



North Wales ARMA Local Network Group – Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

The North Wales Arthritis and Musculoskeletal Alliance Network Group is an umbrella body consisting of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal Alliance (ARMA) organisation members¹ and invited parties whose primary function is to act as a collective voice for the arthritis and musculoskeletal community² across North Wales. It is effective within the County Boroughs of Ynys Môn, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham, an area whose National Health Services are currently provided by the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB)³

2. Objectives

- a) Raise awareness of the need for high quality services for those people with arthritis and other musculoskeletal conditions
- b) Provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and information between service user members, member organisations and service providers.
- c) Monitor local service provision and make recommendations for improvement based on members' evidence, experience and expertise.
- d) Identify and campaign on local service issues using the ARMA Standards of Care and other policy initiatives.
- e) Contribute towards the Welsh Assembly Government's Service Development and Commissioning Directives, Arthritis and Chronic Musculoskeletal Conditions; ARMA's Standards of Care; any other relevant health policy initiatives.
- f) Encourage local involvement in the wider activities of ARMA UK, such as producing local responses to ARMA's public consultations.
- g) Engage with the BCUHB through the provision of appropriate representation on the BCU HB Musculoskeletal Services Joint Service Advisory Group (JSAG) to ensure a well-informed ARMA and service user voice.
- h) Bring about sustainable improvements to services for people with musculoskeletal conditions living in North Wales through the engagement of relevant stakeholders⁴ in the community, encouraging constructive partnership and effective public and patient involvement.
- i) Promote understanding of how patients may manage their conditions and on service improvement and development: with a broad definition of service which may go beyond core NHS services. (Wilson Sherriff recommendation)
- j) Factors for success are detailed in Appendix 3

3. Membership of the ARMA Network Group

It is vital that the ARMA Network Group reflect the principles of diversity and balance between user and professional interests and organisations, which ARMA UK embodies. It is important that the organisations fulfil key responsibilities to ARMA and its North Wales members therefore:-

- a) All ARMA UK member organisations should be given the opportunity to become involved with the North Wales Network Group, and asked to nominate a representative and deputy/ies. The deputy will support the nominated member should they not be able to attend. Only one organisational representative will be permitted to attend the North Wales ARMA network Meeting unless otherwise agreed by the group and co-convenors in special circumstances. Where meeting space permits guests may be invited by prior arrangement with the co-convenors. A carer may support the member to attend.
- b) Where an ARMA UK member organisation has more than one local group operating within the North Wales geographical area then the groups must agree on one member to represent all the groups. i.e. One member per organisation; not one member per group.
- c) Each member organisation shall have one nominated member with one vote. That organisation can delegate other people to attend either with the nominated member or without. That nominated member, if attending alone, will have the vote for that organisation and will also be responsible for communicating all information from the ARMA meeting to the rest of their host organisation
The 'individual ARMA Umbrella Organisations' will endeavour to facilitate good communication networks across their groups and membership within North Wales to ensure, through their individual nominated representatives on the ARMA Network group, that members' views are effectively articulated.
Where there is no representative nominated by the UK organisation, the convenors may identify and nominate a representative, but the UK organisations should be notified, and the local representative encouraged to set-up communication links with them.
If there is a MSK⁵ group that only exists within the geographical boundaries of the North Wales Network Group but is not part of a national organisation it may participate in the ARMA Network Group if its aims and objectives are congruent with those of ARMA. Where appropriate, the group may be asked to join ARMA.
- d) Individuals may be invited to attend at the discretion of the convenors or at the request of the group.

4. Meetings and procedures

- a) It is envisaged that ARMA Network Group meetings should take place at least 3 to 4 times a year.
- b) A convenor should be elected at the first meeting. Ideally two convenors should be appointed; one from the service user community and one from the health professional community.
- c) The convenors shall be elected annually.
- d) The Chairperson should ideally be a service user and a convenor.
- e) The membership should be prepared to help support its convenors with administrative duties as required.
- f) The ARMA Network Group should develop an annual work programme in accordance with its identified priorities.
- g) The ARMA Network Group should periodically report its plans, proposals, decisions and outcomes to the ARMA UK Local Networks Project Manager. This should include an annual report.

5. Welsh Language

The group acknowledges and strives to become a bilingual group. The importance of group members receiving relevant paperwork and being able to converse in Welsh is of the utmost importance; and the group's present inability to offer this is well documented. It is the group's objective to secure long term funding to rectify this.

6. Support from ARMA UK

ARMA UK values its Network groups and the voluntary contributions of people working at a local level. ARMA UK will:

- a) Provide in-principle support to the organisational development of the Network Groups through the provision of advice and information.
- b) Keep Network Groups abreast of key UK policy issues, and inviting Network Group reps to take part in ARMA's events and meetings where appropriate.
- c) Create opportunities for Network Groups to meet and share good practice.

Note there is no funding per se but will support as far as possible

7. Requirements on the Network Group

- a) The ARMA Network Group will not be separate legal entity and should operate within the framework of ARMA UK's policies. These include policies on topical health issues (such as access to treatments), and also operational policies, such as ARMA's Equal Opportunities policy.

- b) Where the ARMA Network Group develops its own policy on an issue pertinent only to its network area, the convenors should consult their membership, allowing sufficient time for response; all policy statements must be approved by ARMA UK.
- c) Where the Network group identifies key issues affecting it locally on which it wishes to campaign these should be consistent with ARMA UK policy.
- d) Where publicity and campaigning activity is planned (especially using the ARMA logo) publicity or press materials must be approved by ARMA UK.
- e) The Network Group will agree to participate in any monitoring and evaluation of activities of the Network.

8. Use of ARMA logo

An ARMA Network logo will be available for use with the name of the Network Group appearing below it. NB Where the logo is used in publicity/press materials or reports, approval must be sought from ARMA UK.

9. Funding and fundraising

- a) The ARMA Networks should not fundraise. It may utilise ARMA UK approved systems for procuring funding sources which will be used solely by the North Wales Network Group.
- b) Out-of-pocket expenses can be paid for network members attending meetings and priority should be given to covering the expenses of representatives from patient/service user groups.
- c) Full records should be kept of any transactions, and a financial report made at the end of each year in accordance with ARMA's audit requirements.
- d) Where funding is available for projects within an individual network area, the North Wales ARMA 'Local' Network Group will work with ARMA UK to secure funding; appropriate management charges may be apportioned to ARMA UK.
- e) Where funding is obtained for projects, ARMA UK and the North Wales 'Local' Network Group (LNG) will establish appropriate accounting procedures. The LNG⁶ will hold the power to designate how such funds are used in North Wales.

Appendix: 1

ARMA Equal Opportunities Policy

ARMA aims to improve health-related quality of life for people with musculoskeletal conditions (msc's) in the UK by bringing together service user, professional and research organisations in the field of arthritis and musculoskeletal conditions to work towards improving services for people with these conditions. ARMA believes in promoting the social model of disability, as part of its commitment to diversity.

Arthritis and other musculoskeletal conditions affect people from all sections of the community, regardless of age, sexuality, race, gender, culture or religious belief. ARMA believes that diversity within its membership and workforce, which reflects the wider society, is crucial to the achievement of its objectives.

As an organisation for people with musculoskeletal conditions ARMA particularly promotes user led services and the involvement of people with musculoskeletal conditions in all aspects of its work.

The success and effectiveness of ARMA in meeting its aims and objectives depends on the calibre, commitment and breadth of vision of our staff and volunteers.

ARMA believes that by following best practice with regard to equal opportunities policy and procedures, particularly in the areas of recruitment and selection, the organisation will attract talented people drawn from all sections of the community.

ARMA's equal opportunities statement

ARMA acknowledges that the United Kingdom (UK) is a society diverse in impairment, race, culture, creed and interest, and that this diversity is a creative force to be welcomed. ARMA operates in all four nations of the UK.

We firmly believe that all people with arthritis and other musculoskeletal conditions should have equal access, in practice as well as in theory, to ARMA's services, structures and infrastructure.

We welcome the statutory requirements laid down in current anti-discriminatory legislation in the United Kingdom, the framework of the European Commission and strongly support the need for enhanced civil rights legislation for disabled people in the UK. We are committed to best practice and access to diversity, which surpasses the minimum requirements of this legislation.

We are opposed to all forms of harassment, victimisation, discrimination and prejudice experienced by individuals and groups on whatever grounds. We recognise that certain groups may face particular discrimination; for example, people with arthritis and other musculoskeletal conditions on the grounds of impairment; age, gender, ethnicity and nationality, sexuality, religion or geographical location.

We will strive to provide a working environment which reflects our commitment to these

principles. Acts which breach this policy and all instances of behaviour, or alleged behaviour, counter to these principles will be taken very seriously, be fully investigated and will be subject to our disciplinary procedures.

We recognise that passive policies will not in themselves bring about equality of opportunity, and that practical implementation of these policies, supplemented by regular review, is therefore critical. ARMA is committed to promoting a pro-active approach to developing diversity across the entire organisation. We therefore declare our intention to combat all direct and indirect discrimination in respect of:

- Constitution and membership
- Recruitment of staff
- Recruitment of volunteers
- Employment practices for paid staff
- Support and training for volunteers
- Involvement of local people
- Provision of information
- Provision of services
- Campaigning and policy influence.

Policy Implementation

RECRUITMENT OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

ARMA is committed to developing employment procedures which prevent discrimination against groups or individuals.

MANAGEMENT

1. Trustees and staff working within the organisation and those otherwise representing ARMA will consider equal opportunities implications in their proposed method of working. They will identify any actions needed to ensure that no individual or group is discriminated against.
2. ARMA trustees, staff and volunteers will be issued with a copy of the Statement and are required to support its implementation.
3. ARMA's elected Executive Committee will review performance against the anti-discrimination measures on a regular basis (at least annually)

SERVICE DELIVERY

1. In all work projects, research and publications, people will be selected to participate taking into account the need for minority groups and interests to be represented.

2. In developing the work of ARMA we will take account of the implications for members from all sections of the community including, inter alia, disadvantaged groups, paying special attention to such matters as our written and visual materials and the ways in which we communicate with our members and supporters.
3. ARMA recognises the importance of inclusive participation in services and activities. It is our intention to give genuine and active consideration to issues of accessibility by removing barriers to technology and built environment.
4. We aim to monitor all material produced by the Alliance to ensure that it is consistent with these principles and that the publicity and information of the Alliance is available and accessible to all groups of people.
5. When commissioning or engaging with key external stakeholders we will take account of their commitment to equal opportunities.
6. Where data from monitoring demonstrates under representation of groups that are mentioned in the policy ARMA's Executive Committee will take measures to address this imbalance.

Appendix 2

Glossary

¹ A list of ARMA UK Member Organisations can be found on <http://www.arma.uk.net/member.html>

² The arthritis and musculoskeletal community is defined to consist of:-

- a) anyone who is living with arthritis and/or a musculoskeletal condition, including family members providing care,
- b) professionals who deliver services to people with arthritis and/or musculoskeletal conditions including those providing complementary therapies alongside mainstream therapies, and
- c) service planners and policy staff whose work impacts directly on the design and resource allocation for services available to people with arthritis and musculoskeletal conditions.

³ Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) – North Wales.

⁴ Stakeholder may refer to: a person, group, organization, or system who affects or can be affected by an organisation's actions.

⁵ MSK Musculoskeletal Conditions Support Group, which is not a member of ARMA UK

⁶ LNG - Local Network Group

Appendix 3

Factors for success

The success of an ARMA Network may depend on the following:

- Building an appropriate and representative membership profile
- Identifying and working together on common ground issues
- Working on a structured programme based on shared and agreed goals
- Focusing objectives and priorities on issues where tangible positive outcomes can be achieved
- Building effective relationships with relevant local decision makers, in particular service development
- Having transparent decision-making and policy-making mechanisms