

**The Hicks Centre
(Charles Hicks and Roman Gate surgeries)**

The Patients' Group (PG)

CONSTITUTION

1. Title: The Group will be called "The Hicks Group Patients Forum".

2. Objectives: The objectives of the PF are to act as a liaison route between the patients and the practice with a view to:

a) protecting, preserving and enhancing the health of the patients of the practice

b) providing a means whereby patients can make positive suggestions about their practice and their health care

c) supporting the surgeries in all aspects of their work including, but not limited to fundraising, education, training and health promotion

d) acting as the Practice's patient representative group in the wider arena of local health and social care provision

3. Powers: In furtherance of the above objectives, but not otherwise, the Management Committee may exercise the following powers:

a) The power to raise funds and to invite and receive contributions provided that, in raising funds, the Management Committee shall not undertake any substantial permanent trading activities and shall conform to any relevant requirements of the law as enacted from time to time.

b) The power to employ such staff (who shall not be members of the Management Committee) as are necessary for the proper pursuit of the objectives and to make all reasonable and necessary provision for the payment of pensions and superannuation for staff and their dependents.

c) The power to co-operate with charities (both local and national), voluntary bodies and statutory authorities operating in furtherance of the objectives or of similar charitable purposes and to exchange information and advice with them.

d) The power to establish and/or support patient support groups which may be, but are not limited to, disease- or age-related groups provided that such groups are created in furtherance of the above objectives.

e) The power to establish and/or support any charitable trusts, associations or institutions formed for all or any of the above objectives.

f) The power to appoint and constitute such advisory committees as the Management Committee may think fit.

g) The power to do all such lawful things as are necessary for the achievement of the objectives.

h) The power to provide transport in support of patient attendance at the surgeries or other health facilities to which they are referred.

4. Membership: Membership of the PF is open, without any bar, to all patients registered with the Charles Hicks Centre and Roman Gate Surgery. The PF Secretary will hold a register of all patients who attend Annual General Meetings and/or who have expressed an interest in the PF.

5. Management:

Management Committee: The PF shall be managed by a Management Committee comprising up to 20 elected representatives from the patients of the Hicks Group Practice. The Management Committee shall be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting. Applications to join the Management Committee must be made in writing on the Application Form agreed from time to time. Applications must be made to the PF Secretary two weeks in advance of the Annual General Meeting. At any one time the Management Committee shall contain a representative from each of the two Practice surgeries.

Executive Committee:

The Management Committee shall elect the following from amongst its members:

- a) Chairman
- b) Vice-Chairman
- c) Secretary
- d) Treasurer
- e) Fundraising Co-ordinator
- f) Communications Co-ordinator

The above shall be the Executive Committee members. Partners and staff of the two Practice Surgeries may be invited to attend meetings of the

Management and Executive Committee but have no voting rights. The Practice Manager of the Hicks Group Practice shall regularly attend the Management and Executive Committees and shall act as the formal link between the GP partners and the PF.

Co-option of Members:

Both the Management and the Executive Committees shall have the power to co-opt members for specific purposes at any time between Annual General Meetings and shall have the power to give or withhold voting rights to such co-opted members. Duration of Office: The maximum term of office for any member of the Executive Committee shall be no more than 3 years, subject to yearly re-appointment at the Annual General Meeting. The 3-year term may be extended in exceptional circumstances and subject to approval at the Annual General Meeting. Once the PF has been established, and other than in exceptional circumstances approved at the Annual General Meeting, retirement by rotation will occur so that, at any one time, two-thirds of the Executive Committee members shall remain in office to give continuity.

6. Meetings:

The Executive Committee will meet no less than every 8 weeks. Members of the Management Committee may and will be encouraged to attend the Executive Committee meetings. The dates of all Management and Executive Committee meetings will be set at the first meeting after the Annual General Meeting.

The Annual General Meeting shall be held in September of each year. Notice of the Annual General Meeting shall be deemed to have been given by a notice posted in the Patients' Waiting Areas of both the Practice Surgeries at least fourteen days previously. Other (Special) General Meetings may be similarly called by the Committee or by written request of not less than ten members of the PF to the PF Secretary.

Executive Committee meetings shall be quorate when a minimum of one half of the appointed officers are present including one representative from each of the two Surgeries. Both Management and Executive Committee members shall have at least seven days' clear notice of the meeting. Voting at all meetings will normally be by a show of hands. If, however, any attendee at any meeting so requests, voting may be by secret written ballot. Proxy votes will not be accepted unless formally notified to the Secretary in advance. At all meetings the Chairman of the meeting shall have a vote. In addition, s/he shall have a casting vote in the event of a tied vote.

7. Change of Constitution:

Subject to the following provisions of this clause the Constitution may be altered by a resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting at a General Meeting of the PF. The Notice of the General Meeting must include notice of the resolution, setting out the terms of the alteration proposed.

8. Finance:

The Financial Year of the PF shall commence on 1st August of each year. Any funds held by the PF shall be kept in a bank or building society account in the name of "Charles Hicks & Roman Gate PPG". The funds shall be administered by the Treasurer. Signatures on cheques shall be the Treasurer and one of two members of the Executive Committee nominated by the Management Committee.

Audit:

The accounts will be subjected to an annual independent examination. A financial statement shall be presented at the Annual General Meeting for adoption.

Remuneration & Expenses:

No member of the PF, whether of the Forum as a whole or serving on either the Management or Executive Committee, shall be entitled to any remuneration. Reasonable expenses may be claimed for stationery, postage or the like or for any travel and must be approved by the Treasurer and one other member of Executive Committee in advance.

9. Dissolution of the PF:

If the Management Committee decides that it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the PF, this can only be achieved at a General Meeting by giving 21 days notice in advance and stating the terms of the resolution to be proposed. However, if membership of the Management Committee is reduced to 2 members only, the PF shall be deemed to have dissolved, and it will be the responsibility of the Practice to advise patients accordingly. If the proposal is confirmed by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting the Management Committee shall have the power to realise any assets held by or on behalf of the PF. Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be transferred to such other charitable organisations or institutions having objectives similar to the objectives of the PF as may be determined by the members of the PF or, failing that, shall be applied for some other purpose which meets the objectives of the PF.