Head and Neck Cancer International Group
Terms of Reference for Committees

Artificial Intelligence and Database Committee (AIDa)

Purpose

To oversee the development, governance, and application of artificial intelligence (AI) and database resources within HNCIG.

Scope of Work

- Develop and maintain centralised databases of trial and cohort data.
- Establish governance frameworks for data sharing and security.
- Promote AI-based methodologies for risk prediction, image analysis, and trial optimisation.
- Facilitate collaborations with AI and data-science groups globally.

Membership

Data scientists, statisticians, clinicians, and IT leads from member groups.

Leadership & Reporting

Chaired by a data/AI expert (3-year term, renewable once by mutual agreement for two years). Reports to HNCIG CEO.

Meetings

At least two per year.

Deliverables

- Data governance framework document.
- Annual AI and database development strategy.

Review

Reviewed every three years by the Board.

Communications Committee

Purpose

The Head and Neck Cancer International Group (HNCIG) is the umbrella organization for the world's leading national clinical trials groups in head and neck cancer. As such, HNCIG is the leading global platform for collaborative research in head and neck cancer and is a dynamic and rapidly moving organization with wide impact and reach. HNCIG is establishing a Communications Group through the integration of the existing Newsletter Group, Website Group, and Social Media Group. This initiative aims to enhance the organization's visibility and strategic communications.

Objectives

- Raise global awareness of HNCIG's mission, initiatives, and research outputs within the oncology and broader scientific communities.
- Strengthen engagement with key stakeholders, including academic institutions, industry partners, policymakers, and patient advocacy organizations.
- Enhance HNCIG's reputation as the leading global platform for collaborative research in head and neck cancer.
- Attract and involve partners from the pharmaceutical and biotechnology sectors.
- Promote internal cohesion and ensure alignment and synergy across HNCIG committees and communication channels.

Core Responsibilities

- Website and Social Media Management: Maintain and update the official HNCIG website (www.hncig.org) and establish and manage official HNCIG accounts on platforms such as X (formerly Twitter) and LinkedIn.
- Newsletter Production: Produce and distribute a professionally designed quarterly newsletter.
- Prospectus Development: Create and periodically update an HNCIG prospectus tailored to academic researchers, patient advocacy groups, and industry stakeholders.
- Committee Coordination: Establish and maintain regular communication and coordination with all HNCIG committees to ensure consistent messaging and collaboration.
- Develop a consistent presentation format and materials to reflect the HNCIG brand.

Membership

Communications and media leads from national groups, plus patient/public representatives.

Leadership & Reporting

Chaired by a communications lead (3-year term, renewable once by mutual agreement for two years). Reports to HNCIG CEO.

Meetings

At least quarterly.

Deliverables

- Annual communication plan.
- Quarterly newsletter and updated website content.

Review

Reviewed every three years by the Board.

Education Committee

Purpose

To promote education, training, and dissemination of knowledge in head and neck cancer research and care.

Scope of Work

- Plan, organise and deliver the HNCIG Annual Meeting.
- Develop educational resources (courses, webinars, workshops).
- Support dissemination of trial results and guidelines through symposia and meetings.

Membership

Educational leads from each national group, plus trainee representatives.

Leadership & Reporting

Chaired by a senior educator/researcher (3-year term, renewable once by mutual agreement for two years). Reports to HNCIG CEO.

Meetings

At least two per year.

Deliverables

- HNCIG Annual Meeting.
- Annual education programme plan.
- Evaluation reports of training activities.

Review

Reviewed every three years by the Board.

Guidelines and Protocol Committee (G&PC)

Purpose

To develop, harmonise, and disseminate evidence-based guidelines and protocols for head and neck cancer research and practice.

Scope of Work

- Coordinate international consensus guidelines.
- Provide template protocols and Case Report Forms (CRFs) for use in trials.
- Support adaptation of protocols to local contexts while ensuring harmonisation.
- Monitor updates in evidence to refresh guidelines.
- Provide recommendations to the Board for endorsement of internal and external guidelines.

Membership

Multidisciplinary representation (surgery, medical oncology, radiation oncology, nursing, PPI representatives).

Leadership & Reporting

Chair appointed by the Board, 3-year term, renewable once by mutual agreement for two years. Reports to HNCIG CEO.

Meetings

2-3 annually or as required.

Deliverables

Consensus guidelines, updated every 3-5 years.

Review

Reviewed every three years by the Board.

Partnerships and Finance Committee (P&FC)

Purpose

To oversee partnerships, collaborations, and financial sustainability of HNCIG.

Scope of Work

- Develop and manage strategic partnerships with industry, academia, and non-profit organisations.
- Oversee financial planning, budgets, and fundraising activities.
- Ensure transparent reporting of financial accounts and compliance with relevant regulations.
- Identify opportunities for joint funding and collaborative projects.

Membership

- Finance and partnership leads from member groups.
- At least one Board member.
- Representation from external partners as appropriate (non-voting).

Leadership & Reporting

Chaired by a senior member appointed by the Board for a 3-year term, renewable once by mutual agreement for two years. Reports to HNCIG CEO.

Meetings

At least twice yearly or as required.

Deliverables

- Annual financial report to the Board.
- Partnership development strategy.

Review

Reviewed every three years by the Board.

Patient and Public Engagement Committee (PPEC)

Purpose

To ensure that the work of HNCIG is informed by, and aligned with, the needs, priorities, and lived experiences of head and neck cancer patients/carers and the wider public.

Scope of Work

- Ensure that research priorities and communications reflect a patient-centred approach.
- Strengthen relevance and quality of outputs by engaging patients/carers in the research life cycle.
- Promote open communication between researchers, clinicians, patients and the public.
- Represent diverse communities and advocate for the inclusion of underserved groups and/or culturally appropriate engagement practices.
- Support policy, advocacy and public awareness in any areas where needed.

Membership

Patient Representatives, Health professionals with PPIE experience or expertise, Patient Advocacy Group representatives.

Leadership & Reporting

Chair appointed by the Board, 3-year term, renewable once by mutual agreement for two years. Reports to HNCIG CEO.

Meetings

At least two per year (virtual/hybrid).

Deliverables

- Annual report on work of the Committee to HNCIG executive and Board.

Review

Reviewed every three years by the Board.

Public Policy Committee (PPC)

Purpose

To engage and raise awareness of national and international policy makers about the research activities of HNCIG to ensure that they can inform and support national and/or international policy in head and neck cancer and research.

Objectives

- Address disparties and promote equitable global access to head and neck cancer research.
- Translate research findings into actionable public health and policy recommendations.
- Support evidence based policy making at international levels (relevant regions).
- Engage with international regulators.

Core Responsibilities

- Collaboration with global institutions: Globocan; IARC, WHO.
- Development of policy briefs, position papers, consensus statements.
- Establish mechanisms to inform national cancer control plans.
- Liaise with H&N cancer networks and Participate in global health forums.
- Engage with government and patient organisations and Engage with regulators.
- Develop communication plans to influence policy agendas.

Membership

- Multidisciplinary, interdisciplinarity (health economist, patient advocates, policymakers).
- Regional representation.

Leadership & Reporting

Chair appointed by the Board, 3-year term, renewable once by mutual agreement for two years. Reports to HNCIG CEO.

Meetings

At least two per year.

Deliverables

- Annual report on work of the Committee to HNCIG executive and Board.

Review

Reviewed every three years by the Board.

Scientific Clinical Studies Committee (SCSC)

Purpose

To provide strategic oversight, scientific review, origination, initiation, and prioritisation of international clinical trials in head and neck cancer under the HNCIG umbrella.

Scope of Work

- Originate and initiate clinical trial concepts.
- Review, endorse, and prioritise proposed clinical trial concepts.
- Ensure trials are scientifically rigorous, feasible, and align with HNCIG's mission.
- Advise on trial design, endpoints, and methodology.
- Facilitate collaboration across member groups for multi-country participation and with industry.
- Oversee ongoing trials, including progress monitoring and troubleshooting.

Membership

- Representatives from national trials group.
- At least one statistician and one methodologist.
- Ex officio: Chair of Translational Studies Committee for integration.

Leadership & Reporting

Chaired by a senior clinician-scientist elected by the Board for three years, 3-year term, renewable once by mutual agreement for two years. Reports to the HNCIG CEO.

Meetings

Minimum of three times per year (virtual/hybrid).

Deliverables

- Annual report on trial portfolio.
- Recommendations to the Board on trial endorsement.

Review

Reviewed every three years by the Board.

Scientific Translational Studies Committee (STSC)

Purpose

To advance biomarker, molecular, and correlative research linked to HNCIG clinical trials.

Scope of Work

- Review and endorse translational research proposals.
- Harmonise biospecimen collection, storage, and governance.
- Promote standardised biomarker and assay platforms.
- Facilitate access to shared biobanks, datasets, and analytic pipelines.
- Foster collaboration with industry and academia in biomarker research.

Membership

- Translational research members from each national group.
- Pathology, genomics, immunology, and bioinformatics experts.

Leadership & Reporting

Chaired by a translational scientist (3-year term, renewable once by mutual agreement for two years). Reports jointly to the HNCIG CEO.

Meetings

At least two per year.

Deliverables

- Translational strategy roadmap.
- Standard operating procedures (SOPs) for tissue/data governance.

Review

Reviewed every three years by the Board.

Young Investigators Committee (YIC)

Purpose

To foster the career development of early-career researchers and to lead cohort and real-world evidence studies in head and neck cancer.

Scope of Work

- Provide mentorship, networking, and leadership opportunities for young investigators.
- Initiate and lead cohort studies and real-world data projects.
- Build international collaborations across member groups for early-career investigators.
- Promote visibility and involvement of young investigators in HNCIG activities.

Membership

Researchers within 10 years of their first faculty/consultant appointment, nominated by national groups.

Leadership & Reporting

Chaired by a young investigator elected by committee peers (3-year term, renewable once for two years). Reports to HNCIG CEO.

Meetings

At least three times per year.

Deliverables

- Annual cohort/real-world studies report.
- Young Investigator development programme activities.

Review

Reviewed every three years by the Board.