



## THE NEW ZEALAND SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP in NEUROPSYCHOLOGY CONSTITUTION

### **HISTORY OF NZSIGN**

#### **The Development of NZSIGN**

Until the advent of NZSIGN there was no systematic arrangement for neuropsychologists in Aotearoa New Zealand to undertake continuing education to keep their knowledge up to date, or to develop expertise and knowledge in new areas. NZSIGN was formed to address this need, and to allow neuropsychologists around the country to communicate with each other and share ideas. NZSIGN works to foster, provide and coordinate information sharing and training, and to promote neuropsychology as a field of practice. NZSIGN also provides training opportunities that assist members of other disciplines to develop an understanding of neuropsychological issues. As the organisation developed and grew, its expertise was increasingly sought for the provision of high-level guidance and advice on matters related to the practice of neuropsychology.

### **AIMS OF NZSIGN**

NZSIGN aims to meet goals in several primary areas of concern:

#### **(a) Identification of Neuropsychologists and those interested in this area**

NZSIGN allows Neuropsychologists in NZ to be in touch with each other through a professional network.

#### **(b) Education**

The knowledge and techniques of assessment and treatment that are the basis of neuropsychology are continually being researched and developed. NZSIGN aims to educate members via educational workshops, sharing of resources, collegial discussions and ultimately the development of a Neuropsychology post graduate qualification. NZSIGN members can also request to be put in touch with suitable potential neuropsychology supervisors to help them further their skill development.

#### **(c) Representation**

Focussed representation of concerns affecting neuropsychology as a profession is essential. NZSIGN aims to present and promote the quality and skills of its own members and assist in educating the public about sound standards of practice. Representation encompasses issues such as the following:

- (i) Providing the public with information about the areas of expertise of neuropsychologists to promote informed consumer choice.
- (ii) Representing neuropsychology with the New Zealand Psychologists Board
- (iii) Providing representation to bodies such as the Ministry of Health and other governmental agencies (e.g. ACC, MHC, and Ministry of Social Development) or other organisations on matters relevant to the profession.

#### **(d) Guidance and advice**

NZSIGN members are experts in the field of neuropsychology and from time-to-time high level guidance and advice may be sought or given by the organisation. This may include for example position statements or endorsements of best practice clinical guidance.

## NZSIGN COMMITTEE MAKE UP

The following office holders and staff are responsible for the day to day running of NZSIGN:

**Chairperson**

**Deputy Chairperson**

**Secretary**

**Treasurer**

**Digital Resources Co-ordinator**

**Māori representative**

**Student representative**

**Committee members (up to 10)**

## BENEFITS OF NZSIGN MEMBERSHIP

1. **Promotion of the profession.** This professional organisation is able to promote the role of practicing neuropsychologists. It can promote Neuropsychology to the public as a professional speciality. This should have long-term benefits for individuals of the profession.
2. **Collegiality and support.** NZSIGN will put you in touch with the group of people who are your professional colleagues and allows for great networking. Communication with other members occurs through a Google Group email list, which allows you to partake in discussions regarding neuropsychological practice with colleagues around the country. It also facilitates access to significant expertise and guidance the field of neuropsychology in Aotearoa New Zealand, and to potential supervisors. Neuropsychologists may work in multi-disciplinary teams and can feel somewhat isolated from likeminded professionals. Workshops give opportunities to refresh and reconnect with your discipline.
3. **Workshops at reduced costs.** Membership gives you entry to the continuing education programme co-ordinated by NZSIGN at a reduced cost. The organisation is non-profit making and much of the organising of the education is done voluntarily by enthusiastic and committed members, enabling us to have high standard local and overseas speakers at relatively low cost. NZSIGN works to foster, provide and co-ordinate such training, and to promote regular participation by members. Ongoing education assists in the process of continued development and updating of professional skills.
4. **An avenue to effect changes in the profession.** Membership will provide an avenue for you to express your opinion about important issues affecting the profession. From time to time members may be asked to vote on matters related to best practice. Members have voting rights at the AGM.
5. **Kept informed of current issues, useful book reviews, job vacancies, courses and seminars, relevant abstracts, etc., specific to Neuropsychology in N.Z.** as well as providing overseas references.
  - a. This will include information periodically provided via NZSIGN email and a dedicated webpage on the NZSIGN website for useful information and resources.

## OVERVIEW OF NZSIGN MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

All members must be registered psychologists with the New Zealand Psychologists Board (or an overseas equivalent) or a student on a post graduate psychology course (such as Clinical Psychology, Child and Family Psychology or Neuropsychology). Proof of course enrolment will be required for acceptance into the student membership category. The membership is intended to be inclusive rather than exclusive, to enable those with an interest in this area to develop their skills, awareness, and expertise. The membership process consists of completing the online form on the NZSIGN website. Your application will be reviewed for suitability by the membership co-ordinator; once you have paid your membership fee and been approved, your name will then be added to the NZSIGN mailing list, through which you will receive our communications and can start or take part in discussions amongst the membership. You will also receive login details for the member section of the website.

Members of the committee are exempt from membership fees as an acknowledgement of the time they give freely to the smooth running of the organisation.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR CONTINUING MEMBERSHIP**

An individual membership provides a single person with membership to NZSIGN for one year. Membership to NZSIGN will be charged annually on the 1<sup>st</sup> July, or on the anniversary of joining NZSIGN if that date falls after 1<sup>st</sup> July. NZSIGN reserves the right to cease membership of any individual in the case of misconduct or unprofessional behaviour.

## **RULES OF THE NEW ZEALAND SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP IN NEUROPSYCHOLOGY**

### **1. Name**

The name of NZSIGN is The New Zealand Special Interest Group in Neuropsychology. The Registered Office of NZSIGN is located at 538 Wairakei Rd, Burnside, Christchurch 8053

### **2. Objectives**

- 2.1.** The objectives of NZSIGN shall be pursued within the context of partnership under the Te Tiriti o Waitangi and embody the principles of equity with regard to ability, age, disability, ethnic origin, gender, location, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status or other characteristics which may lead to disadvantage.
- 2.2.** To promote and maintain excellence in the professional practice of Neuropsychology.
- 2.3.** To encourage practices in neuropsychology which promote recognition and respect for the cultural diversity which exists within Aotearoa New Zealand.
- 2.4.** To actively seek and integrate a Māori worldview into all Neuropsychology practice and research with Māori, recognising the status of Māori as tangata whenua of Aotearoa New Zealand.
- 2.5.** To promote, encourage, fund and support post-graduate educational experience for the benefit of members of NZSIGN.
- 2.6.** To tender advice to institutions involved in the training and education of Neuropsychologists on matters relevant to such training and education of Neuropsychologists.
- 2.7.** To liaise, advocate for, and represent Neuropsychology in matters relevant to the profession.
- 2.8.** To enter into any such financial arrangements as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objectives.
- 2.9.** To undertake all of the above matters, all such other things as are incidental or conducive to them, or any other matters of relevance to the practice of Neuropsychology within Aotearoa New Zealand.

### **3. Membership**

- 3.1.** NZSIGN shall consist of Members, each being a Registered Psychologist, or a student on a post graduate psychology course (such as Clinical Psychology, Child and Family Psychology or Neuropsychology), who in the view of the membership subcommittee is of good standing. Proof of course enrolment will be required for acceptance into the student membership category.
- 3.2.** Applications for Membership  
All applications for Membership status shall be made on the online form prescribed by the Committee and shall be accompanied by the annual subscription payable, together with such documentation to support the applicant's claim to meet the membership criteria as is deemed necessary. The membership subcommittee's decision on applications shall be final. Where applications are declined the subscription submitted with the application shall be returned. In considering applications for Member status, the membership subcommittee may consult with anyone it sees fit in order to judge the suitability of applicants.
- 3.3.** Resignation of Members  
Any Members may resign from NZSIGN by giving the Membership co-ordinator notice in writing to that effect. Every such notice shall unless otherwise expressed take effect from the end of the current financial year. Members who have not paid their current subscription lose all rights and privileges upon resignation.
- 3.4.** The Committee of NZSIGN may at any time preclude from renewing their membership any Member who has been found guilty by the Psychologists Registration Board of a breach by him or her of the Code of Ethics. Members of NZSIGN are responsible for informing the membership co-ordinator of any disciplinary process they are involved in. Any person so excluded from NZSIGN may if he or she so wishes, submit the question of his or her exclusion to the next Annual General Meeting of NZSIGN. In the interim the appellant will be subject to a suspension of all other rights and privileges of membership. At this meeting the excluded person shall be permitted to offer an explanation verbally and/or writing and if thereupon the majority of NZSIGN present should vote for endorsement of his or her exclusion, such endorsement shall be considered final and no further course of appeal shall be available. If at the meeting there is a majority vote for the reinstatement of the excluded person, their membership may be restored subject to any restrictions or conditions the Committee may see fit to impose. Voting on any such motion shall be by secret ballot if so demanded.

### **4. Subscription**

- 4.1.** Every Member shall pay to NZSIGN an annual subscription or such other amount as shall from time to time be fixed by resolution of the Committee. Failure to pay the subscription within six months of the beginning of each financial year may lead to the suspension of the rights and privileges of the Members. Members who have not paid all subscription monies due are automatically expelled ninety days after being notified of their suspension in writing.

## **5. NZSIGN Structure**

### **5.1. Officers of NZSIGN**

NZSIGN shall have an executive committee that shall be known as the NZSIGN Committee.

### **5.2. Committee**

**5.2.1.** The Committee will consist of: Chair, Deputy Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Māori Representative, Student Representative, Digital Resources co-ordinator (all of whom shall be elected at an annual general meeting of NZSIGN for a three year period and serve for no more than three consecutive terms in any one position).

**5.2.2.** Up to 10 additional NZSIGN Committee members (unnamed officers who will attend committee meetings and who may also contribute to working parties on particular topics). The Committee members will be elected at an annual general meeting for a three year period and serve for no more than three consecutive terms as an unnamed officer.

**5.2.3.** Anyone whom the Committee may see fit to co-opt.

### **5.3. Role of Committee - The Committee shall:**

**5.3.1.** Control the day-to-day affairs and finances of NZSIGN.

**5.3.2.** Meet regularly, usually quarterly, though this can occur via an online platform and may not be a face to face meeting. Written notices of meetings are to be given by NZSIGN Chair.

**5.3.3.** Have power in the name of NZSIGN to enter into any agreement or agreements as it may think fit and necessary in the advancement and management of NZSIGN.

**5.3.4.** Have power to make, alter or rescind by-laws not repugnant to these rules.

**5.3.5.** Fill any vacancies that occur from time to time.

**5.3.6.** Open an account with a trading or Trustee Savings Bank and all receipts shall be banked within twenty-one days. The Committee shall have power to invest surplus funds of NZSIGN against such security as the Committee may unanimously determine.

**5.3.7.** The Committee may employ such staff and on such terms as it considers appropriate.

### **5.4. Procedure**

**5.4.1.** There shall be at least four meetings of the Committee each year.

**5.4.2.** Six members of the Committee, two of whom must be officers, shall form a quorum, which must include either the Chairperson or Secretary.

**5.4.3.** Voting - Voting at any meeting of Committee members shall be on the voices or, if any member so requests, by show of hands. Voting by proxy shall be permitted providing that such written proxies are received by the Chair prior to the opening of the meeting to which they apply. The result of each division shall be declared by the Chairperson and recorded in the minutes.

**5.4.4.** The Committee shall appoint working parties that shall be subordinate to the Committee. The Chair of NZSIGN shall be a member of all subcommittees ex officio. Working parties include Continuing Education.

**5.4.5.** The Chairperson, all other named officers and the unnamed Committee members shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of NZSIGN. They shall all be Members of NZSIGN and they will be appointed by the membership for a maximum term of three years, and they may be reappointed up to two times.

**5.4.6.** Any Committee member not attending more than two Committee meetings per year (except with the consent of the Committee) at the option of the Committee shall cease to be a member thereof.

**5.4.7.** The Chair shall call a special meeting of the Committee if requested by any two Committee members or 10 ordinary members of NZSIGN, such meeting to be held within 28 days of the request being received, by sending every Committee member at least seven days' notice thereof in writing at his or her ordinary address specifying the day, place and time of the meeting and the business for which it is to be held.

## **6. Control of Funds**

**6.1.** All monies received by or on behalf of NZSIGN shall forthwith be paid to the credit of NZSIGN in an account with a trading bank or such other bank or savings bank from time to time to be decided by the Committee.

**6.2.** All cheques, promissory notes, drafts and other negotiable instruments and all receipts for money paid to NZSIGN shall be signed, drawn, accepted, endorsed or otherwise executed, as the case may be, in such manner as the Committee from time to time by resolution shall determine.

**6.3.** Reserves – NZSIGN will retain at all times sufficient funds to reimburse all membership fees for the current financial year in case of unexpected closure of the organisation.

## **7. Resolutions**

- 7.1. A resolution in writing, signed by two-thirds of the Committee for the time being entitled to receive a notice of a meeting of the Committee shall be as valid and effective as if it had been passed at a meeting of the Committee duly convened and held. Any such resolution may consist of several documents in form, each signed by one or more of the Committee.

## **8. Meetings**

### **8.1. Annual General Meetings and Special General Meetings:**

- 8.1.1. The Annual General Meeting shall be held every year upon a date and at a time and place to be fixed by the Committee. Virtual meetings are permitted.
- 8.1.2. A special General Meeting shall be convened whenever ten Members in writing shall request it or the Committee considers it necessary to do so. Such meetings will be convened by the Chair within 28 days of the receipt of the request.

### **8.2. Procedures:**

- 8.2.1. Notice - notice of all General Meetings shall be given to Members, at least fourteen days before the Meeting.
- 8.2.2. Quorum – Ten Members shall form a quorum at all General Meetings.
- 8.2.3. Voting - Voting at any General meeting of members shall be on the voices or, if any member so requests, by show of hands, or by an online voting platform. Voting by proxy shall be permitted providing that such written proxies are received by the Chair prior to the opening of the meeting to which they apply. The result of each division shall be declared by the Chairperson and recorded in the minutes.
- 8.2.4. Minutes - All Minutes of the Committee meetings and also Minutes of every Annual and Special General Meeting of the Members of NZSIGN shall be kept on file and approved by email by the Chairperson of the Meeting at which the same are to be confirmed. Such Minutes when purporting to be so signed shall in all cases and for all purposes whatever, be binding upon NZSIGN and upon every Member thereof. Minutes of all meetings will be uploaded to the members section of the NZSIGN website.

### **8.3. Alteration of Rules:**

- 8.3.1. These rules may be altered, added to, rescinded or otherwise amended by a resolution passed by two-thirds majority of those Members present at a General Meeting.
- 8.3.2. Any resolution to alter, add to, rescind or otherwise amend the rules of NZSIGN must be received by Committee at least 21 days prior to the date of the General meeting at which the resolution will be considered.
- 8.3.3. Duplicate copies of every such alteration, addition, rescission or amendment shall forthwith be delivered to the Registrar in accordance with the requirements of the Incorporated Societies Act.
- 8.3.4. Annual Report  
The Committee shall submit at each annual meeting a report of its proceedings during the past year together with an annual financial statement of the affairs of NZSIGN. The financial statement shall comprise a Revenue Account for the year and a Balance Sheet showing the investments and other assets and the liabilities and accumulated funds of NZSIGN. The financial year shall be deemed to end on the 30th day of June in each year or such other date as decided by the Committee.

## **9. Honorary titles and eligibility**

- 9.1.1. Life Members and Fellows are nominated before the AGM, and then recognised at the AGM with a speech and awarding of certificate to formally honour.
- 9.1.2. Life Member- is a special non-financial membership category for retired NZSIGN Members that honours a previous member's long-standing contribution to the field of neuropsychology. Life Membership status is awarded to those previous NZSIGN members by the NZSIGN committee following a written nomination by at least two existing members of NZSIGN. Life membership entitles the holder to the benefits of Member Plus category (standard membership benefits with access to educational webinars).
- 9.1.3. Fellow -This category of membership is available to current financial members of the NZSIGN and honours a member's significant contribution to the field of neuropsychology. The Fellowship is awarded by the NZSIGN committee following a written nomination by at least two current members of NZSIGN. The membership entitles the holder to free of charge access to educational webinars.

## **10. Winding up**

- 10.1. Disposition of Surplus Assets: In the event of NZSIGN being wound up and after payments of NZSIGN's liabilities and expenses of the winding up, surplus assets shall be given on such terms as a general meeting

of the members shall decide to one or more Societies which include among their main objects the understanding of research into, and promotion of neuropsychological conditions in Aotearoa New Zealand.

**11. General**

- 11.1.** In the event of any questions as to the construction or application of any of these rules, the Committee is hereby empowered to decide the same.
- 11.2.** No member of NZSIGN shall make any public press statement purporting to be made by or on behalf of NZSIGN or any section thereof except with the prior approval of the Committee.
- 11.3.** The Committee may co-opt for a time any Member or other person not a member who may be in a position to assist the Committee on any subject under discussion or otherwise assist in the Committee's deliberations.