



Cymru Wales

Elections to the Welsh Council of the British Medical Association for the session 2020-2023

Information for candidates

June 2020

This is a general guide only and, while every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, the information contained within the guide is subject to the Articles and Bye-laws of the Association which are, in turn, subject to English Company and Trade Union law.

Introduction

1. This information has been prepared for those who are thinking of standing in this election to serve on the BMA's Welsh Council. It covers what the Welsh Council does and its constitutional position within the Association, what is expected of members and includes details about the election. If anything is unclear or you would like further information please contact Sarah Miller, Committee Executive Officer, on smiller@bma.org.uk or on 029 2047 4610.

2. 15 voting members of the Welsh Council of the British Medical Association will be elected in 2020 to serve for three years for the session 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23.

PART 1 - INFORMATION ABOUT BMA WELSH COUNCIL

The function of Welsh Council, and the role profile for a member of Welsh Council including key responsibilities and person specification, are detailed in appendix 1.

Arrangements for meetings of Welsh Council

3. The Association's "session" runs from the end of one Annual Representative Meeting (ARM) to the end of the next one. Welsh Council normally meets four times during the session. The pattern of meetings tends to be: October, January, March and June. ARM is usually held in June, however for this year only due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the ARM is being held on 15 September 2020. Those elected in this election will therefore take up their posts on 16 September 2020.

4. Meetings of Welsh Council are normally held in Cardiff and start at 10.30 am. The business is usually concluded by 4.30 pm. Members' receipted travel and subsistence expenses are reimbursed as are receipted locum costs. Members are also eligible for the payment of honoraria after the completion, in any session, of 12 BMA meeting days. The agenda and other papers for meetings are sent to members 7 days before the meeting and supplementary papers are usually sent out a few days in advance. Members may submit motions for debate at meetings of Welsh Council in accordance with the procedures outlined in the standing orders. The conduct of meetings is governed by standing orders and copies of these are available to candidates on request.

Membership of Welsh Council

5. Welsh Council normally has 15 elected and voting members. In addition, ex-officio members of Welsh Council (with voting rights) are: Chair of Welsh Consultants Committee; Chair of General Practitioners Committee (Wales); Chair of Welsh Staff, Associate Specialists and Specialty Doctors; Chair of Welsh Committee for Public Health Medicine; Chair of Welsh Junior Doctors Committee; Chair of Welsh Medical Students Committee; Chair of the Forum of Welsh Local Negotiating Committees.

Also, the following are ex-officio members of Welsh Council (without voting rights): President of the Association; Chairman of the Representative Body; Chairman of UK Council; Treasurer; any member(s) of UK Council with a registered address in Wales, for the duration of their office and while having a registered address in Wales.

PART 2: ELECTIONS TO COUNCIL

6. In order to ensure a spread of members from around Wales and from across the various branches of practice, there will be at least two members on Welsh Council from each of the three electoral zones outlined below, and at least one from each of the eight branches of practice.

7. The electoral zones are as follows:

North Wales

Anglesey
Conwy
Gwynedd
Denbighshire
Flintshire
Wrexham

Mid and West Wales

Ceredigion
Carmarthenshire
Bridgend
Neath Port Talbot
Pembrokeshire
Powys
Swansea

South East Wales

Blaenau Gwent
Merthyr Tydfil
Torfaen
Monmouthshire
Rhondda Cynon Taf
Caerphilly
Newport
Cardiff
Vale of Glamorgan

8. A candidate's electoral zone will be determined by his/her address on the BMA's register of members at the time that nominations in this election close at 12 noon on 24 July 2020.

9. The branch of practice groups are:

- Consultants
- General practice
- Doctors in training grades
- Medical students
- Public health medicine
- Retired members
- Staff, associate specialists and specialty doctors
- Armed forces plus those members in practice but not covered by the other specified professional groups.

10. A candidate's primary branch of medical practice will be used for the purposes of the election and this will be determined by that category of medical work in which, at the time that nominations in this election close at 12 noon on 24 July 2020, the candidate spends the majority of his/her remunerated medical time (except for medical students and retired members).

11. If a candidate's electoral zone and/or primary branch of medical practice changes between the time that he/she completes the nomination form and the time at which nominations close (12 noon on 24 July 2020), the candidate must notify the change to Sarah Miller so that the correct electoral zone/branch of practice is used for the purposes of this election.

12. The branch of practice definitions are as follows:

Consultants

Doctors holding an appointment in consultant medical practice and/or whose job requires their name to be included on the Specialist Register, or doctors providing services of substantially the same type and nature, other than consultants in public health medicine.

General practice

Medical practitioners providing and/or performing primary medical services under the National Health Service Act 2006 and/or the National Health Service (Wales) Act 2006 and/or the National Health Service (Consequential Provisions) Act 2006 and/or the National Health Service (Scotland) Act 1978 and/or the Health and Personal Social Services (Northern Ireland) Order 1972 and any Acts or Orders amending or consolidating the same and as from time to time extended to all or any part of the United Kingdom or doctors providing services of substantially the same type and nature and not under NHS legislation, excluding GP trainees. This category includes prison GPs.

Doctors in training grades

Doctors holding an appointment in a recognised training grade including GP trainees.

Medical students

Those enrolled for a course of study in the United Kingdom for, or leading to, a primary medical qualification, including those who have suspended their studies for a period not exceeding 12 months.

Public health medicine

Doctors working in public health practice who are on the specialist register for public health medicine or who, while working in a career post, are working to obtain a CESR in public health medicine.

Retired doctors

Doctors declaring themselves as permanently retired from medical practice. There is no age restriction on membership of Welsh Council.

Staff, associate specialists and specialty doctors

Doctors holding appointments as associate specialists, specialty doctors, staff grades, clinical assistants (who are not GPs), senior clinical medical officers, clinical medical officers, non-standard 'trust' grades, and those career grade hospital doctors whose appointment does not require them to be on the Specialist Register.

Armed forces

Doctors who are either serving officers, reservists or civilian doctors employed by, contracted to, or seconded to the Ministry of Defence.

Other

Members in practice, but not covered by those categories listed above.

13. There is no age restriction on membership of Welsh Council.

14. In the event of a dispute as to a candidate's eligibility to stand for election, his/her electoral zone or his/her branch of practice, the decision of the Returning Officer (the National Director of BMA Cymru Wales) shall be final.

Election schedule

15. The schedule for election is expected to be as follows:

- From 9 am on 6 July 2020 until 12 noon on 24 July 2020 nominations are open online (in advance of the election period).
- Once nominations are closed, all nominations are reviewed for eligibility before the voting stage begins.
- All BMA Cymru Wales members will be emailed notifying them of the opening of online voting. The voting period lasts for approximately two weeks.
- Voting will run from **9am on 3 August 2020 until 12 noon on 14 August 2020**.
- As soon as possible after the results have been calculated the Welsh Council secretariat contacts all candidates to let them know the outcome of the elections.
- Election results are then posted on the BMA website.

Eligibility – to stand for election

16. Only those BMA members who work and/or live in Wales may run for positions in Welsh Council elections. Whether this is determined by their work or residential address will depend on which address they have listed on the BMA's register of members at the time of the election.

17. Candidates submit their nomination online at the BMA elections website.

18. Candidates may submit statements in support of their candidature which will be limited to 250 words. If a statement exceeds the 250 word limit, the statement will end at the last complete sentence within the 250 word limit.

The ballot

19. Voting is by single transferable vote and is conducted online.
20. Constraints (counting rules) will be applied so that there is a spread of members on the Welsh Council from the various branches of practice and geographical electoral zones. These constraints will be applied in the following order:
 1. Geographical constraint (so that there will be at least two members from each region on Welsh Council), as described at paragraph 7.
 2. Branch of practice minimum (so that there will be at least one directly-elected member from each of the 8 defined branch of practice groups on Welsh Council).
 3. Branch of practice maximum, so that no more than 3 seats may be held by directly-elected members of the same branch of practice (in addition to the ex-officio seat from that branch of practice committee).
21. If any branch of practice fails to nominate members for election, such seats shall remain vacant (to be filled at a by-election) and shall not be allocated to other branches of practice).
22. If, after the period for voting commences, a candidate dies or withdraws his/her nomination or is found by the Returning Officer to be ineligible to be elected, that candidate will be withdrawn from the election count and votes for that candidate will be ignored during the count.
23. In the event of a tie, the independent scrutineers will be asked to break the tie.
24. Candidates in the election will be notified by post or email, where practical before the election results are published, whether or not they have been elected. A detailed breakdown of all results will appear on the BMA's website.

Term of office

25. Members elected to Welsh Council in 2020 shall normally serve a three-year term of office from 2020 to 2023.
26. Elected members are eligible for re-election, provided that they continue to qualify for election.

Functions of Welsh Council

Within the over-arching requirements of the prevailing Memorandum, Articles and Bye-laws of the BMA, Welsh Council will work towards the following:-

- To represent to external bodies the view of the profession in Wales on all matters relating to medicine, health and healthcare within Wales;
- To represent the view of the profession in Wales to UK Council on all matters relating to medicine, health and healthcare within the UK, particularly where such matters include a specific Welsh dimension;
- To implement BMA policy decisions applicable to Wales, where specifically mandated by the BMA to do so;
- The effective stewardship of any assets and resources provided for use within BMA Cymru Wales according to the requirements of the BMA/UK Council;
- To complement any governance standards established by the BMA/UK Council by maintaining a high standard within BMA Cymru Wales's own governance arrangements, both internally and within the BMA's overall corporate governance arrangements, in:
 - (i) interpreting BMA policy within the Welsh context;
 - (ii) describing policies that are specific/unique to Wales;
 - (iii) focusing on clear, measurable objectives and implementation routes;
 - (iv) acting, where mandated to do so, on behalf of UK Council on matters relating to policy or the BMA, within Wales; and
 - (v) providing a strategic direction for the implementation of the above.
- To act as the public face of the profession in Wales and the authoritative source of comment on profession-wide matters for the media. (Individual Branch of Practice Committees will continue to lead on matters relevant to those areas of practice);
- To act to promote membership of the BMA, to encourage active involvement by members at all levels and in each Branch of Practice, and to effectively reflect the balance of professional opinion;
- To remain relevant by properly reflecting the diversity of the profession in Wales, through effective engagement with the membership;
- To remain a key stakeholder in the design and delivery of healthcare within Wales, by fostering and maintaining key relationships with the Welsh Assembly Government and other key strategic partners;
- To be formally consulted on any matter relevant to the profession and/or BMA Cymru Wales;
- To champion developments and initiatives which further the interests of the profession and/or BMA Cymru Wales;
- To commission and/or publish research into healthcare policy, health commissioning, provision and/or delivery, relevant to Wales;
- To establish sub-committees and/or time-limited working parties, with a specific remit and accountability mechanism, and including approval of their structure, membership, standing orders, etc; and
- To delegate discrete activities to sub-committees and/or BMA Cymru Wales staff, as appropriate.

Role profile for a Member of Welsh Council

Background

- Welsh Council is responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of BMA Cymru Wales, helping to develop its aims and objectives, in accordance with the Association's values and in line with the Bye-laws and other guidelines or requirements.
- Welsh Council is accountable, in varying degrees, to UK Council and a range of stakeholders, including BMA members in Wales.

Key responsibilities

1. Acting as a member of the Welsh Council team:
 - To individually and collectively ensure the implementation of agreed Welsh Council policy.

- Maintaining regular contact with the wider BMA membership by attending national annual conferences, Divisions and other local events that bring you into contact with members and their issues.
- As agreed with the Chairman and the rest of Welsh Council, taking appropriate opportunities to promote, support and represent the work of the Welsh Council by meeting members and stakeholders with which the Association works and thus also keeping in touch with and understanding members' views and concerns.
- Developing and maintaining good working relationships with other Welsh Council colleagues and senior management.
- Fulfilling any specific brief agreed with Welsh Council or the Chairman, liaising with the appropriate officer, as required.
- Leading debate on any aspect of Welsh Council business (to include giving presentations, briefings and preparing discussion papers), as requested by the Chairman.
- To represent, where appropriate, BMA Cymru Wales on an outside body and to provide two-way communication between the outside body and Welsh Council.

2. Attending and contributing to meetings of Welsh Council

- Diligently preparing for and attending all Welsh Council meetings, participating in discussions and decision making, bringing your own skills and experience to bear, helping to form a consensus and upholding Welsh Council decisions.
- In the event of unavoidable absence from a meeting, providing your written comments and/or questions in advance on the relevant papers to the Chairman.
- Reading and considering reports for meetings and questioning these to ensure that Welsh Council decisions are well founded.
- Being a member of one or more sub-committees of Welsh Council and/or working groups as established from time to time.
- Diligently preparing for and attending one annual strategy/development event.
- Attending training events agreed as appropriate for all members of Welsh Council and those agreed as necessary for your individual development objectives.

3. Providing strategic direction and leadership

- Determining strategic direction and policy for BMA Cymru Wales, alongside fellow Welsh Council members.
- Sharing corporate responsibility for Welsh Council decisions.
- Approving the BMA Cymru Wales overall strategy and annual business plan.
- Ensuring that effective resources are in place to achieve the BMA Cymru Wales business plan objectives, and to monitor progress against them.
- Bringing impartiality and objectivity to decision making.
- Electing (and if necessary removing) the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.
- Acting as an informed and influential ambassador for Welsh Council and BMA Cymru Wales.
- Working collaboratively with other Welsh Council members and maintaining an open dialogue with colleagues in the formulation of strategy and policy.
- Maintaining your knowledge, understanding and awareness of key developments in medicine, healthcare and the NHS in Wales.
- Working to achieve an equitable balance between the interests of current and future BMA members.
- Working to achieve a balance between the short term requirements of BMA Cymru Wales and its long term interests and viability.

4. Performing to the highest personal standards

- Performing to the highest personal standards in line with Welsh Council's expectations and acting only in the interests of the profession as a whole.
- Treating information gained as a member of Welsh Council in confidence.
- Upholding the values and objectives of the Association and its core policies, including those for equality and diversity.
- Not doing anything to undermine the work or good name of Welsh Council/BMA Cymru Wales and declaring all relevant conflicts of interest and significant changes in personal circumstance.
- Upholding the principles of good governance.
- Keeping up to date with your own specialist area of knowledge and with matters in the profession generally.
- Acting only in the interests of the profession as a whole.

- Being available to (and actively participating in discussions with) BMA members so that their concerns can be addressed effectively, and to communicate these to Welsh Council and your/Welsh Council's activities to the membership.
- Ensuring you are briefed at the appropriate time on significant issues, i.e. those that may:
 - Result in a change to established policy
 - Have major resource implications
 - Be contentious and/or politically sensitive
- Seek opportunities to involve and consult non-members of the BMA.
- You actively recruit non-members of the BMA into membership

General

No role profile can cover every issue which may arise within the post from time to time and each Member of Welsh Council is expected to carry out duties from time to time which are broadly consistent with those described above.

Person Specification for a Member of Welsh Council

In order to contribute effectively as a Member of Welsh Council, the attributes listed below are highly desirable: -

General

- The ability to allocate sufficient time to Welsh Council's business.

Abilities and Skills

- An ability to work effectively in a team with other members of Welsh Council and senior management of BMA Cymru Wales.
- An ability to read, understand and analyse both written and numerical reports presented to Welsh Council for decision and information, and to draw out pertinent points for discussion.
- An ability to express views succinctly and effectively in a formal committee meeting environment by making reasoned and thought-through contributions.
- An ability to challenge constructively, while respecting the roles, views and feelings of others.
- An ability to contribute to forming a consensus with other members of Welsh Council when involved in decision making and to influence through persuasive discussion.
- An ability to make balanced and informed decisions.
- An ability to think creatively.
- An ability to consider the long term implications and broader view of issues, spotting opportunities, identifying key risks and the means of mitigating them.
- An ability to act as an ambassador for Welsh Council at formal and informal gatherings.
- Personal impact and credibility with the wider membership
- Ability to make reasoned and sound judgements with integrity in a complex environment
- Ability to set aside personal views and preferences, to look objectively at Welsh Council activities and to understand risks and the proportionate responses to these.
- Possess the inter-personal skills necessary to make a full contribution to Welsh Council discussions and decisions and to act as a public face of Welsh Council/BMA Cymru Wales in the media and elsewhere, as necessary.
- Strategic insight into key issues facing the profession in Wales over the short, medium and long term.

Personal qualities

- A commitment to the aims, objectives and values of the Association.
- A commitment to the interests of current and future members.
- A high degree of probity and integrity
- A desire to take up any opportunities for personal development that may be available, in order to better carry out their activities as an effective and influential Member.