

SURESEARCH

Constitution

Name and Description

- 1 Our name is Suresearch.
- 2 Suresearch is a network of mental health service users, survivors, carers and allies in research and education based in the Midlands.
- 3 Suresearch is a non-affiliated organization based at the School of Social Policy, University of Birmingham.

Objects

- 4 Suresearch aims to influence the quality, ethics and values of mental health research, education and training by linking with other local, regional and national partnerships in the mental health arena.
- 5 Suresearch seeks to achieve this by:
 - a) increasing the involvement of mental health service users, carers and their allies in research and education
 - b) providing opportunities for members to work in partnership with each other to share and develop skills and knowledge
 - c) developing and providing programmes of education and training for members
 - d) responding to and taking up opportunities for research, consultancy and education
 - e) influencing the quality, ethics and values of mental health research and education
 - f) linking with other local, regional and national partnerships in mental health

Membership

- 6 Our Membership consists of all those mental health service users, survivors, carers and allies who
 - a) have experience of and/or an interest in mental health research and education, and
 - b) indicate that they wish to be a member by whatever means Suresearch from time to time decides (including an application form), and
 - c) agree to abide by the Constitution, and any ground rules and codes of conduct established in accordance with the constitution, and
 - d) have been accepted into membership by Suresearch, and
 - e) whose membership has not been terminated or suspended in accordance with the Suresearch constitution and codes of conduct.

- 7 A list of Suresearch members will be kept by the Membership Secretary, or some other person authorised by Suresearch.
- 8 Suresearch may, from time to time, send out a notice requesting that members confirm that they wish to continue their membership, within a period of not less than 21 days. If a member does not respond by the due date in the manner requested, his/her membership will automatically lapse.

Powers

- 9 Subject to any contrary provision in this Constitution, Suresearch has the power to do anything conducive to and compatible with the furtherance of its Objects including the following
 - a) power to raise funds and to invite and receive contributions provided that in raising funds the Committee shall not undertake any substantial permanent trading activities that are unrelated to Suresearch's objectives and shall conform to any requirements of the law;
 - b) power to buy, take on, lease, or exchange any property necessary for the achievement of the Objects and to maintain and equip it for use;
 - c) power, subject to any consents required by law, to sell, lease or dispose of all or any part of the property of Suresearch;
 - d) power to co-operate with other Groups, including charities, voluntary bodies and statutory authorities operating in furtherance of the Objects or of similar purposes and to exchange information and advice with them.
 - e) power to pay out of pocket expenses to members and to pay members a proportion of fees received for services they have provided on behalf of Suresearch, such proportion to be decided by Suresearch, if not stipulated in the agreement with the recipient.
- 10 Suresearch will not
 - a) borrow money repayable on demand
 - b) engage staff under a contract of employment
 - c) enter into any lease or other contract that requires more than 1 month's notice of termination
- 11 Suresearch officers may exercise the above powers in between Suresearch meetings, in accordance with directions and decisions of Suresearch meetings, except the power 9c) concerning disposal of Suresearch property, and Suresearch may appoint one or more of its members to exercise the above powers for specified purposes by a resolution of a Suresearch meeting.

Finances

- 12 The funds and property of Suresearch shall be used solely to further its objectives in accordance with any financial policy laid down by a Suresearch meeting.

- 13 The funds of Suresearch, including all donations contributions and bequests, shall be paid into an account in the name of Suresearch at a bank chosen by Suresearch, except that Suresearch may decide that a fund received for a specific purpose may be held by a third party partner organisation under the terms of an agreement with such partner made for that purpose.
- 14 All cheques drawn on the account must be signed by the Treasurer, and at least one other Officer.
- 15 A proper record of all income and expenditure will be kept at all times.
- 16 The Treasurer will be responsible for operating the bank account and the keeping of financial records on behalf of Suresearch.

Suresearch Meetings

- 17 Where practicable, Suresearch meetings are held once each month of the year, and there will be at least nine meetings in each year.
- 18 All members may attend and vote at Suresearch meetings, and only members may vote.
- 19 At each meeting, members will be appointed to chair the meeting and take minutes.
- 20 Non-members are welcome to attend as guests at the discretion of the meeting.
- 21 There is no set quorum.
- 22 Decisions will be made by a simple majority (ie more than half the votes cast) of those members present at the meeting unless otherwise stated in this constitution.
- 23 At least 14 days notice in writing will be given of the date of all Suresearch meetings. (This may be achieved by means of an annual notice.)

Annual General Meeting

- 24 An Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Suresearch will be held each year in the month of October, or as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 25 At least 14 days notice of an AGM will be given to all members together with details of the business to be discussed.
- 26 The Treasurer will present a financial report and statement of accounts for the preceding year to each AGM.
- 27 The AGM will elect officers, as listed below, who shall hold office from the conclusion of that AGM and until the following AGM.
- 28 Nominations for election of officers will be made in person at the meeting. Should nominations exceed the number vacancies, voting will be by a show of hands or a secret ballot of those present at the AGM. Voting will be by secret ballot if two or more members present at the AGM so request.
- 29 Officers will remain in office until the next AGM, unless they resign or are removed by an Extraordinary General Meeting.

Extraordinary General Meeting

- 30 The Membership Secretary must call an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) if requested to do so in writing by at least 10 members of Suresearch, or if an officer's position becomes vacant, or if instructed to do so by a Suresearch meeting.
- 31 An EGM can consider a resolution to remove an officer, amend the constitution and any of the business normally considered by the AGM or a monthly Suresearch meeting.
- 32 At least 14 days notice of an EGM will be given to all members together with details of the business to be discussed and notice of any resolutions to be proposed.
- 33 The EGM should normally be held immediately before the next available Suresearch monthly meeting, but it can be held on an earlier date (subject the requirement to give notice) if the 10 members requesting it or the instructing Suresearch meeting declare that the urgency of the business to be discussed requires it to be held on an earlier date.
- 34 In the event of the resignation or other unavailability of the Membership Secretary, another officer or another member of Suresearch should assume the responsibilities of the Membership secretary for calling an EGM.

Attendance and Voting at AGMs and EGMs

- 35 All members may attend.
- 36 Only those who were members when the notices of the meeting were sent may vote.

Suresearch Officers

- 37 The officers, to be elected at the AGM, will be:
 - a) Membership Secretary, who will
 - i) maintain the records of Suresearch members,
 - ii) inform members of meetings and Suresearch activities through production of the Suresearch email newsletter,
 - iii) maintain the electronic archive of Suresearch minutes and other documents,
 - iv) coordinate postal communication with members if required;
 - b) Correspondence and Activities Secretary, who will
 - i) deal with correspondence including liason with those seeking Suresearch involvement in education, training and research,
 - ii) coordinate Suresearch activities;

- c) Minutes and Meetings Secretary, who will
 - i) coordinate arrangements for meetings of Suresearch and its groups, including booking of rooms
 - ii) coordinate the production and supply of minutes for the Membership secretary to include in the Suresearch newsletter
 - iii) call meetings in accordance with the constitution, in conjunction with the Membership secretary,

- d) Digital Media Secretary and IT coordinator, who will:
 - i) maintain Suresearch's online presence (currently including the website, Twitter account, and Facebook),
 - ii) provide support and training for other officers with the technical aspects of their roles;

- e) Assistant Secretary, who will
 - i) support other officers in their roles
 - ii) deal with printing and posting of any postal mailings to members
 - iii) deal with photocopying of papers for face to face meetings if required;

- f) Treasurer, who will
 - i) deal with incoming money and payments
 - ii) maintain Suresearch financial records
 - iii) produce financial reports for Suresearch meetings as required
 - iv) monitor whether Suresearch is operating within its resources and budgets
 - v) be one of the signatories to Suresearch bank accounts

38 The officers will support each other with their roles as needed.

39 The Officers will assume a collective responsibility for providing a welcoming non-discriminatory environment for members' meetings and activities and the use of Suresearch ground rules and codes of conduct for this purpose.

40 Not used

Groups

41 A Suresearch meeting may authorise Groups of its members to focus on specific areas of interest and activity and may

- a) elect a fixed membership to such a Group,
- b) or resolve that the Group be open to any member interested (an "open group").

42 Such Groups will report to, and be accountable to, Suresearch meetings.

- 43 The following Groups were already established at the time of adoption of Constitution in 2010:
- a) The Writers' Group is an open group meeting approximately every 6 weeks for those interested in writing (creative or otherwise) about mental health issues.
 - b) The Inpatient Care Forum is an open group meeting approximately every 4 weeks for those interested in focusing on issues relating to Inpatient and Secondary Care services.
 - c) Webwatch is an open group that meets as necessary to discuss the maintenance and development of the Suresearch website.
 - d) Futures is an open group established to focus on how Suresearch might develop its work and organization in the future and its ongoing collaborative relationship with the School of Social Policy at the University of Birmingham, and on the operation of Suresearch between monthly meetings. It meets as often as necessary

Ground Rules and Codes of Conduct

- 44 Suresearch may agree on Ground Rules and Codes of Conduct governing the behaviour of members at Suresearch meetings and in representing Suresearch by resolution at a Suresearch meeting, and these rules may include provision for suspension and termination of membership.
- 45 At least 14 days notice must be given to all members of a proposal to amend or add to Ground Rules and Codes of Conduct.

Alterations to the Constitution.

- 46 The Constitution may be altered by a resolution passed at an EGM or an AGM. All members must be given 14 days notice of the terms of the alteration proposed.

Arrangements until first Annual General Meeting.

- 47 Until the first annual general meeting takes place this constitution shall take effect as if the officers' positions are vacant.

Dissolution.

- 48 If a Suresearch meeting decides that it is necessary or advisable to dissolve Suresearch, the Secretary shall call an EGM, and give at least 21 days notice of the meeting and the terms of the resolution to be proposed. If the proposal is confirmed by a two-thirds majority of those present, the officers or other members appointed by the EGM shall have power to realise any assets held by or on behalf of Suresearch.
- 49 Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to the objects of Suresearch as the members of Suresearch may determine or

failing that shall be applied for some other charitable purpose, and not distributed to members of Suresearch in any way.

- 50 A copy of the statement of accounts for the period since the last AGM will be prepared.

Notices

- 51 In any paragraph where a specified period of notice must be given to members, this refers to the date of receipt by the member, and the notice is deemed to be served:
- a) For email notices, 24 hours after sending to the email address last supplied by each member;
 - b) For postal notices, if posted to the address last given by the member and it is posted in time to arrive by the due date. Any dispute about whether sufficient time has been allowed is settled by reference to the delivery operative's documentation for the service chosen.
- 52 Subject to paragraph 53, notices will be sent by email, unless Suresearch decides to send a particular notice by post, and members are expected to supply an email address for this purpose and advise Suresearch of any alterations to their contact details.
- 53 Notices should be sent by post where this is necessary to make Suresearch communications accessible to a disabled member.
- 54 In any paragraph where there is a requirement to give notice to all members, this refers to all those who are members at the time the notices are sent.

This constitution was originally adopted at the Suresearch meeting on 7 October 2010, amended at the E.G.M. on 4 May 2017, and further amended at an E.G.M. on 2 December 2021.