



Vasco da Gama Movement

Constitution

**Adopted on 25/06/2019
at the VdGM Council Meeting
held at the
2019 WONCA Bratislava Preconference**

Article 1: Name, description, logo, address and language

- 1.1.** The official name of the Organization is 'Vasco da Gama Movement' (VdGM). This name was selected at the January 2004 Constitutional meeting in Lisbon.
- 1.2.** VdGM is the European Organization representing 'New and Future General Practitioners / Family Physicians' (NFGPs / FPs) under the aegis of WONCA Europe (European Region of the World Organization of Family Doctors). VdGM has a unique role in representing and advocating for NFGPs / FPs in Europe.
- 1.3.** The official logo of the Organization is displayed at the head of the VdGM Constitution and consists of a blue ship sailing under nine yellow stars, complemented by the WONCA globe, and with the name Vasco da Gama Movement underneath. This is the only permissible logo and no modifications may be made. Only the following individuals may use the VdGM logo for promotion of VdGM in their respective countries: -
 - 1.3.1.** VdGM Executive Members.
 - 1.3.2.** VdGM Council Members.
 - 1.3.3.** VdGM Hippokrates National and Regional Exchange Coordinators.
- 1.4.** The name of VdGM shall not be utilised by any National organization of NFGP/FM within their own name. National member organisations shall be supported to develop their own names and organizational infrastructure.
- 1.5.** The email address of VdGM is info@vdgm.eu.
- 1.6.** The official language of VdGM is English; all publications shall be in English and all meetings shall be conducted in English.

Article 2: Participation, fees and benefits

- 2.1.** VdGM is a network of European NFGPs / FPs and welcomes participation of anyone who wishes to be involved.
- 2.2.** There are no membership fees or dues for those NFGPs / FPs participating in VdGM. Membership fees are paid to WONCA World by National representative organizations; an annual grant is provided to VdGM by WONCA Europe.
- 2.3.** New and Future General Practitioners/Family Physicians, here within to be referred to as NFGPs / FPs, are defined as those who are in currently undertaking or within 5 years of completion of specialist training in General Practice/Family Medicine. No age restriction is applied to this definition.
- 2.4.** Only those who are within five years of completion of specialist training (from the date of awarding of a certificate of specialisation by the appropriate national awarding body) are eligible to participate in Hippokrates exchanges, enter the VdGM Junior Research Award, apply for VdGM Bursaries or Awards, and avail of any other similar material benefits as may be determined from time to time by the VdGM Executive. The date of awarding of any benefit is the date on which the calculation of five year eligibility shall take place.

Article 3: Aims and objectives

3.1. The **aims** of VdGM are to: -

- 3.1.1.** Provide opportunities for all European NFGPs / FPs to meet, learn from each other, and gain collegiate support.
- 3.1.2.** Be the voice of European NFGPs / FPs.
- 3.1.3.** Improve education and research opportunities for NFGPs / FPs in Europe.
- 3.1.4.** Promote the discipline of general practice / family medicine (GP/FM) and to enhance the position of NFGPs / FPs in the medical world.

3.2. The **objectives** of VdGM are to: -

- 3.2.1.** Organize or co-organize meetings including: -
 - 3.2.1.1.** A Preconference meeting which takes place immediately prior to each WONCA Europe regional conference.
 - 3.2.1.2.** An annual VdGM Forum.
- 3.2.2.** Provide a communications framework to support European NFGPs / FPs with the purposes of: -
 - 3.2.2.1.** Facilitating the identification of their concerns, doubts and needs.
 - 3.2.2.2.** Helping address those identified concerns, doubts and needs.
- 3.2.3.** Publish newsletters and other articles and materials in various media formats about VdGM.
- 3.2.4.** Collaborate with: -
 - 3.2.4.1.** National Colleges and Associations of GP/FM.
 - 3.2.4.2.** International GP / FM organizations.
 - 3.2.4.3.** Student organizations.
- 3.2.5.** Promote, encourage and facilitate the formation of national representative structures for NFGPs/FPs.
- 3.2.6.** Raise the profile of VdGM and be represented at international meetings.
- 3.2.7.** Evaluate and encourage improvement in quality standards and the overall quality of training programmes for GP/FM.
- 3.2.8.** Gather and disseminate information on training programmes, research opportunities and other activities for NFGPs/FPs.

Article 4: Representation and terms of office

- 4.1.** Representation to Council is outlined in subclause **5.2. Composition** under **Article 5: Council**.
- 4.2.** For elected or appointed representatives of VdGM, including but not limited to members of the VdGM Executive and Council, National Exchange Co-ordinators (NECs) and Regional Exchange Co-ordinators (RECs), and the 'VdGM-Appointed Member at Large in the WONCA Europe Executive Board' (VdGM MALWEB), but excluding the office of President, a standard term of appointment is for a three year period.

- 4.3.** The standard term of appointment to the office of President shall be for four years and shall consist of one year as President Elect, two years as President, and one year as Immediate Past President.
- 4.4.** With the exception of the presidential role, a representative or appointee may stand for election to Executive officer for more than one term, with a maximum of two consecutive standard terms of office.
- 4.5.** A representative or appointee may only serve as President on one occasion.
- 4.6.** All those representation VdGM in an official capacity, including but not limited to members of the VdGM Executive and Council, NECs, RECs and the VdGM MALWEB, must, on the date of their election or appointment, be within five years of completion of specialist training calculated from the date of awarding of a certificate of specialisation by the appropriate national awarding body.
- 4.7.** Council and Executive shall make every reasonable effort, including calls for nominations, to ensure that qualified candidates from both genders face equity in terms of opportunities to apply for officer and other positions.

Article 5: Council

5.1. General Powers and Responsibilities

- 5.1.1.** The VdGM Council is the governing body of VdGM, makes decisions about strategy, policy, direction and the Constitution, and gives direction to and holds the Executive accountable for acting in the best interests of VdGM.

5.2. Composition

5.2.1. Voting Members of Council

- 5.2.1.1.** The Voting Members of Council shall consist of one (1) representative per country in the WONCA Europe region. The National Delegates represent the young doctors which are members of the national representative organization(s).

5.2.1.1.1. For countries in the region where there is at least one (1) Member Organization of WONCA Europe, the National Delegates are appointed or elected by the respective Member Organization(s). If there is more than one (>1) national representative organization, a single national representative to VdGM should be agreed by the national Member Organizations.

5.2.1.1.3. Each Member Organization (or group of national Member Organizations) shall notify the VdGM Secretary of the name and email address of its National Delegate, certify her/his credentials, and inform of any subsequent changes.

5.2.1.1.4. The National Delegate must, on the date of the appointment, be within five (5) years of completion of specialist training calculated from the date of awarding of a certificate of specialization by the appropriate national awarding body.

5.2.1.1.5. The National Member Organization holds the autonomy to elect the National Europe council Representative according to the National MO's terms of office. The standard appointment of a National Delegate is for a 3 year period. After this term the VdGM will contact the MO to assess whether the delegate continues his/her activity. After 6 years, the VdGM

will contact the MO again in order to renew the information. If no answer from the MO is provided within 6 months, then the seat is considered to be vacant. All EC members have the responsibility to ensure the continuity of the representation. During the tenure of office, the National Delegate must be a member of the Member Organization.

5.2.1.3. Each National Delegate shall have one (1) vote at Council.

5.2.2. Non-Voting Members of Council

5.2.2.1. The VdGM Executive officers, VdGM appointed Liaisons to Networks and Collaborations and Leads of VdGM approved Special Interest Groups may attend meetings of Council, and have the privileges of the floor, but shall not have the right to vote (except if they are also National Delegates). VdGM Executive officers may attend meetings of Council, and have the privileges of the floor, but shall not have the right to vote (except if they are also National Delegates).

5.2.3. Observers

5.2.3.1. Council shall admit as observers to its meetings:

5.2.3.1.1. Official Observers;

5.2.3.1.1.1. Executive members of WONCA World and WONCA Europe;

5.2.3.1.1.2. Chair, President, Convenor or official representative of each WONCA Working Party, Young Doctors' Movement, Network, SIG, Committee and Organization in Collaborative Relations;

5.2.3.1.1.3. President or official representative of a Member Organization;

5.2.3.1.1.4. The Editor of any journal, newsletter or other regular publication produced under the auspices of WONCA.

5.2.3.1.2. Other Observers

5.2.3.1.2.1. WONCA Individual Members at the discretion and invitation of VdGM Executive, with the concurrence of Council.

5.2.3.1.2.2. Other individuals invited by the VdGM Executive, with the concurrence of Council, for part or whole meeting.

5.2.3.2. All observers to Council shall have, at the discretion of the President, the privileges of the floor, but shall not have the right to vote.

Article 6: The VdGM Executive

6.1. The VdGM Executive is the body tasked with day to day running of VdGM and is charged with responsibility for: -

6.1.1. Enacting decisions of the VdGM Council.

6.1.2. Upholding the VdGM Constitution.

6.1.3. Fulfilling the aims and objectives of VdGM including arranging and preparing Executive and Council meetings, Preconferences and Forums, and ensuring that Theme and Special Interest Groups are supported and encouraged.

6.1.4. Engaging with external bodies in the interests of VdGM.

6.1.5. Providing regular reports to the VdGM Council.

6.1.6. Appointing a Manager for each Preconference and approving the Chairperson of the Organising Committee for each Forum.

6.2. The VdGM Executive shall consist of: -

6.2.1. The President.

6.2.2. A President Elect or Immediate Past President.

6.2.3. The Secretary.

6.2.4. The Treasurer.

6.2.5. A maximum of six other Members at Large to be defined in accordance with the needs of the organisation, but which shall include at all times

6.2.5.1. Liaisons to the active Theme Groups

6.2.5.2. 'VdGM-Appointed Member at Large in the WONCA Europe Executive Board' (VdGM WONCA Europe Liaison); the criteria and method of filling this position shall be at the discretion of and determined from time to time and as required by the Executive and published on the VdGM website and notified within a week directly to the Council by e-mail.

6.2.6. Other non-voting members that the Executive may from time to time invite to join the Executive in an advisory capacity or in relation to managing meetings.

6.3. Members of the VdGM Executive shall communicate with each other in a timely and efficient manner.

6.4. Executive Working Groups

6.4.1. There shall be a number of Executive Working Groups which at all times will include a Working Group on Exchanges.

6.4.2. Working Groups should represent essential core functions of the Executive Group which require additional support from our members. As such they should be in line with our core aims and objectives as outlined in Article 3.

6.4.3. Participation in Theme Groups is open to anyone who may be interested, at the discretion of the Executive member leading that group.

6.4.4. Each Executive Working Group will be led by the Executive Group Member responsible for the associated area of work.

Article 7: Special Interest Groups

- 7.1.** Special Interest Groups may be created and dissolved by a simple majority vote of the VdGM Executive during any Executive Meeting.
- 7.2.** Participation in Special Interest Groups is open to anyone who may be interested.
- 7.3.** Each Special Interest Group will have a lead who will provide a written report once a year to the VdGM Council and will attend VdGM Council as a non-voting member in accordance with sub-clause 6.2.2.
- 7.4.** SIGs are encouraged to send abstracts to conferences organised by WONCA Europe, its member organizations and networks.
- 7.5.** SIGs are encouraged to communicate, engage and collaborate with WONCA Europe and WONCA World Networks, SIGs and Working Parties of relevance to their topic of interest.

Collaborations

- 7.6.** VdGM welcomes collaboration with organizations where there are mutually beneficial interests, which includes but is not limited to:
 - 7.6.1.** WONCA Europe Networks and Organisations
 - 7.6.2.** WONCA World Working Parties and SIGs
 - 7.6.3.** YDM Global projects
 - 7.6.4.** WONCA Collaborative organizations.
- 7.7.** Collaborations shall be guided and governed by an agreed written Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between VdGM and any collaborating organization.
- 7.8.** During preparation of a MoU, the interests of VdGM will be represented by the VdGM Executive.
- 7.9.** The decision for VdGM to enter into a formal collaboration by way of an MoU between VdGM and a collaborating organization must have:
 - 7.9.1.** approval by a simple majority of VdGM Council members in an ordinary council meeting quorum %50. In the event of a tied vote, no collaboration shall be entered into.
 - 7.9.2.** additional approval by WONCA Europe Executive, where the collaborating organisation exists outside of WONCA Europe or WONCA World.
- 7.10.** Where a collaboration is entered into, VdGM will appoint a designated Liaison who will report on an annual basis to the VdGM Council as a non-voting member, in accordance with Sub-clause 6.2.2.
 - 7.10.1.** Liaisons will be appointed by the VdGM Executive, in collaboration with the collaborating organisation/group where appropriate.
 - 7.10.2.** Liaisons will be expected to attend meetings of the collaborating organisations/group and subsequently provide reports to Council in a timely manner.
 - 7.10.2.1.** Where possible Liaisons may appoint a local VdGM representative to attend the meetings on their behalf to minimise expenses.

- 7.11.** Terms of collaboration between VdGM and WONCA Europe Organizations are detailed in the paper approved by WONCA Europe at the WONCA Europe Council meeting which took place during the 2006 WONCA Europe Conference in Florence, Italy.

Article 8: Roles and responsibilities

8.1. The President

8.1.1. The President shall: -

- 8.1.1.1.** At all times seek to uphold the VdGM Constitution and act in the best interests of VdGM.
- 8.1.1.2.** Be answerable to the Executive and Council.
- 8.1.1.3.** Give direction and leadership to VdGM including the Executive and Council.
- 8.1.1.4.** Chair meetings of the Executive and VdGM Council.
- 8.1.1.5.** Represent VdGM.
- 8.1.1.6.** Be primarily responsible for setting the agenda of Executive and Council meetings.
- 8.1.1.7.** Endeavour to ensure the Executive acts in a cohesive and productive fashion.
- 8.1.1.8.** Delegate tasks and responsibilities where necessary.
- 8.1.1.9.** Carry out all other duties that may be required from time to time in fulfilling the role of President.

8.2. The President Elect / Immediate Past President

- 8.2.1.** The President Elect shall endeavour to grow into the role of President.
- 8.2.2.** The Immediate Past President shall support and provide counsel to the President and endeavour to ensure continuity within the Executive.
- 8.2.3.** The President Elect / Immediate Past President shall: -
 - 8.2.3.1.** At all times seek to uphold the VdGM Constitution and act in the best interests of VdGM.
 - 8.2.3.2.** Be answerable to the Executive and Council.
 - 8.2.3.3.** In the event that the President is unavailable or incapacitated, perform any and all duties that may be required to provide continuity to the role of President until such time as the President is available or no longer incapacitated. This may include chairing meetings, representing VdGM and putting in place measures to address extraordinary circumstances.
 - 8.2.3.4.** Support the President during the two year term of office.
 - 8.2.3.5.** Shall carry out all other duties that may be required from time to time in fulfilling the role of President Elect or Immediate Past President.

8.3. The Secretary

8.3.1. The Secretary shall: -

- 8.3.1.1.** At all times seek to uphold the VdGM Constitution and act in the best interests of VdGM.
- 8.3.1.2.** Be answerable to the Executive and Council.
- 8.3.1.3.** Be responsible for VdGM paperwork.

- 8.3.1.4.** Arrange the agendas for and keep minutes of Executive and Council meetings.
- 8.3.1.5.** Publish minutes of Executive and Council meetings.
- 8.3.1.6.** Archive and distribute accordingly any internal / external mail.
- 8.3.1.7.** Undertake any other duties as assigned by the Executive Group or that may be necessary in fulfilling the role of Secretary.

8.4. The Treasurer

8.4.1. The Treasurer shall: -

- 8.4.1.1.** At all times seek to uphold the VdGM Constitution and act in the best interests of VdGM.
- 8.4.1.2.** Be answerable to the Executive and Council.
- 8.4.1.3.** Act under the direction of the Executive.
- 8.4.1.4.** Keep or cause to be kept adequate and proper accounts of the property and funds of the Organization.
- 8.4.1.5.** Deposit or cause to be deposited all monies and other valuables in the name of, and to the credit of the Organization, with such deposits as may be designated by Executive Group.
- 8.4.1.6.** Disburse or cause to be disbursed the funds of the Organization as may be mandated by Executive Group.
- 8.4.1.7.** Render to Executive Group and VdGM Council, whenever they so request, an account of all the transactions as Treasurer and of the financial state of the Organization.
- 8.4.1.8.** Analyze possible sources of funding.
- 8.4.1.9.** Submit an annual financial report and a report on a future 2 or 3 year budget including possible changes to our fund (extraordinary payments for Forum or other expenditures due to travel costs for Forum etc., decrease in income due to changes from the WONCA income etc.), approved by VdGM Executive, to the WONCA Europe Executive Committee and Europe Council members.
- 8.4.1.10.** Submit a quarterly financial report to the Executive.
- 8.4.1.11.** Undertake any other duties as assigned by the Executive Group or that may be necessary in fulfilling the role of Treasurer.

8.5. Theme Group (TG), Special Interest Group (SIG) Leads and Collaborative Liaisons

8.5.1. Special Interest Group Liaisons and Collaborative Liaisons shall: -

- 8.5.1.1.** At all times seek to uphold the VdGM Constitution and act in the best interests of VdGM.
- 8.5.1.2.** Be answerable to the Executive and Council.
- 8.5.1.3.** Be responsible for communications between the the VdGM Executive and relevant TG or SIG.
- 8.5.1.4.** Monitor activity within the relevant TG or SIG.
- 8.5.1.5.** Provide a written report on TG or SIG activity to the VdGM Executive once a year and where appropriate following involvement in an important meeting or event.
- 8.5.1.6.** Ensure that an up-to-date register of active participants is maintained.
- 8.5.1.7.** Attend Executive Group Meetings on request to provide a verbal update and offer feedback to the Executive.
- 8.5.1.8.** TG, SIG Leads and Collaborative Liaisons shall be published on our website with hyperlinks.

8.6. National and Regional Exchange Coordinators (NECs / RECs)

8.6.1. National and Regional Exchange Coordinators shall: -

- 8.6.1.1.** At all times seek to uphold the VdGM Constitution and act in the best interests of VdGM.
- 8.6.1.2.** Be appointed in writing by their respective National Delegate.
- 8.6.1.3.** Be responsible for working with the Exchange Liaison to promote and administer the Hippokrates Exchange Programme.

8.7. Preconference Manager and Chairperson of the Forum Host Organising Committee

8.7.1. The Preconference Manager and Chairperson of the Forum Host Organising Committee shall: -

- 8.7.1.1.** At all times seek to uphold the VdGM Constitution and act in the best interests of VdGM.
- 8.7.1.2.** Be appointed by and approved by the VdGM Executive respectively.
- 8.7.1.3.** Be responsible for organising the Preconference and Forum respectively and liaising with the VdGM Executive regularly and as required.
- 8.7.1.4.** Ensure that financial decisions are taken only after consultation with the VdGM Executive and specifically with the Treasurer.
- 8.7.1.5.** Work closely with other Preconference Managers and Forum Organising Committee Chairs to ensure there is retention of experience and knowledge within VdGM.
- 8.7.1.6.** Prepare post-meeting reports for the VdGM Executive within three months of the event.

Article 9: Meetings

9.1. VdGM Council Meetings

- 9.1.1.** Ordinary Council Meetings shall be held in parallel to the Preconference which takes place in advance of the WONCA Europe annual conference. In extenuating circumstances, the annual Ordinary Council Meeting may be called at any other time by the Executive.
- 9.1.2.** In exceptional circumstances, Extraordinary Council Meetings may be called by the President with the concurrence of the Executive Group by a two-thirds (2/3) majority, or upon the written request of not less than forty percent (40%) of Voting Members of Council, provided that:
 - 9.1.2.1** There are exceptional or extraordinary circumstances that justify the meeting and it is not possible to wait until the next anticipated Ordinary Council Meeting.
- 9.1.3.** Council Meetings will be arranged by the Secretary.
 - 9.1.3.1.** A notification will be sent ahead of the meeting
 - 9.1.3.1.1.** For Ordinary Council Meetings, a minimum of ninety (90) days notice will be given in writing to Council Members
 - 9.1.3.1.2.** For Extraordinary Council Meetings, a minimum of sixty (60) days notice will be given in writing to Council Members.

9.1.4. A Member Organization (or group of national Member Organizations) in good standing which is unable to send its National Delegate to a meeting of Council, may either:

9.1.4.1. Authorize, in writing whether another member of the Member Organization or another Council Member to represent it temporarily, given that:

9.1.4.1.1. A notification is sent at least one (1) hour in advance of the Council Meeting to the VdGM Secretary, detailing the name and email address of the replacement person and certifying her/his credentials; and

9.1.4.1.2. The appointee is, on the date of the appointment, within five (5) years of completion of specialist training calculated from the date of awarding of a certificate of specialization by the appropriate national awarding body.

9.1.4.2. Authorize, in writing, another Council Member of VdGM to represent it temporarily, as long as:

9.1.4.2.1. A notification is sent at least one (1) hour in advance of the Council Meeting to the VdGM Secretary, detailing the name and email address of the replacement person and certifying her/his credentials.

9.1.4.2.2. Circumstances render it impossible to participate via telepresence or videoconference.

9.1.4.2.3. The appointed Council Member has not received any other similar authorization (a Council Member can only be proxy for 1 single other Council Member, so a maximum of 2 votes).

9.1.4.2.4. The National Organization's interests are respected by the proxy.

9.1.5. The agenda for Council Meetings shall be prepared by the Secretary.

9.1.5.1. Matters for the agenda proposed by Council members must be received in writing by the Secretary, by email, not less than thirty (30) days prior to ordinary Council Meeting and fifteen (15) days prior extraordinary Council Meeting.

9.1.5.2. The agenda shall be circulated in writing by email to Council Members by the Secretary not less than fourteen (14) days before ordinary Council Meeting and seven (7) days before extraordinary Council Meeting.

9.1.5.3. For Ordinary Council Meetings the agenda shall consist of the following standard items:

9.1.5.3.1. A vote on the Minutes from the previous Council Meeting (by those members who attended the Council Meeting to which the minutes refer);

9.1.5.3.2. Matters arising from the minutes;

9.1.5.3.3. Important correspondence;

9.1.5.3.4. A vote on the Council Meeting agenda;

9.1.5.3.5. Listed items of business;

9.1.5.3.6. Any other business;

9.1.5.3.7. Adjournment.

9.1.5.4. In the event of an Extraordinary Council Meeting, there should be at least a single item on the agenda to address the extraordinary circumstance which

required such an Extraordinary Council Meeting to be called.

- 9.1.6.** Council meetings shall be chaired by the President, or if the President is incapacitated or unavailable, by the Immediate Past President, President Elect, Treasurer, or Secretary in that order. If none of the aforementioned are present, the Council Members present shall temporarily elect from their number a Member to chair the meeting.
- 9.1.7.** The discussion at any meetings of Council shall be conducted in English.
- 9.1.8.** For Ordinary Council Meetings a quorum for the transaction of business of Council shall consist of a majority of the Voting Members of Council representing Member Organizations in person or by proxy. For Extraordinary Council Meetings a quorum for the transaction of business of Council shall consist of a majority of the Voting Members of Council representing Member Organizations in person or by proxy.
- 9.1.8.1.** In the event that a quorum of Voting Members is not present at the scheduled time of the Council Meeting, the Chair shall adjourn proceedings for thirty (30) minutes before reconvening. If after thirty (30) minutes a quorum is still not present, the meeting shall be further adjourned for sixty (60) minutes before reconvening. If after this second adjournment a quorum is not present, the meeting shall be abandoned to be rescheduled.
- 9.1.8.2.** In the event that an Ordinary Council Meeting is abandoned as a consequence of a quorum not being present, the Executive may at its discretion arrange for a secure electronic vote to be taken for the purposes of electing new Members to the Executive or transacting any other items from the agenda which would otherwise necessitate the calling of an Extraordinary Council Meeting.
- 9.1.8.3.** In the event that an Extraordinary Council Meeting is abandoned as consequence of a quorum not being present, the Executive will act to ensure democracy of Europe Council by allowing the opportunity for Europe Council to either electronically vote or respond to email threads on key matters which had been planned for discussion at the extraordinary council meeting.
In this case a quorum of a majority of the total number of Council Members is required for a vote to be valid.
- 9.1.9.** Except the subclause of **14.1** of having two third (2/3) majority for dissolution of VdGM, all matters shall be decided by a majority vote of voting members of Council present in person, those for whom a proxy has been granted and, if in place, those who voted by electronic ballot.
- 9.1.10.** Minutes of each Council Meeting shall be recorded, in English, and kept by the Secretary.
- 9.1.10.1.** The minutes of each meeting shall be transmitted to each Council Member not later than thirty (30) days following the Council Meeting.

9.2. The VdGM General Meeting

- 9.2.1.** An open VdGM General Meeting shall take place annually during the WONCA Europe Conference.
- 9.2.2.** The President will give a presentation summarising the activities and future plans of VdGM.

9.2.3. An annual report (electronic or hard copy as appropriate) of VdGM activities will be circulated at this meeting including written updates from

- 9.2.3.1.** National Organisations
- 9.2.3.2.** Executive Group Members
- 9.2.3.3.** SIG Leads
- 9.2.3.4.** Collaboration Liaisons

9.2.4. Persons present will then have the opportunity to ask questions, offer feedback and meet with VdGM representatives present including

- 9.2.4.1.** Executive Group Members
- 9.2.4.2.** National Representatives
- 9.2.4.3.** SIG Leads
- 9.2.4.4.** Collaboration Liaisons.

9.3. Executive Group Meetings

- 9.3.1.** The Executive will hold regular remote meetings during the year.
- 9.3.2.** The Executive will endeavour to meet in person at least twice a year, including once during the WONCA Europe Conference and if possible during a second to take place at the time of the VdGM Forum.

Article 10: Vacancies, elections and voting

10.1. Death, resignation or incapacity

- 10.1.1.** In the event of the death, resignation, incapacity or ineligibility for office of the President, either the President Elect or Immediate Past President shall assume the office of President. In the event of the death, resignation, incapacity or ineligibility for office of the President Elect, or if the President Elect or Immediate Past President should become President during their term as President Elect or Immediate Past President, then the VdGM Council shall elect another President Elect in such a manner as is outlined below under 10.1.2. to 10.3.2.
- 10.1.2.** The Secretary shall in writing by email both call for nominations from Council Members for the position of President Elect and at the same time inform Council Members that there will be an election by electronic vote by members of the VdGM Council to be held 56 days after the closing of nominations.
- 10.1.3.** The Secretary shall circulate in writing by email to Council Members the names and Curriculum Vitae of those so nominated no later than 28 days after the closing of nominations.
- 10.1.4.** The Secretary shall conduct the vote by secure electronic means.
- 10.1.5.** The Treasurer, or in the case that s/he be one of the nominees for the position, a member of the Executive who is not a nominee, appointed by the Executive, shall act as scrutiny for the election and shall declare the successful candidate elected.
- 10.1.6.** In the event of the death, resignation, incapacity or ineligibility for office of the Secretary or the Treasurer, the Executive shall within 30 days of such offices becoming vacant, appoint a suitable replacement to carry out the duties of the post

until the earliest possible opportunity at which a replacement can be elected by the Council.

- 10.1.7.** In the event of the death, resignation, incapacity or ineligibility to continue to hold office of any other Executive Member, the Executive shall within 60 days of such offices becoming vacant appoint a suitable replacement to carry out the duties of the post (with all the attendant rights and responsibilities) until the earliest possible opportunity at which a replacement can be elected by the Council.

10.2. Executive vacancies and elections

- 10.2.1.** Elections will take place as required at Ordinary Council Meetings to fill vacancies as they arise on the Executive.
- 10.2.2.** Existing Executive Members who at the next Ordinary Council Meeting will reach the end of their term of office, should, not less than 180 days before the Council Meeting, inform the Secretary in writing by email of their intention to either stand for re-election (should they be eligible) or to stand down.
- 10.2.3.** Should there be vacancies on the Executive, the Secretary will inform National Delegates not less than 120 days before a Council Meeting of these vacancies and seek expressions of interest.
- 10.2.4.** National Delegates, as VdGM Council Members, may seek election to any vacant Executive position. They may do so by informing the Secretary in writing by email of their intention to seek election not less than 30 days in advance of the Council Meeting during which the election will take place.
- 10.2.5.** Vacancies shall also be advertised on the VdGM website, and anyone providing the following documentation and meeting the listed may seek election to a vacancy on the Executive: -
- 10.2.5.1.** From the individual, a written expression of interest in seeking election;
 - 10.2.5.2.** A letter of support from his / her country's National Delegate;
 - 10.2.5.3.** A letter of support from his / her GP / FP Association;
 - 10.2.5.4.** Two additional letters of support from other GPs / FPs who are active members of either VdGM or WONCA Europe;
 - 10.2.5.5.** The written application and the four letters of support must be sent to the Secretary no later than four weeks before the annual Council meeting;
 - 10.2.5.6.** As per articles 5.2 of the VdGM Constitution, they must come from a country which is a Full or Associate Member of WONCA Europe and they must be within within five years of completion of specialist training on the day the election will take place.
- 10.2.6.** A single individual may not apply for more than one vacancy during one election cycle.
- 10.2.7.** In the event that nominations are not received for all the vacant Executive roles by the deadline as outlined in 10.2.4 and 10.2.5.
- 10.2.7.1.** The executive may reopen nominations for a period of one week, closing the nomination no less than 3 weeks before Council.
 - 10.2.7.2.** Nominations received should be circulated to Council.

10.2.8. In the event that Executive positions remain unfilled following the Council meeting where elections take place.

10.2.8.1. The executive may reopen nominations for a period of one month following the council meeting and hold a subsequent electronic vote.

10.2.8.2. Should the positions remain unfilled the Executive can choose to open further rounds of nominations or to divide the outstanding responsibilities amongst themselves as they deem appropriate and manageable until such time as the position can be filled.

10.3. Elections and voting

10.3.1. With the exception of a vote on dissolution of VdGM, all decisions for which there is a vote or ballot will be by simple majority vote. In the event of a tied vote, repeat rounds of voting will be held until the motion is either passed or defeated.

10.3.2. For elections to the Executive Group, Council members will be elected by ballot from the VdGM Europe Council by simple majority at an Ordinary Council Meeting. If there are three or more candidates standing for election to a vacant position, and no one candidate receives a simple majority in the first ballot, then a second ballot shall be taken between the two candidates who received the highest number of votes in the first ballot. If there is a tie for second place the candidate receiving the highest numbers and those tying for second place shall be included in the second ballot, and the balloting shall continue until such time as a candidate is deemed elected by simple majority.

10.3.3. VdGM Europe Council members have to be present in person to be able to use their vote unless they have arranged not less than four weeks in advance to participate by electronic ballot or have authorized a proxy (member of the organization or council member) to cast a vote on their behalf. Participation by electronic ballot is at the discretion of the VdGM Executive.

10.3.4. A VdGM Europe Council member who is unable to attend a Europe Council meeting (due to sickness, accident, force majeure) may authorize another VdGM member from his/her own country or another council member to represent him/her at that Council Meeting. A letter of proxy must be received by the Secretary no less than 1 hour in advance of the Council Meeting.

Article 11: Financial Matters

11.1. The Treasurer shall be responsible for maintaining in good order all financial affairs, accurate records and accounts of VdGM.

11.2. The VdGM Executive shall be collectively responsible for decisions regarding financial affairs will be discussed and taken by the Executive Group.

11.3. Accepting or raising funds in the name of VdGM from or by third parties will not be allowed without prior approval of the Executive Group.

11.4. The report of the Treasurer will be approved by the Europe Council at the annual meeting.

Article 12: Publications

- 12.1.** Books, manuscripts, publications, letters and audiovisual material or computer material to be published and / or distributed in the name of VdGM in any manner whatsoever require prior approval of the VdGM Executive.
- 12.2.** Except where otherwise noted, all materials distributed by VdGM (including but not limited to documents, texts, images, photos, audio and video) shall be licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-Share Alike 4.0 International License.
- 12.3.** Proposed revision(s) to or amendment(s) of the VdGM Constitution must be submitted in writing by email to the Secretary a minimum of 90 days in advance of any Council Meeting.

Article 13: Adoption of revisions or amendments to the Constitution

- 13.1.** Council members must be notified in writing by email of the final text of any proposed revision(s) of or amendment(s) to the VdGM Constitution by the Secretary a minimum of 60 days in advance of the Council Meeting at which any proposed revision(s) or amendment(s) will be voted upon.
- 13.2.** A majority vote in favour of adoption of any proposed revision(s) of or amendment(s) to the VdGM Constitution by Council members in attendance at a properly constituted Council meeting is required for adoption of any proposed Amendment(s).

Article 14: Dissolution

- 14.1.** A decision to dissolve the Organization shall require a two-thirds majority decision of the full Council membership at an Extraordinary Council Meeting convened for the sole purpose of voting on the dissolution of VdGM.
- 14.2.** Following the dissolution of VdGM, the Treasurer shall discharge any and all outstanding liabilities. Any surplus assets shall be sent to the YDM Global FUND after consultation and approval with WONCA Europe Executive with an express provision that the surplus funds so returned shall be used for the support and advancement of scientific and educational activities of worldwide NFGPs / FPs.