

# INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE

## CHARTER

### Definition and Scope

Behavioral medicine can be defined as the interdisciplinary field concerned with the development and integration of psychosocial, behavioral and biomedical knowledge relevant to health and illness and the application of this knowledge to prevention, etiology, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation. The scope of "behavioral medicine" extends from research efforts to understand fundamental biobehavioral mechanisms; to clinical diagnosis and intervention; to disease prevention and health promotion. The International Society of Behavioral Medicine (ISBM) is intended to serve the needs of all health-related disciplines concerned with the integration of psychosocial behavioral and biomedical sciences.

### Goals

The goals of the ISBM shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

1. To encourage formation of national or regional organizations of behavioral medicine, and to develop and maintain liaison with related professional organizations.
2. To encourage and co-ordinate communication and interaction among various health professionals including biomedical and behavioral science researchers and clinicians, without regard to specific discipline loyalties.
3. To stimulate research, clinical, preventive and training activities through formal meetings, collaborative undertakings and awards for meritorious effort.
4. To develop guidelines for implementation of behavioral medicine training and research activities at various levels in the health sciences.
5. To serve as an information resource for behavioral medicine by facilitating access to scientific and professional journals computer-based information systems, and organization of scientific meetings/conferences.

### Structure

Consistent with its charter objective of encouraging the development of national or regional societies of behavioral medicine, the ISBM will function principally as a federation of such societies. The membership of this federation will be of two types: *Full Membership* for national or regional societies whose composition and objectives are consistent with the goals of the International Society, and *Affiliate Membership* for organizations with interests relevant to behavioral medicine but which do not meet all criteria (detailed in the bylaws) for full membership. Affiliate member organizations are entitled to limited benefits but are not eligible to vote on the Governing Council.

### Functions of ISBM

#### Information dissemination

The ISBM will promote effective international communication between both individuals and national groups to facilitate research, clinical and training activities on a worldwide basis. The ISBM will endeavor to overcome the uneven distribution of scientific and clinical information and the formidable barriers that exist to timely access to existing information sources in most parts of the world. The ISBM will make efforts to establish a world-wide communication system for technology transfer and information dissemination which will keep pace with this rapidly developing field.

### Education and training

One of the tasks of the ISBM is to assist in the preparation of curricula and course synopses for teachers in medical and behavioral science educational institutions. It is also intended to organize relevant teaching workshops and courses, where possible in connection with conferences and in co-operation with national and regional societies and organizations. By these efforts to promote education and training, the ISBM will contribute to a better understanding of integrative mechanisms which play an important role in overcoming the limits of the specialized disciplines of health care and in developing rational prevention and therapy for life-style and stress-related disorders.

### The development of national and regional (i.e., multinational) societies

The ISBM believes that the growth of research and practice of behavioral medicine throughout the world can best be promoted through the formation of national and regional societies. The ISBM therefore seeks to foster the establishment of new behavioral medicine societies in terms of increasing the interdisciplinary nature of their membership and activities. It is proposed that the formation of new societies can best be encouraged by creating links with existing health-related scientific organizations in each country or region, in order to develop a multidisciplinary professional group with common interests in behavioral medicine. The ISBM recognizes the need to be sensitive to the cultural and scientific background in different parts of the world and to the fact that the scientific groups currently concerned with behavioral medicine vary across nations. Nevertheless, it is believed that national and regional behavioral medicine societies must endeavor to develop multidisciplinary membership and not become the preserve of any single discipline.

### International collaborative research

The ISBM will attempt to stimulate cooperative and cross-cultural research within the behavioral medicine area. The ISBM will function as a channel and source of information for researchers who wish to set up these kinds of studies and will also attempt to stimulate support for such studies. Information will be available through the ISBM for these purposes. In addition, national and international conferences will be used as mutual meetings points for groups that are involved in co-operative effort. One possibility will be to set aside specific sections of international meetings for this purpose.

### Meetings

One of the main functions of ISBM will be to hold international meetings of which basic, clinical and public health research-and application in behavioral medicine can be discussed. Two types of meetings are envisaged: full international congresses, and regional meetings for special interest groups.

The frequency of meetings should remain flexible in the early stages of ISBM. However, it is envisaged that full international conferences will be held every two years.

FOUNDING SOCIETIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF BEHAVIORAL  
MEDICINE:

Academy of Behavioral Medicine Research (USA)

Czechoslovakia Medical Association:  
Section on Neurohumoral Integration and Behavioral  
Medicine and Modification

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Verhaltensmedizin and Verhaltensmodifikation (DGVM)  
German Association of Behavioral Medicine and Modification

Nederlands Behavioral Medicine Federatie  
Dutch Behavioral Medicine Federation

Society of Behavioral Medicine (USA)

Svensk Beteendemedicinsk Forening  
Swedish Society of Behavioral Medicine

# INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE

## BYLAWS

### **Governance**

The governing body of the International Society will be the Governing Council herein called The Council. The Council will have supervision, control and direction of the affairs of the Society; its committees and publications. It will determine its policies or changes therein, will actively prosecute its objectives and supervise the disbursement of its funds. The Council may adopt such rules and regulations for the conduct of its business as will be deemed advisable, and may, in the execution of the powers granted, delegate certain of its authority and responsibility to the Executive Committee. -

Failure by any officer or committee chairperson to attend two consecutive Council meetings will be grounds for removal from office and from the Council by a two thirds vote of the Council. A member of the Governing Council will be given four weeks prior written notice of the Council's intention to remove him or her so that he or she may prepare and present a defense.

The Council will be composed of up to two voting representatives from each nation/region, irrespective of the number of "behavioral medicine" organizations accredited by ISBM as Full Members from a given country/region. The Affiliate Members may designate a representative to attend Council meetings in a nonvoting capacity. The Council shall select from its members, individuals to serve as President, President-Elect, Secretary and Treasurer. These officers, plus the Past President and the Editor of the *International Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, will comprise the Executive Committee. A country can only be represented once among the President-Elect, President and Past President.

The Executive Committee may act in place instead of the Governing Council between Council meetings on all matters, except those specifically reserved to the Council by these bylaws, pursuant to delegation of authority to such Executive Committee by this Governing Council. Actions of the Executive Committee shall be reported to the Council for ratification at the next Council meeting.

National society representatives should typically include the national society President (or designee) and the international affairs representative (if such a position has been created). It is expected that the national society Presidents/representatives will be empowered to speak on behalf of their Society. Holding office on the Executive Committee will take precedence over tenure of national society representation. Each nation/region will be limited to a total of two votes even though they may conceivably have as many as two members on the Executive Committee and two representatives (leading potentially to a total of four national/regional representatives on the Governing Council).

Committees to carry out the functions of the ISBM will be created by the Governing Council as required, and will be chaired by Governing Council representatives.

### **Officers**

#### *Duties of Officers*

The duties of officers will be as hereinafter specified or as otherwise provided by law.

#### *President*

The President will be appointed by the Governing Council for a two year (nonrenewable term). The presidency will normally alternate between the biomedical and behavioral sciences. The President will preside at and schedule meetings of the Governing Council and any special meetings that may be called. The President will prepare the agendas for said meetings in consultation with the Secretary. The President may make nominations for approval by the Council of any appointed position which must be filled except as otherwise stated. The President will not hold any other position on the Council while in office. The

President will be responsible in all matters, stated or implied, that are related to the welfare, stature, and proper operation of the Society. The President will perform such other duties as are necessarily incident to the office of President or as may be prescribed by the Council.

#### *President-Elect*

In the President's absence at any meeting, the President-Elect will be chairperson. In the case of absence, disability, or resignation of the President, the President-Elect will perform the duties of the President. The President-Elect will work as closely with the President on all executive matters.

#### *Past President*

The Past President will preside at all meetings in the absence of both the President and the President-Elect. The Past President will also normally serve as Chair of the Membership Committee, and will be responsible for soliciting, receiving and processing applications for full or affiliate membership from national/regional societies.

#### *Treasurer*

The Treasurer will be appointed for a four year term by the Governing Council. The Treasurer is responsible for the receipt, custody and disbursement of all funds of the Society. The Treasurer will make a written and oral report of the financial condition of the Society to the Council at each meeting.

#### *Secretary*

The Secretary will be appointed for a four year term by the Governing Council. The Secretary will be responsible for preparing the minutes of all meetings, maintaining contact with Member Societies, and for administration of elections. The minutes of each meeting will be mailed to members of the Governing Council within one month thereafter.

### **Nominations/Elections**

Election procedures for the Executive Committee by the Governing Council will be accomplished by a nominations procedure from all accredited participants at the appropriate Governing Council meeting. Mail nominations will also be accepted. Each full Member Society will be informed of elections three months in advance, so that nominations can be lodged with the Secretary. At least one month prior to the Governing Council meeting at which an election is scheduled to take place, a slate of nominees for each post will be circulated to full Member Societies. Full Member Societies will have the opportunity to submit their votes to the Secretary in advance of the Governing Council meeting. Alternatively, they may nominate their representatives at the meeting to cast their votes. Nominees will be rank ordered following a secret ballot by each full Member Society, with two votes being available for each nation/region, irrespective of the number of organizations accredited by ISBM as full members from that country/region. A quorum of 50 per cent of eligible votes plus one must be present for all election procedures.

### **Membership**

As noted in the Charter, the ISBM will function as a federation of national/regional societies. Two classes of membership, full and affiliate will be offered to applicant societies.

**Full Membership** will be available to all national/regional societies of behavioral medicine (or equivalent) whose charters and bylaws conform to the tenets of the ISBM:

- Multidisciplinary membership.
- Balance between biomedical and behavioral/social sciences
- Subscribe to the definition of behavioral medicine as noted in the Charter of ISBM

Applicants will be asked to submit copies of their Charter, Bylaws and a list of members broken down by profession. Provisional membership will be granted to those organizations fulfilling the requirements stated above. Representatives of the applying organization will be invited to participate in the next Governing Council meeting following granting of provisional membership, during which they will review the development, goals and current status of their organization. Based on this information, the Governing Council will consider the election of this organization to full membership, based on a two thirds majority vote. Provisional status may be omitted at the discretion -of the Governing Council.

In cases where there is an existing Member national Society, and where another national Society wishes to join as a Full Member, the following conditions will apply.

- a. The existing Member national Society will review the application and make recommendations to the Membership Chair.
- b. If the existing Member national Society considers the application to be satisfactory, and the application is appropriate under the general requirements stated above, the societies involved should negotiate division of votes and present their proposal to the ISBM Governing Council.
- c. If the application is not acceptable to the existing Member national Society, the said Member Society should submit a formal report to the Chair of the Membership Committee, detailing their concerns, which will be included in the discussion of the application by the Governing Council.

**Affiliate Membership** will be granted in those cases where the organizational goals of the applicant are consistent or overlapping with the tenets of the ISBM, but do not meet all of the criteria for full membership.

Membership for individuals will be considered in cases where no national Societies exist. This class of membership will not be activated, however, until the administrative structure of ISBM is capable of processing and servicing such members.

### **Dues**

Full Member Societies will be billed initially at one US dollar equivalent annual per individual member for registration in ISBM. Affiliate Societies will be billed initially at one US dollar equivalent annually on a per individual member basis up to a maximum of three hundred dollars. The Governing Council will be responsible for annually reviewing and establishing appropriate dues for Full Member and Affiliate Societies. Services will be offered through the national societies and billed accordingly (e.g. journals, computer network). A third level membership (sponsor) will be available for corporations, foundations and other organizations who contribute to the development of international activities in behavioral medicine.

### **Changes in Bylaws**

National Societies are encouraged to appoint alternates for all representatives to assure appropriate representation at Council meetings. Changes in Bylaws can be effected by a two thirds vote of the Governing Council. The quorum is fifty per cent plus one of eligible Governing Council membership.

### **Committees**

There will be permanent and special committees of the Society. Committee chairpersons will also be members of the Governing Council. A regular term of office of a committee chairperson will begin following the international congress meeting After the appointment of that person. Chairpersons of committees will serve a four year term of office, except for a two year term for the Program and Membership Committee Chairs. Normally, no committee chairperson may serve successive terms of office.

Nomination of a candidate for election as chairperson of a permanent or special committee will be made by the President in consultation with the Executive Committee. In addition, full Member Societies may make nominations for Chairs of committees other than the Program Committee. Each full Member Society will be informed of elections three months in advance, so that nominations can be lodged with the Secretary. At least one month prior to the Governing Council meeting at which an election is scheduled to take place, a slate of nominees for each post will be circulated to full Member Societies. Full Member Societies will have the opportunity to submit their votes to the Secretary in advance of the Governing-Council meeting. Alternatively, they may nominate their representatives at the meeting to cast their votes. Candidates will be elected by majority of the Governing Council. The President is charged with the responsibility of maintaining a balance of professional representation of the Council by appointing committee chairpersons representing diverse disciplines in the psychosocial, behavioral and biomedical fields.

Six specific Committees are to be constituted:

- a) Membership
- b) Program
- c) Education
- d) International Collaborative Studies
- e) International Organizational Liaison
- f) Communications

a) **Membership**

The Membership Committee will be responsible for screening all applications for membership in the ISBM to determine the class of membership (if any) appropriate for a given applicant. The Committee will normally be chaired by the Past President. The Executive Committee will serve as a "committee of the whole" for membership purposes.

b) **Program**

The Program Committee will have responsibility for organizing the invited and competitive components of the International Congress. The Program Committee will consist of the Chair, Co-Chair (the Host Country President or their designee) and members representative of the geographic and scientific diversity of the organization, to be chosen by the Program Committee Chair.

c) **Education and Training**

The Education and Training Committee will have responsibility for the synthesis and dissemination of educational opportunities in behavioral medicine around the world, including primary training, continuing education, workshops, conferences and other activities designed to increase knowledge and upgrade skills in behavioral medicine. Such programs should include the entire scientific spectrum concerned with health and behavior relationships: from investigations of brain-body mechanism linkages to reducing health-risk via community intervention strategies.

d) **International Collaborative Studies**

The International Collaborative Studies Committee will be responsible for the encouragement and stimulation of international/cross-cultural research projects in the area of behavioral medicine. This committee will also help identify areas of prime interest to the field as well as possibilities for collaborative efforts with international research organizations.

e) **International Organizational Liaison**

The Organizational Liaison Committee will be responsible for identifying, relating to and coordinating information exchange with relevant international health-related scientific organizations, (e.g., WHO, international health specialty groups, etc.).

f) **Communications**

The Communications Committee will be responsible for the coordination and facilitation of information exchange among Member Societies and their constituents.

### **Scientific Meetings**

It is proposed that ISBM meetings will be hosted by national or regional societies. The programs of such meetings shall be devised by the ISBM Program Committee in conjunction with local organizers. The budgetary planning of such meetings will be primarily the responsibility of the national host society, but financial arrangements must be approved by the ISBM Governing Council. A portion of the registration fee, to be determined by the Governing Council, will be retained by the ISBM to cover administrative costs of the Society. National host organizers of conferences are encouraged to seek public and private sector support in order to recover the organizational costs and expenses of invited participants. The organization of institutes or workshops immediately before and after the meeting should be considered in an effort to defray costs. The content of programs should show a balance between biological, behavioral and psychosocial aspects, and between basic and applied scientific topics.