

# **Brigham and Women's Hospital House Staff Council Constitution**

## **Preamble**

We, the house staff at the Brigham and Women's Hospital, in order to collectively improve patient care, further our common goals, and fulfill our responsibilities to each other and to our patients, do establish the Brigham and Women's Hospital House Staff Council.

## **Article I. Mission Statement**

The Brigham and Women's House Staff Council will aim to advocate for key issues affecting house staff, foster a sense of community among and across graduate medical training programs, and represent house staff with a unified voice. The Council will consist of members from all training programs at Brigham and Women's Hospital, and solutions to complex problems will be addressed through dialogue from the vast array of clinical specialties we represent. Undoubtedly, the important issues of the day will vary, but the Council will strive to always remain rooted in the principles of advocacy, community, inclusive representation, and improving the hospital we care so much about.

## **Article II. Definitions**

### Section 1: Abbreviations

- a. Brigham and Women's Hospital (BWH)
- b. House Staff Council (HSC, or simply the Council)
- c. House Staff Council Members (HSC members, or simply "members").
- d. American College of Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)
- e. Medical Degree (MD)
- f. Doctor of Osteopathy (DO)

### Section 2: Programmatic definitions

- a. Training program: A training program is any program that contains house staff that rotate through the Brigham and Women's Hospital. A full list of training programs will be enumerated in the HSC bylaws.
- b. House Staff: Any MD or DO in an ACGME-certified training program at Brigham and Women's Hospital.
- c. Resolution: A resolution is a vote held by the HSC that is either a statement of purpose, obligates the HSC to carry through with an action, or affects change to the HSC bylaws.
- d. Referendum: A form of resolution enacted by a vote of all house staff, rather than only members of the HSC.
- e. Constitution: This document, which defines the HSC's guiding principles and its functions.
- f. Amendments: Alterations to the constitution.
- g. Bylaws: HSC rules and regulations that further delineate the rules and regulations guiding the HSC, in accordance with the principles laid out in the Constitution.

### Section 3: Membership definitions

- a. Candidate: House staff individual who has declared his or her intent to fill a position on the HSC, either through appointment or popular election.
- b. Representatives: House staff elected by their training programs to the HSC.
- c. Executive Board: Representatives elected to serve the core leadership functions of the HSC. Members of the Executive Board maintain their role as HSC representatives.
- d. House Staff Council Members: Includes representatives, Executive Board members, and those appointed to the HSC to serve various functions throughout the hospital.

## **Article III. House Staff Council Membership**

### Section 1: Structure

- a. The HSC shall include the Executive Board, representatives, and other HSC members.

### Section 2: Executive Board

- a. The Executive Board includes, but is not limited to, a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Other Executive Board positions may be outlined by the HSC bylaws.

### Section 3: Representatives

- a. Each training program shall be guaranteed at least one representative, and no training program shall have more than five representatives.
- b. The number of representatives for each training program will be calculated as one representative per twenty trainees, rounding up to the nearest whole number.
- c. For the purposes of calculating the number of representatives, the number of house staff per training program will be tallied annually.

### Section 4: Other membership

- a. Any house staff may be appointed by the HSC to serve on committees and enact resolutions passed by the HSC.

## **Article IV. Elections**

### Section 1: Representative elections

- a. Any house staff within a training program may declare their candidacy to the HSC.
- b. Each house staff within a training program shall have the opportunity to cast a single vote to elect that training program's HSC representatives.
- c. Candidates with the most votes will become elected HSC representatives for their respective training programs.
- d. In the event of a tie, other elected representatives on HSC will vote on the tied candidates.
- e. Representative elections will occur at least annually.

### Section 2: Executive Board Elections

- a. All HSC representatives are eligible to declare their candidacy for an Executive Board position.
- b. Two HSC representatives may run together to fill an Executive Board position. For example, two representatives could run to be “Co-Presidents.”
- b. Executive Board members will be chosen by a vote open to all HSC representatives.
- a. The candidate with the most votes shall be elected to the Executive Board position.

#### Section 2: Unfilled positions

- a. In the event that there exists unfilled positions, either at the end of an election or throughout the year, HSC representatives may fill the vacancies by appointment.
- b. For representative positions, in the event that no candidate applies for a vacant position, the Chief Resident of that program may nominate house staff to be voted on to the HSC for appointment.

### **Article V. Meetings**

#### Section 1: Meeting details

- a. The meeting schedule will be determined by the Executive Board with final dictation by the President
- b. All HSC meetings must be open to all house staff.
- c. House staff can attend the meeting remotely without being physically present (i.e. through telecommunication devices.)

#### Section 2: Attendance expectations

- a. HSC representatives must make a good faith effort to attend all meetings.
- b. HSC representatives who are unable to attend a meeting will be allowed to select a proxy.
  - i. The proxy must be from the same training program as the absent HSC representative.
  - ii. Any HSC representative selecting a proxy must notify the President or Vice President in advance of the meeting.

### **Article VI: Voting**

#### Section 1: Resolutions

- a. Any HSC representative may submit a resolution to be voted upon.
- b. If another HSC representative “seconds” the resolution, then HSC will proceed with a vote.
- c. Only HSC representatives are eligible to vote.
- d. HSC representatives may either vote “yes,” “no,” or abstain from a vote.
- e. Votes may take place outside of a physical meeting over email.
  - i. Notification of a vote must be sent to all HSC members.
- f. A resolution is enacted if 60 percent of responding HSC representatives vote in the affirmative.
  - i. House staff who are not physically present but have attended the meeting remotely through telecommunication services are eligible to vote.

- ii. Proxies for HSC representatives are eligible to vote.

### Section 2: Referendum

- a. A referendum may be proposed by a 60 percent vote of HSC representatives, or by a petition that is signed by 10 percent of house staff.
- b. Referendum votes will be sent by email to all house staff. The deadline for voting must be pre-specified and must fall at least 7 days after the email is sent.
- c. A simple majority of house staff votes in the affirmative shall enact a referendum.

### Section 3: Amendments

- a. Amendments to the constitution may be proposed by a 60 percent vote of the HSC, or by a petition that is signed by 10 percent of house staff in programs who work at BWH.
- b. An amendment to the constitution requires an affirmative vote of 80 percent of all HSC representatives.
  - i. As opposed to a normal HSC vote, an amendment to the constitution has to be ratified by 80 percent of all HSC representatives, not just those who are physically present at a meeting. Representatives not physically present at a meeting may vote via email.
- c. An amendment to the constitution may alternatively be enacted by an affirmative vote of 60% of responding house staff, during an annual HSC election.

## **Article V: Bylaws**

### Section 1: Jurisdiction

- a. Anything not enumerated by this constitution may be clarified by the HSC bylaws.
- b. Bylaws may not contradict the principles and rules outlined in this constitution.

### Section 2: Changes to the bylaws

- b. The HSC bylaws can be adopted and changed through the resolution process.

## **Article VI: Ratification**

The HSC Constitution is ratified by a vote of 80 percent of responding HSC members of the HSC Working Group, and a majority vote of house staff during the first annual election.