



RCSSA  
We Care We Treat We Teach

# **RENAL CARE SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA (RCSSA)**

# **CONSTITUTION**

**2024**

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# RENAL CARE SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA

## CONSTITUTION

### DEFINITIONS

In this constitution, unless the context otherwise indicates:

- Society means the **Renal Care Society of South Africa**
- Committee means the **Executive Committee**
- **Renal Care:** The art and science of the care of kidney disease
- **Renal Replacement Therapy:** Life-supporting treatments for renal failure namely haemodialysis, peritoneal dialysis, continuous therapies and renal transplantation.
- **Jurisdiction:** the society practices acute and chronic dialysis and transplantation within the boundaries of South Africa
- **Dues:** subscription fees for ordinary members

### ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this Society is the **Renal Care Society of South Africa**, and the official abbreviation shall be **RCSSA**.

### ARTICLE II. MISSION STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES

#### Section A. Mission Statement

The mission of RCSSA is to advance the professional development of members practicing in renal replacement and related therapies, and to promote the highest standards of patient care through advocacy, scholarship, and excellence. Through this ***“we care, we treat and we teach”***.

#### Section B. Objectives

To foster the highest attainable level of professional development and patient care, the RCSSA endeavors to:

1. Enhance the competence of the membership through education programs at regional and national level.
2. Initiate, improve and uphold through its membership, high standards of patient care and patient rights.
3. Promote efficiency, co-operation between all personnel involved in renal care.
4. To promote research relating to renal care and its related subjects.
5. To provide the opportunity to disseminate information and knowledge to members.
6. Promote member's awareness of professional, ethical and social issues affecting their practice
7. Encourage the individual member to participate in the growth and development of the organization.
8. Provide the public with information regarding the prevention of renal disease.

### ARTICLE III. TERRITORY

The area of jurisdiction of the Society shall be South Africa.

### ARTICLE IV. LEGAL STATUS

The Society has its own assets and liabilities, regardless of that of its members, and can protect it in any legal matter. It shall exist for an indefinite period in its own right, regardless of change

of membership and office bearers.

## **ARTICLE V. LANGUAGE**

English shall be the language of choice in the proceedings of the society as well as its promotional & educational material.

## **ARTICLE VI. MEMBERSHIP.**

### **Levels of Membership**

The Society shall consist of ordinary and extraordinary members.

Application for membership shall be in writing to the Committee or Secretary of the Society.

### **Section A. Full Members**

The following are eligible for full membership of the Society:

Any professional registered with the South African Nursing Council or Health Professions Council of South Africa.

### **Section B. Associate Members**

The following are eligible for Associate Membership of the Society:

1. Any person who is committed to the promotion of renal care, and who does not qualify for full membership.
2. Any person who has the same interest and qualifications as full members but who reside outside the territory of the Society. These members shall have no voting rights or hold office. Associate members shall have all the privileges of members in the Society except those of voting, holding office and serving as chairpersons of committees.

### **Section C. Honorary Life Members**

Honorary life membership may be conferred upon individuals who have made contributions of exceptional merit to the knowledge of dialysis and transplantation or to the Society. They shall be nominated by the members, recommended by the Committee and be awarded with a certificate. They shall be exempt from dues. They shall have voting rights.

### **Section D. Life Members**

At the discretion of the Committee, life membership may be conferred on fully paid up members who have been members for twenty (20) consecutive years. They shall be exempt from dues and retain voting rights.

### **Section E. Membership fee**

A membership fee, to be agreed upon at the General Meeting, will be proposed by the Committee and shall be due on an annual basis. No pro rata amount will be calculated for persons joining during a year.

### **Section F. Obligations of members**

1. Membership of the Society goes with the responsibility of maintaining a sustained interest in its affairs and objectives as stated in this Constitution.
2. Each member shall be responsible for paying the prescribed subscription fee to retain membership.
3. It shall be the responsibility of each member to maintain membership and to notify the Secretary of any changes to contact details.

### **Section G. Membership Indemnity**

All members of the Society shall be deemed to have been indemnified and held harmless in their personal capacity against any loss which the Society or its members may suffer by reason of the actions of the Committee or any member of the Society.

### **Section H. Suspension of Membership**

Any member of the Society whose actions are considered harmful to the best interest of the Society, will be managed through the following procedure:

A written complaint may be filed to the Committee by a member. An opportunity must be given to the member to defend themselves in person or in writing before the Committee. If the Committee considers the complaint justified, it will result in the following action being taken:

1. Counselling
2. Written warning
3. Suspension

## **ARTICLE VII. OFFICE BEARERS**

### **Section A. Officers**

The Committee shall consist of the President, Deputy President, Secretary, Treasurer and 6 members elected at the General Meeting or every four years. The immediate past president will remain in a consulting capacity for one year.

### **Section B. Nomination and eligibility for nomination**

Nominations for Committee members may be made by full paid up members at the General meeting. Nominees must indicate their willingness to serve prior to nomination by signing the nomination form.

Candidates for office bearers must have been members of the Society for a minimum of four years, and in good standing.

### **Section C. Election of Officers and Term of Office**

1. To be eligible for election for presidency, a person must have been a Committee member for at least one term (four years).
2. The President and Deputy President shall be full members in good standing and be elected by the Committee. The person shall hold office for a period of four years or until the next General Meeting, after which the person will be eligible for re-election, to hold a maximum of two (2) terms of office. After holding office for two (2) terms, the President shall not be eligible for re-election until a period of four years has elapsed.
3. The Secretary shall be a full member in good standing and be elected by the Committee. The person shall hold office for a period of four years or until the next General Meeting, after which period the person will be eligible for re-election.
4. The Treasurer shall be a full member in good standing and be elected by the Committee. The person shall hold office for a period of four years or until the next General Meeting, after which period the person will be eligible for re-election.
5. The Society shall elect from the list of full members, *six (6) members* to serve for a period of four years after which they will be eligible for re-election.
6. The Committee may co-opt any full member in good standing in order to improve efficiencies by taking into consideration geographic and/or allied health professionals to hold office as co-opted member with voting rights.

## **Section D. Length of Term of Office Bearers**

Any part of a term equaling or exceeding one half the regular term, shall be considered a term in deciding eligibility for re-election.

## **Section E. Vacancy**

1. If the office of President, Secretary or Treasurer becomes vacant, the members of the Committee shall, at the first meeting after such a vacancy occurs, elect an acting President, Secretary or Treasurer. Any member so elected shall hold office until the following General Meeting at which time the person shall vacate this office. This member may be nominated and duly elected in the proper manner to fill the office in which the vacancy has occurred.
2. Any vacancy on the Committee shall be filled by a nomination and election of another member at the first General Meeting, after which such a vacancy occurs. The member so elected shall hold office until the next General Meeting.

## **Section F. Duties of Officers**

### **1. The Committee**

The Committee shall constitute the governing body of the Society. It shall have all judicial and executive functions common to a professional organization. It shall formulate bylaws, rules and regulations subject to the approval of the General Meeting.

### **2. The President and Deputy President**

- The President shall be accountable to the Committee and the Society and uphold and promote the aims of the Society.
- The President shall call special meetings of the Society and Committee in accordance with the Constitution and perform other duties as usually pertain to the office.
- The President shall prepare a report dealing with the activities of the Society and deliver this report at the General Meeting.
- Upon termination of office, the President shall deliver all records and documents of the Committee and the Society to the successor.
- In the absence of the President, the Deputy President shall assume the role of the President.

### **3. The Secretary**

The Secretary shall be responsible for the following:

- Have a list of all members of the Society and shall keep the membership lists updated.
- Keep minutes of the Committee proceedings to be read at the next meeting and keep minutes of the General Meeting.
- Minutes of all meetings will be kept safely and always be on hand for members to consult.
- Notify members of meetings and handle all correspondence.
- Upon termination of office, the Secretary shall deliver all such records and documents over to the successor.

### **4. The Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall be responsible for the following:

- Have charge of all funds and other personal property of the Society and shall submit the account of all undistributed funds to the successor.
- Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, the Treasurer shall disburse all funds upon order of the President or the Society and shall perform other duties as may be prescribed by the President of the Society.

- Shall present a financial account at each meeting and a financial report of Assets and Liabilities, together with a report at every General Meeting.
- Upon termination of office, the Treasurer shall deliver all such records and documents over to the successor.

**Section G. Removal of elected officers**

In the event that an elected officer does not fulfil the role responsibilities as outlined, the Committee shall provide the officer in question with a written statement of examples in which the officer did not fulfil the role responsibilities and will assist the officer in developing a plan for improvement with timelines. If the officer is unable to complete the improvement plan, the officer will be asked to resign by the President (or by the Immediate Past President if the President is the one in question). If the officer does not choose to resign, an affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the Committee is required to remove the officer.

**ARTICLE VIII. MEETINGS**

**Section A. Committee Meetings**

1. The Committee shall meet at least twice every year.
2. Members of the Committee present shall form a quorum at a convened meeting.

**Section B. General Meetings**

1. The Society shall hold a General Meeting at least every two years or in conjunction with the biennial South African Renal Congress.
2. The General Meeting may be held in person or online via Microsoft Teams or a similar digital application.
3. At least thirty (30) days' notice shall be given of any General Meeting of members. A copy of minutes of the previous General Meeting or special meeting and an agenda shall be published on the website and issued at such a meeting.
4. Members may introduce visitors to the General Meeting of the Society and may also arrange with the Secretary for communications and demonstrations to be given by visitors.
5. Any member may bring before a meeting in writing any matter of business which requires the attention of the Society.
6. A quorum of a General Meeting shall be one-tenth of ordinary paid up members including at least four members of the Committee. All decisions taken will take effect and be binding.
7. Online meetings:
  - a. Members should inform the secretary of their intention to attend via email at [secretary@renalcaresoc.org](mailto:secretary@renalcaresoc.org) at least seven calendar days before the scheduled meeting.
  - b. The meeting link shall be sent to members at least 48 hours before the scheduled meeting.
  - c. Access to the meeting shall be controlled by the Secretary via a virtual waiting room.

**Section C. Divulging of information**

The proceedings of any meeting may only be communicated to the press with the approval of the President.

**ARTICLE IX. VOTING**

**Section A. Committee Meetings**

The decision of the Committee shall be made by a simple majority vote.

## **Section B. Committee Members**

1. Voting for any committee member may take place by ballot or online via the RCSSA website.
2. Should any vacancy occur after nominations have been closed, nominations will be called for at the General Meeting and voting will be done by a show of hands or digitally.
3. Voting by proxy is also allowed (See Section C, 4).
4. Online voting via RCSSA website:
  - a. Voting shall remain open for a period not exceeding five calendar days.
  - b. The voting process and results shall be independently monitored by two persons appointed by the Committee.

## **Section C. General Meetings**

1. Each member has one vote. In the case of equal votes, the Chairperson will have a deliberative and casting vote.
2. All resolutions must be in writing, proposed and seconded before being put to the vote. A resolution must be forwarded to the Secretary at least 48 hours before the meeting.
3. Voting will always be by show of hands unless the Chairperson requires a secret ballot or a motion by a member is passed and duly seconded.
4. Members may vote by proxy. Written proxies stating who is to vote on their behalf (the Appointer), to be lodged with the Secretary of the meeting not less than one (1) hour before the appointed time of the meeting. It is understood that the Appointer has to be present at the meeting and cannot transfer his/her rights and responsibilities to another person.
5. Proposals & Counter Proposals: In the case of a counter proposal or a number of counter proposals being put to the meeting, the members will vote on the last proposal and if that receives a majority, it is carried. If it does not receive a majority, the second last proposal is voted on and so on, until one proposal receives a majority vote.

## **ARTICLE X. FINANCE**

1. The financial year of the Society shall end on 30<sup>th</sup> June of every year.
2. The Treasurer will be required to prepare a set of financial records to be presented to the members at the General Meeting.
3. The Committee may open or close banking accounts at such banks or financial institutions at their discretion. All cheques and orders for payment of money shall be signed by not less than two (2) authorized members of the Committee which includes the Treasurer, Secretary and President.
4. Surplus funds of the society may only be deposited in registered financial institutions as defined in Section 1 of the Financial Institutions (Investment of Funds) Act, 1984.
5. The Committee must, in a savings account, retain at least 10% of the surplus funds as indicated in the financial statement presented to the General Meeting.
6. Any member engaged in any profession shall be entitled to charge and be paid a fair market related charges for work done by him/her or their firm in connection with the execution of his office. All this on condition that there was prior unanimous agreement by the Committee.
7. Members may be reimbursed for any reasonable and legitimate expenses, including any travelling or other expenses, incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a member or Committee Member. All this on condition that such expenses were approved by the Committee prior to incurring them and claimed on an official expenses claim form together with all expense receipts.
8. No profits or gains will be distributed to members but will be retained for the sole purpose of pursuing the objectives of the Society.
9. Members or office bearers of the Society do not have rights over assets that belong to the Society.



10. RCSSA shall be at full liberty to employ and remunerate accordingly, any person or agent to perform specific tasks or to transact such business as the Committee may deem necessary to pursue the aims and objectives of the Society.

#### **ARTICLE XI. AFFILIATION**

At the discretion of the Committee, affiliation to other professional Societies and Associations may be sought.

#### **ARTICLE XII. GRANTS, BURSARIES AND AWARDS**

Linking onto the objectives of the Society, the Committee may introduce grant and bursary opportunities to any paid-up member and may specify specific awards to promote participation in the activities of the Society. The guidelines pertaining to these opportunities and awards shall be outlined in a Society Bylaw document.

#### **ARTICLE XIII. AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION**

Proposed amendments to the Constitution may be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the Committee and circulated to the members of the Society at least four weeks before the General Meeting, or special meeting, and placed on the agenda of the meeting. The Constitution of the Society can be amended by two-thirds majority of members present at a General Meeting. The amendments shall be fully discussed at such a meeting before voting takes place.

#### **ARTICLE XIV. DISSOLUTION OF THE SOCIETY**

1. The Society may be dissolved for the following reasons and upon fulfilment of the following conditions:
  - 1.1 As a result of a resolution passed by two-thirds majority of the members present at a duly constituted General Meeting of members.
  - 1.2 If, as a result of the Society becoming dormant and not able to fulfil its aims and objectives any longer, a motion is passed by two-thirds majority of the members present at a duly constituted General Meeting of members.
2. In the event of the dissolution of the Society, after repaying all loans or other legally due amounts to all creditors, being members or otherwise, the balance of the Society's assets shall be placed in trust with a suitable entity to be held in safe custody pending a decision by the members.
3. When the society closes down it has to pay all its debts. After doing this, if there is property of money left over it should not be paid or given to members of the society. It should be given to another non-profit organization that has similar objectives. The society's general meeting can decide what organization this should be.
4. The transfer of the balance of the funds may also be decided upon at the meeting where the dissolution of the Society was agreed upon. The decision is to be agreed by a two-thirds majority of members present.
5. In the case where agreement cannot be reached, the decision will revert to an Interim Committee of a minimum of five persons, to be appointed by the members present through a show of hands and a simple majority.

# **BYLAW 1**

## **GRANTS, BURSARIES AND AWARDS**

### **1. GRANTS**

- 1.1 Deserving, paid-up, ordinary members of at least two (2) years standing may apply for grants.
- 1.2 Grant applications may be submitted for the following purposes:
  - 1.2.1 Expenses to attend local or international nephrology-related congresses or symposia.
  - 1.2.2 Expenses incurred by any ordinary member on Society business.
  - 1.2.3 Nephrology-related research of either a nursing or technical nature which shall be beneficial to all members and renal care as a whole.
- 1.3 All applications for financial assistance for congresses/symposia must reach the Secretary at least four (4) months prior to such events.
- 1.4 Research grant applications may only be submitted after institutional and ethical approval have been obtained.
- 1.5 Recipients of research grants may be requested by the Committee to present their research at the South African Renal Congress and must acknowledge the support of the Society when presenting or publishing their research.
- 1.6 Applications must be submitted by emailing the completed, prescribed application form and all supporting documents to the Secretary of the Society at [secretary@renalcaresoc.org](mailto:secretary@renalcaresoc.org).
- 1.7 Incomplete or late applications submitted without supporting documents will be disqualified.
- 1.8 All applications shall be reviewed by the Committee. The Committee shall have the authority to accept or reject such applications.

### **2. BURSARIES**

#### **2.1 Purpose**

The purpose of the bursary is to support nephrology practitioners (Nurses and Clinical Technologists) in achieving a post-graduate nephrology-related qualification at an accredited institution of higher education and to further formal education in Nephrology.

#### **2.2 Criteria**

- 2.2.1 Bursaries may be granted to deserving, paid up, ordinary members of at least two (2) years standing.
- 2.2.2 Bursaries are available to South African citizens only.
- 2.2.3 Applicants must meet all legal and constitutional requirements and must have been accepted, or have provisional acceptance, into an accredited study program at a registered educational institution before submitting a bursary application.
- 2.2.4 Study bursary applications may be submitted for accredited, recognized qualifications in Nephrology only.

#### **2.3 Funding of the bursary**

- 2.3.1 The Society shall make available at least two (2) bursaries per calendar year. The

value of the bursaries shall be decided on by the Committee annually and communicated to members timeously.

2.3.2 Donations will be invited, to be used as bursaries. Should such monies materialize, it shall be deposited into a savings account to be used specifically for this purpose.

## **2.4 Guidelines**

2.4.1 All stipulations laid down by the benefactor shall be advertised and adhered to.

2.4.2 The Society shall elect a minimum of three (3) Society members to act as the bursary sub-committee.

2.4.3 The bursary sub-committee shall rank eligible applicants in order of merit.

2.4.4 The bursary sub-committee shall review all applications, compile a shortlist and make recommendations to the EXCO.

2.4.5 The Committee shall have the authority to accept or reject such applications or defer the bursary to a future date. The decision of the Committee shall be final.

2.4.6 If the Committee is satisfied that at least one eligible applicant is of sufficient merit to warrant the award of the bursary, they shall recommend that the bursary be awarded to the applicant with the highest ranking.

2.4.7 Shortlisted candidates shall be required to undergo an interview before the final decision is made.

2.4.8 The bursary shall be tenable for one year, subject to the recipient's continued enrolment in the academic program for which the bursary was awarded.

2.4.9 Bursary recipients shall be required to submit to the Society an academic progress report at least every six (6) months or as requested by the Committee.

2.4.10 If a recipient fails to meet the academic requirements at the end of the year, the bursary will be terminated.

## **2.5 Application guidelines**

2.5.1 All bursaries shall be advertised on the official website of the Society.

2.5.2 Bursary applications must reach the Secretary by no later than 31 July in the year preceding the commencement of study.

2.5.3 Applications must be submitted by emailing the completed, prescribed application form, and all supporting documents, to the Secretary at [secretary@renalcaresoc.org](mailto:secretary@renalcaresoc.org).

2.5.4 Incomplete or late applications submitted without supporting documents will be disqualified.

## **3. AWARDS**

### **3.1 RCSSA ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

#### **Purpose of this award**

This award serves to give recognition to any practitioner who has contributed to the field of renal care in any manner, which will lead to the improvement of renal patient care. This award was first presented in 1996.

### **Criteria**

Recognition will be given to any renal caregiver who, by means of

- education
- invention
- design
- research
- initiation and implementation, contributes to the improvement of renal patient care.

The appointed adjudicators will consider the following in their evaluation of entries:

- uniqueness
- cost effectiveness
- applicability
- impact on patient care
- impact on renal workers

### **Who may be nominated?**

- Nominees must actively practice in any area of the renal field
- The contribution must have been made within the last four (4) years
- Preference will be given to paid up members
- No person may nominate themselves

### **Who may nominate?**

- Any person involved in renal patient care
- Nominations must be seconded
- No person may nominate him/herself

### **Procedure for nomination**

- Forward the completed prescribed nomination form via email to secretary@renalcaresoc.org
- The award is sponsored by the Society and may be awarded biennially at the South African Renal Congress
- The award will consist of a trophy and a cash prize, the amount of which will be determined by the Committee.

**Accepted:** March 2017

## **3.2 TED POPE BEST PRESENTATION AWARD**

### **Purpose of this award**

The purpose of this award is to acknowledge presentations of outstanding quality and sets a standard which will ensure the continual advancement of nephrology care.

This award is sponsored by the Society or a sponsor should one be found. The award will consist of a certificate and a cash prize, the amount of which will be determined by the Committee or sponsor.

### **Guidelines**

To reach this goal, the Committee shall:

1. Elect a panel of 5 members to act as evaluators.
2. Each presentation will be judged by 2 of the 5 members.
3. All papers accepted by the Committee and appearing in the congress programme will be

- eligible to receive the award.
4. Assessment will take place on the prescribed form as compiled and approved by the Committee.
  5. The mean percentage of a speaker is computed at the end of each session.
  6. At the discretion of the Committee, the winner of the award may be announced within thirty (30) days after the conclusion of the congress.
  7. The final result rests with the Committee after which it is valid and irrevocable.

### **3.3 BEST ABSTRACT AWARD**

#### **Purpose of this award**

The purpose of this award is to set a standard in abstract presentation that will reflect research methodological structure and through that improve congress/symposium presentations.

This award is sponsored by the Committee or a sponsor should one be found. The award will consist of a certificate and a cash prize, the amount of which will be determined by the Committee or sponsor.

#### **Guidelines**

To reach this goal, the Executive Committee of the RCSSA will:

1. Elect a panel of two (2) members to act as evaluators.
2. All abstracts accepted by the Committee and appearing in the congress programme will be evaluated.
3. Adjudication will take place on the prescribed form as compiled and approved by the Committee.
4. The mean percentage of an abstract (from two judges) is computed.
5. At the end of the congress only the winning percentage as well as the average of all abstracts will be announced and the award presented. Individual percentages will be made available on request.
6. At the discretion of the Committee, the award may be presented within thirty (30) days after the conclusion of the congress.
7. The final result rests with the Committee after which it is valid and irrevocable.

**Accepted:** March 2017

### **3.4 HEILIE UYS RESEARCH AWARD**

#### **Purpose of this award**

The purpose of this award is to recognize outstanding research by a nephrology nurse or clinical technologist. This research could be a long-term, cumulative contribution or a single idea or experiment.

#### **Nomination criteria**

#### **Who may be nominated?**

- Current full members of the Society, having been a member for a minimum of the last two (2) years.
- Practitioners who are actively involved in renal care or related health care services.
- Practitioners who actively participate in the activities of the Society at a local, regional or national level.

**Who may nominate?**

- Any person involved in renal care;
- Nominations must be seconded;
- No person may nominate him/herself.

**Research criteria**

- Demonstrated excellence in research.
- Conducted outstanding research that contributes to the advancement of renal care.
- Work has been published and/or is widely recognized.
- The nominee has presented his/her research findings at a national or international meeting.
- Recognition by professional societies, organizations or other bodies.
- Contributions to the research environment locally, nationally and/or internationally.
- Contributions to training and education.
- Impact on research community.
- The technical soundness of the research approach.
- On the basis of new discoveries or fundamental advances in the field of nephrology.
- Contributions to the development of new technology or solutions.
- Substantial positive impact on the field of nephrology.
- Publication awards or other forms of honorary recognition.

**Guidelines**

- Candidates for the award will be nominated.
- Evaluation will be done by two Committee members based on an abstract submitted or any other documentation as requested by the evaluators.
- This award is sponsored by the Committee or a sponsor should one be found.
- The award will consist of a certificate and a cash award, the amount of which will be determined by the Committee or sponsor.
- Nominations may be submitted by completing and submitting the prescribed form and all other supporting documents via email to the Secretary at [secretary@renalcaresoc.org](mailto:secretary@renalcaresoc.org).

**Accepted:** October 2024

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**PRESIDENT**

.....  
**SECRETARY**

**DATE:** 19 October 2024

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**Approved by the General Meeting on 19 October 2024**