

# Counselling Special Interest Group (CSIG) of the Canadian Fertility and Andrology Society (CFAS)

## CSIG Terms of Reference Updated August 14, 2020

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

In keeping with the Mission and Vision of the Canadian Fertility and Andrology Society (CFAS) and the requirements of Canadian legislation (i.e., the Assisted Human Reproduction Act), counsellors who belong to the Counselling Special Interest Group (CSIG) strive to respond to the complex social, psychological, legal, and ethical dimensions of assisted human reproduction (AHR). CSIG counsellors provide a range of psychosocial services that include, but are not limited to: counselling support; psychotherapy; assessment; evaluation; advocacy; education; research; and consultation. The CSIG encourages the development of the highest standards of practice and is involved in the creation of best practice guidelines for counselling within the field of fertility and AHR. The Terms of Reference (TOR) set forth in this document describe the mandate, activities, and responsibilities of the CSIG.

### **1. MISSION, VISION & MANDATE**

#### Vision

In keeping with the CFAS, the CSIG's Vision is to promote Excellence in assisted reproduction.

#### Mission

In keeping with the CFAS, the CSIG's Mission is to advance reproductive science and medicine in Canada through leadership, research, and guidance.

#### Mandate

In keeping with the Mission and Vision of the CFAS, the CSIG's Mandate is to:

- 1.1. Promote Excellence in assisted reproduction.
- 1.2. Advance reproductive science and medicine in Canada through leadership, research, and guidance.
- 1.3. Facilitate awareness and understanding of the role of counselling within the CFAS, the field of AHR, and to the general public.
- 1.4. Promote opportunities for communication and networking between CSIG counsellors.
- 1.5. Encourage multi-disciplinary collaboration and exchange between all CFAS members.
- 1.6. Promote professional development to CSIG counsellors through education and training.
- 1.7. Support CSIG members' involvement in research activities.
- 1.8. Develop and encourage the use of best practice guidelines for counselling within the mission of CFAS, the context of Canadian legislation (i.e., the Assisted Human Reproduction Act), and the scope of mental health professionals' associations and colleges.
- 1.9. Encourage mental health professionals working in AHR to become members of CFAS and CSIG.

## **2. MEMBERSHIP**

- 2.1. Membership in the CSIG is open to all CFAS members in good standing who choose CSIG as an area of interest on the membership portal.
- 2.2. Active CSIG members shall receive all general communication, questionnaires, newsletters, or other SIG publications and will have access to CSIG continuing education activities.
- 2.3. The CSIG, as with all CFAS SIGs, must maintain a minimum of five members in order to keep its status within the CFAS.
- 2.4. Membership in the CSIG may be particularly relevant to those with clinical training, experience, and academic credentials in a mental health discipline (e.g., psychology, counselling, psychotherapy, social work, and psychiatry).

## **3. DUES & FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

The CSIG adheres to the following guidelines, as outlined in *Section 2 of POL-S-021 CFAS Special Interest Groups Terms of Reference*:

- 3.1. CSIG members in arrears may be reinstated to good standing upon the payment to CFAS of the current year's annual membership dues.
- 3.2. Executive members of the CSIG must be members in good standing per calendar year.
- 3.3. The CFAS will bill and collect annual membership dues.
- 3.4. The CFAS will maintain financial records for the CSIG.
- 3.5. The CFAS will assume the cost of necessary basic office services, printing, and postage.
- 3.6. The CFAS will assume financial responsibility for all courses or continuing education activities approved or sanctioned by the CFAS, provided that the budget is approved in advance. The CSIG will not share in any profits or losses from these activities.
- 3.7. Requests for additional funding from CFAS and/or sponsorship from external sources shall only be made by the CSIG Chair and require specific discussion with the CFAS Executive Director and approval by the CFAS Board of Directors.
- 3.8. The CSIG must not attempt to raise funds from industry by independent solicitation unless specifically directed by the CFAS Office.
- 3.9. The CSIG will submit a plan to the CFAS Office each year regarding spending for the upcoming year (e.g., CSIG Professional Morning speakers, thank you cards, networking meetings, etc.).
- 3.10. The fiscal year of the CSIG is the same as the fiscal year of CFAS.

## **4. ELECTIONS & VOTING**

### CSIG Business Affairs

- 4.1. Any CSIG business item requiring a vote by its members may be conducted in person or online.
- 4.2. Every CSIG member in good standing is eligible to vote.
- 4.3. A quorum of 5% of CSIG members, including a majority of the Executive Committee, is required to conduct the affairs of the CSIG.
- 4.4. All motions shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the present CSIG members to pass.
- 4.5. Any motion declared lost shall not be reintroduced at the same meeting.

### CSIG Executive Committee

All CSIG Executive Committee members shall abide by the Election and Voting terms outlined in *Section 4 of POL-S-021 CFAS Special Interest Groups Terms of Reference*. A description of the elections and voting process is as follows:

- 4.6. The CSIG, with support from the CFAS Office, shall hold an election for the CSIG Executive Committee roles once a year.
- 4.7. The CSIG must organize its Executive Committee so that a rotation of members takes place in order to ensure continuity of knowledge concerning the CSIG and its projects.
- 4.8. The CSIG Executive Committee confirms with the CFAS Office which positions will be vacant for the upcoming calendar year (i.e., from September to August) by May 15 of each year.
- 4.9. The CFAS Office will issue a call for nominations to the CSIG membership by June 1.
- 4.10. Nominees may self-nominate, but cannot run for more than one (1) position on CSIG Executive Committee per year, and cannot run for a position on more than one (1) SIG per year.
- 4.11. The CFAS Executive Director reviews the nominations for eligibility.
- 4.12. In the event that a nominee is considered ineligible, the Executive Director informs the nominee directly.
- 4.13. Voting will take place virtually over a period of approximately one month.
- 4.14. At any election of the CSIG (i.e., in person or online), every CSIG member in good standing is eligible to vote.
- 4.15. The CFAS Office will inform the CSIG Executive of the successful candidate, which is determined according to a majority two-thirds (2/3) vote, as described in lines 4.1 to 4.5.
- 4.16. The successful candidate will be announced to the CSIG members by the Executive on or before the CSIG Annual Business Meeting, held during the CFAS Annual Meeting.
- 4.17. To serve on the CSIG Executive Committee, nominees must be CFAS members in good standing who are also members of CSIG. Their work must be based primarily within Canada. It is preferred that CSIG Executive members have clinical and/or research experience in the mental health field.
- 4.18. Each CSIG Executive Committee member shall serve a Term of three (3) years, and no CSIG Executive member shall serve more than two (2) consecutive Terms in the same role. That is, no member shall serve longer than six (6) years total, unless a request for a third Term is approved by the CFAS Board prior to elections.

## 5. CSIG EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

### Governance

The CSIG Executive Committee governs the activities of the CSIG membership. The CSIG Executive Committee aims to:

- Plan and run the CSIG Annual Business Meeting, held in conjunction with the CFAS Annual General Meeting.
- Plan activities for CSIG Professional Morning, held in conjunction with the CFAS Annual General Meeting.
- Assist with the CFAS Annual General Meeting program planning by nominating topics or speakers for Concurrent Sessions that are relevant to mental health professionals.
- Provide a list of nominees to serve on CFAS/CSIG committees, as requested by the CFAS President.
- Plan professional development and networking opportunities for CSIG members (e.g., Round Tables, counsellor dinner, regional meetings, webinars, etc.).
- Liaise with the CFAS Board of Directors and the CFAS Office.
- Listen to and advocate for the needs of CSIG members.

### Powers & Duties of Chair Positions

The CSIG Executive Committee shall consist of at least three (3) members, including but not limited to: Chair (or two Co-Chairs); Vice-Chair; and Secretary. The Chair of any CSIG Subcommittee shall also be a member of the CSIG Executive Committee, and an additional Executive Committee member may be

added for this purpose. Currently, additional Executive positions exist for the Research & Abstract Review Subcommittee and the Standards & Guidelines Subcommittee.

The CSIG is free to divide duties listed in *Section 5 of the POL-S-021 CFAS Special Interest Groups Terms of Reference* document. The duties of each position are as described below:

5.1. Chair (or two Co-Chairs):

- If the CSIG chooses to have two Co-Chairs instead of a single Chair, the responsibilities of the Chair shall be shared by the Co-Chairs as they so choose.
- Serves for a three (3) year Term and a maximum of two (2) consecutive Terms in the same role.
- Acts as principal executive officer who shall supervise and control all administrative and business affairs of the CSIG.
- Acts as the primary liaison with the CFAS President and Executive Director.
- Meets with the CFAS Board of Directors at the CFAS Annual Meeting to inform them of the activities, future plans, and other areas of interest of the CSIG.
- Provides an Annual Report to the CFAS Executive Director that summarizes activities of the preceding year and states plans for the upcoming year.
- Provides up to three Term Reports per year (or as otherwise requested) to the CFAS Board of CSIG activities, meetings, minutes, and updates.
- Provides a list of nominees to serve on CFAS committees as requested by the CFAS President or Executive Director.
- Receives a list of nominees to serve on CFAS committees as requested by the CFAS President or Executive Director.
- Receives a CFAS financial statement once per year as well as quarterly financial reports regarding CSIG membership and membership dues.
- Assists in planning content for annual CSIG-related events (e.g., CFAS Annual Meeting, concurrent sessions, CSIG Professional Morning, regional meetings, webinars, etc.), as required.
- Submits requests or concepts for continuing education courses to the CFAS President or Executive Director.
- Sits as Chair of CSIG Subcommittees, as required.

5.2. Vice-Chair:

- Serves for a three (3) year Term and a maximum of two (2) consecutive Terms in the same role.
- Assumes the duties of the Chair (or Co-Chairs) in their absence.
- Acts as an ex-officio member for all CSIG Subcommittees.
- Assists the Chair(s) in preparing the CSIG Annual Report.
- Assists the Chair(s) in preparing the Term Reports for the CFAS Board of Directors.
- Assists in planning content for annual CSIG-related events (e.g., CFAS Annual Meeting, concurrent sessions, CSIG Professional Morning, regional meetings, webinars, etc.), as required.
- Sits as Chair of CSIG Subcommittees, as required.

5.3. Secretary:

- Serves for a three (3) year Term and a maximum of two (2) consecutive Terms in the same role.
- Involved in all communications and membership duties.
- Records and documents the Minutes of the CSIG Annual Business meeting and any CSIG Executive Committee interim meetings.
- Circulates Minutes of the CSIG Annual Business Meeting to CSIG members (e.g., through the CFAS portal) and sends a copy to the Executive Director.
- Maintains an archive of all meeting Minutes, books, documents, and other relevant records on the designated cloud drive, and posts them on the CFAS portal as required.
- Obtains a CSIG membership list from the CFAS Office when required (e.g., prior to the CFAS

- Annual Meeting).
- Assists in planning content for annual CSIG-related events (e.g., CFAS Annual Meeting, concurrent sessions, CSIG Professional Morning, regional meetings, webinars, etc.), as required.
- Sits as Chair of CSIG Subcommittees, as required.

5.4. Past Chair:

- Shall be an honorary member of the Executive Committee for a period to be decided by the CSIG Executive, but not less than one (1) year and for a maximum of three (3) years.
- Shall not have voting rights as a CSIG Executive Committee member.
- May assist in planning content for annual CSIG-related events (e.g., CFAS Annual Meeting, concurrent sessions, CSIG Professional Morning, regional meetings, webinars, etc.), as required.
- Sits as Chair of CSIG Subcommittees, as required.

5.5. Other Executive Members:

- A member of the CFAS Board of Directors acts as an ex-officio participant in the CSIG Executive Committee in order to facilitate communication with the CFAS Board.
- The Chair of any CSIG Subcommittee shall be a member of the CSIG Executive Committee. For example, the Chair of the Research & Abstract Review Subcommittee and the Chair of the Standards & Guidelines Subcommittee will also sit on the CSIG Executive Committee.

## 6. REPORTING TO THE BOARD

- 6.1. The CSIG Chair (or Co-Chairs) shall act as the primary liaison with the CFAS President and the Executive Director.
- 6.2. The CSIG Chair meets with the CFAS President and the Executive Director on an annual basis to discuss events of the preceding year and plans for the upcoming year.
- 6.3. The Chair will provide the Executive Director with news of developments within the counselling field as news comes to the attention of the Chair, with the intent that such news items can be distributed to the CFAS membership as a whole, included in a newsletter, referenced on the CFAS website, or distributed by social media.
- 6.4. The CSIG Executive Committee must present an Annual Report to the CFAS Executive Director at the Annual General Meeting detailing the activities of the preceding year and plans for the upcoming year.
- 6.5. The CSIG Chair (or Co-Chairs) shall submit up to three Term Reports to the CFAS President or the Executive Director.
- 6.6. The CSIG Chair (or Co-Chairs) must obtain written approval from the CFAS Executive Director prior to inviting any speakers to CFAS events, CSIG Annual meetings, CSIG Regional meetings, or any other CSIG related events.

## 7. CSIG SUBCOMMITTEES

The CSIG shall determine the number and scope of subcommittees that are required for the proper operation of the CSIG. In addition, CSIG Subcommittees may assist the CFAS Clinical Practice Guideline Committee (CPG) in relevant position papers and on Guidelines, as requested by the CFAS President or the Executive Director.

The CSIG Subcommittees include, but are not limited to the following:

7.1. Research & Abstract Review Subcommittee:

- The Research & Abstract Review Subcommittee Chair is a member of the CSIG Executive Committee.
- Serves for a three (3) year Term and a maximum of two (2) consecutive Terms in the same role.
- Receives a list from the CFAS Office of Abstracts submitted for inclusion at the CFAS Annual General Meeting.
- Works with the other Abstract Review Subcommittee members to review and assess Abstract submissions using the designated instruction manual.
- Informs the CFAS Office of successful candidates.
- Informs the CSIG membership of newly published research that may be of interest to CSIG members, and in particular informs of research published by CFAS or CSIG members.
- May assist in planning content for annual CSIG-related events (e.g., CFAS Annual Meeting, concurrent sessions, CSIG Professional Morning, regional meetings, webinars, etc.), as required.
- Consults with other Subcommittees, as required.
- Takes part in CSIG Executive Meetings, as required.

7.2. Standards & Guidelines Subcommittee:

- The Standards & Guidelines Subcommittee Chair is a member of the CSIG Executive Committee.
- Serves for a three (3) year Term and a maximum of two (2) consecutive Terms in the same role.
- This Subcommittee is responsible for Taskforces and Documents that include, but are not limited to: Best Practice Guidelines for Counselling; LGBTQ+ Counselling Guidelines; Guidelines for Third-Party Reproduction Reporting; LGBTQ+ Resource document; and the Donor Conception Resource document.
- May assist in planning content for annual CSIG-related events (e.g., CFAS Annual Meeting, concurrent sessions, CSIG Professional Morning, regional meetings, webinars, etc.), as required.
- Consults with other Subcommittees, as required.
- Takes part in CSIG Executive Meetings, as required.

## 8. GENERAL GUIDELINES

- 8.1. Any vacancies in the CSIG Executive Committee prior to the end of the stated Term shall be filled by the appointment of the CSIG Executive Committee. Such appointments shall be for the remainder of that Term of office.
- 8.2. Members resigning from a CSIG Executive Committee position shall provide a written report to the CSIG Chair on the current status of their position within one week of resigning.
- 8.3. In the event that a member of the CSIG Executive Committee fails to comply with the CSIG Terms of Reference, the remaining CSIG Executive Committee members should refer the matter to the CFAS Board of Directors who shall decide whether to remove the member from the Executive.
- 8.4. The CSIG Annual Business Meeting will be held at the CFAS Annual Meeting.
- 8.5. All active CFAS members must be notified of a motion to dismantle the CSIG. A motion to dismantle must be passed at the CFAS Annual General Meeting.
- 8.6. The CSIG Terms of Reference shall be reviewed by the CSIG Executive Committee on a regular basis, and a full review shall be conducted at least once every five (5) years. Any proposed revisions to the CSIG Terms of Reference shall be submitted to the CFAS Board of Directors prior to being distributed to or reviewed by the CSIG members.
- 8.7. No CSIG member shall use their membership in the CSIG for self-promotional purposes.
- 8.8. No CSIG member shall purport to represent the CFAS or speak on its behalf.

- 8.9. A probationary period of three (3) years applies to any new SIG. During this time, the SIG must demonstrate that it fulfills the mission of the CFAS as outlined in their application. The SIG Executive will, during the probationary period, report all of their activities to the CFAS Board of Directors at least annually.

## 9. DOCUMENT CREATION

- 9.1. CSIG document creation is to be proposed through the CFAS Board. The Board will review the proposal, provide feedback, and approve or decline the request. The Board, if needed, may request assistance from the CFAS Clinical Practice Guideline (CPG) Committee for guidance and support.
- 9.2. The creation of documents shall be affected in compliance with the *CFAS Document Publication Policy*, as such policy is updated from time to time.
- 9.3. Likewise, any communications (e.g., surveys or e-blasts) that CSIG wishes to share with the membership (or their SIG members) must come from the CFAS Office and receive approval from the Board first.
- 9.4. CSIG members cannot make final decisions, use the CFAS logo or letterhead, or provide information claiming to be on behalf of CFAS (written, verbally, or online) without explicit permission from the CFAS Board or Executive Director.

Date reviewed/updated by CSIG Executive Committee	Summary of revisions	Date approved by the CFAS Board of Directors
2007	Original	2007
2010	Updated	2010
2014	Updates at the request of the CFAS Board	n/a
2019	Updated at the request of the CFAS Board	n/a
August 21, 2020	Updated to reflect changes to the February 26, 2020 document <i>POL-S-021 CFAS Special Interest Groups Terms of Reference</i>	