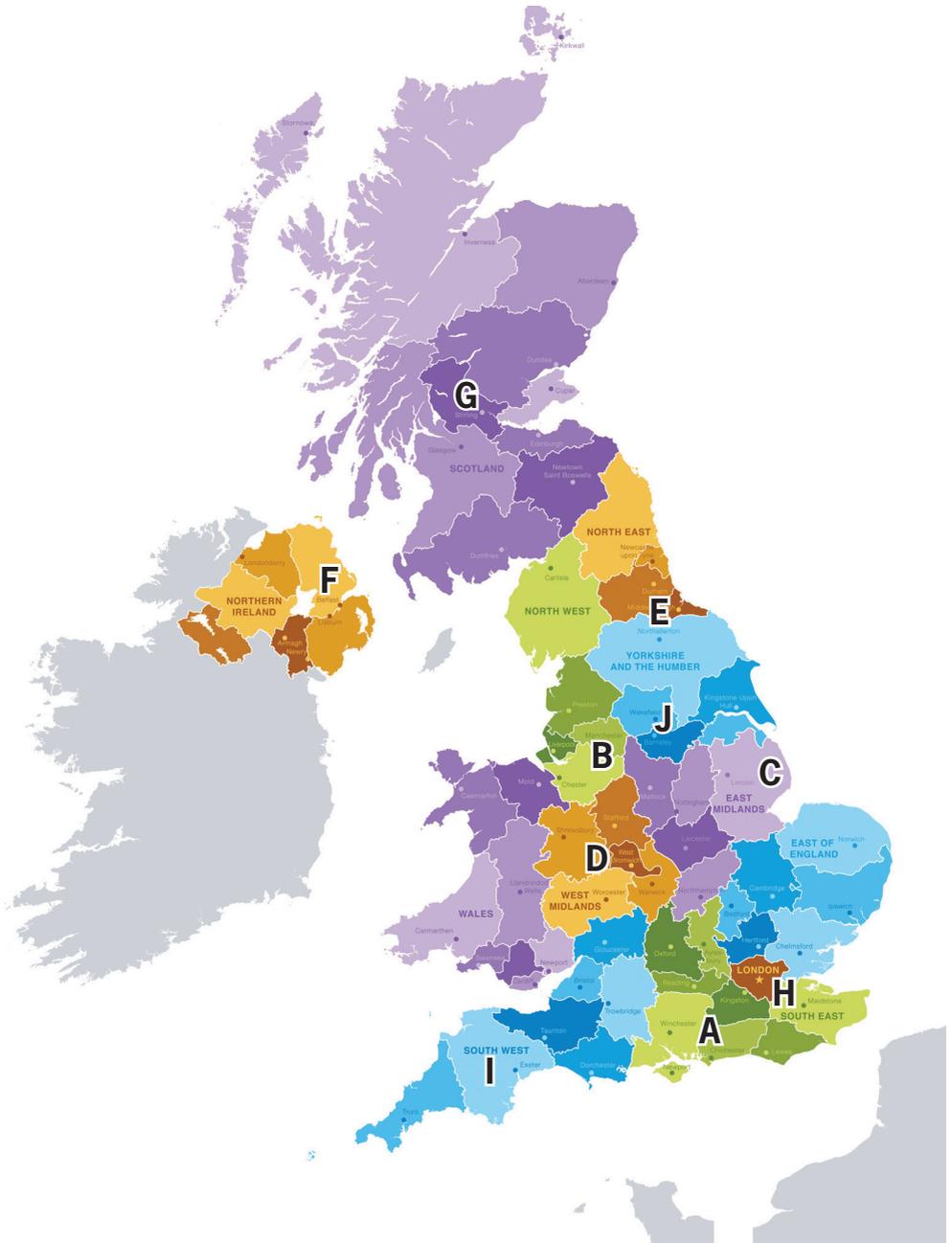
Generally speaking regional groups can be run in whatever way the members decide and periodically discussed to see if the method is fulfilling the needs of the members.

Conclusion

It is hoped that this booklet will serve the purpose for which it is intended; as a guide and a help and perhaps to stimulate further links between groups. Each regional group will have its own method of operating but we can often learn alternate ways by networking with others. As you are aware the contact details are in the LINK newsletter for all groups and their leads so I hope that you can use this information and gain maximum benefit from your group meetings. I would welcome and consider any comments and / or further suggestions which may improve this booklet

Revised 27th November 2017

Map of NACTHPC Regional Groups



A Central Southern England

B Greater Manchester

C Lincolnshire & North Lincolnshire

D Midlands

E North East

F Northern Ireland

G Scottish

H South Eastern

I South West

J Yorkshire

