



# Association for Continence Advice

Driving Excellence in Bladder and Bowel Care

## ACA Branch Handbook

This handbook seeks to outline the roles of the ACA Branch Committee who serve the membership.

1. To increase the transparent working of the Branch Committee so that members may better understand the running of the Association.
2. To encourage members to stand for election to the branch Committee, by providing a better explanation of what is involved, should they be elected.

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# **Guidance on the conduct of ACA branch Activities**

## **1 Introduction**

The Association for Continence Advice (ACA) branch is the local membership structure through which the ACA organizes local representation for its members working towards achieving its objectives of:-

- Represent the interests of our multi-professional membership, ensuring that decisions of the Executive committee are shared, owned and accepted the members.
- Lead educational activity and support research development within the organization.
- Initiate projects and engage with internal or external groups, organizations or companies; and likewise, contribute to projects that aim to maximize evidence-based continence care.
- Influence UK wide clinical, professional and political developments in the field of continence care policy.
- Promote safe, high quality continence services that reflect UK wide policy developments.

- 1.1 The geographical boundaries of the branch will be determined by the relevant board. Any change in title or boundary of the branch will be made by the board and members will be notified.
- 1.2 The branch is accountable to the relevant Executive committee and shall submit an Annual Plan and review of its activities to the Executive committee for approval.

## **2 Branch membership**

- 2.1 All ACA members working in workplaces within the branch's geographical boundary will be members of the branch.
- 2.2 Any ACA member who is not employed but whose home address falls within the geographical boundary will be a member of the branch.
- 2.3 All branch members will have full voting rights in respect of all branch elections.

### **3 Purposes of the branch**

The purpose of the branch is to recruit and retain, support and develop members and help achieve the ACA objectives of:

- Represent the interests of our multi-professional membership by communicating effectively, for example, through its newsletter and website.
- Lead educational activity and support research development within the organisation.
- Initiate projects and engage with internal or external groups, organisations or companies; and likewise, contribute to projects that aim to maximize evidence-based continence care.
- Influence UK wide clinical, professional and political developments in the field of continence care policy.
- Promote safe, high quality continence services that reflect UK wide policy developments

This is achieved through:

- Enabling learning and development, leadership and support for members by providing local education, communication and networking opportunities.
- Providing a local ACA structure and its associated accountability

### **4 Branch organisation**

- 4.1 The branch committee are full members and is responsible to the ACA Executive for the conduct of all branch matters, acting on behalf of branch members
- 4.2 It will serve as a route to feedback views of the ACA membership to the ACA Executive Committee.
- 4.3 It must adhere to the charitable objectives as set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the ACA.
- 4.4 The branch committee will be made up of a minimum of three members and a maximum of six, including the roles of branch chair, secretary and treasurer. Other branch roles may include organiser and education officer. It may be convenient for one person to assume more than one role e.g. joint chair / branch organiser, or branch organiser/secretary. This is acceptable, although it is recommended that any branch committee contain a minimum of three full members and it is agreed by the Executive Committee. **(Appendix 1, Role Specification).**
- 4.5 The chair, secretary, treasurer and other committee members must be full members of the ACA and should be elected annually at the branch AGM. Any member of the branch can nominate them self at the AGM. To be valid, each nomination must be seconded by a branch member, and should be put to the

vote at the AGM. No member can occupy more than one of these roles concurrently.

- 4.6 Employees of Corporate members of the ACA are entitled to become Branch Committee members but should not exceed 49% of the Branch Committee. They are not eligible to stand for election to the ACA Executive Committee.
- 4.7 The term of office for Branch Committee membership is normally three years after which there is an option to stand for a further 3 years . At the end of six years the member must stand down for a year before standing for re-election unless there is nobody willing to take this position and the officer is willing to continue.
- 4.8 The quorum of a branch committee meeting is three members of the committee.
- 4.9 The secretary is responsible for informing the ACA Executive Secretary the names of members elected or co-opted as members of the branch committee immediately after their election or co-option and the branch ratification or removal of any ACA representative. An annual branch plan and review must be sent to Executive Secretary as soon as possible after the branch AGM.  
**(Appendix 2, Template 1)**
- 4.10 The members of the branch committee shall be recognized as the leaders of the branch, who are competent to act on behalf of the ACA at local level. They shall have a duty to act within the ACA professional standards, objectives and to be mindful of the image of the ACA in all their activities and decisions.
- 4.11 At all times the branch Committee will be honest and will act with integrity and probity at all times. It will not make, permit or knowingly allow to be made, any untrue or misleading statements relating to their own duties or in relation the ACA.
- 4.12 The branch committee must ensure at all times the best interests of the public, branch members and ACA are upheld. It is vital that in decision-making process, decisions are not improperly influenced by gifts or inducements.
- 4.13 The branch committee can co-opt members to fill any casual vacancy on the committee until the next branch AGM.
- 4.14 The committee is accountable for the organization of the branch to the ACA Executive and to branch members at the branch AGM.

The branch committee is responsible, on behalf of the members, for:

- 4.14.1 Organising the branch and its activities in support of the ACA standards and objectives.
- 4.14.2 The financial stewardship of ACA branch funds
- 4.14.3 Delivering a program of events and meetings to meet the needs of members
- 4.14.4 Recruiting members
- 4.14.5 Ratifying the branch elections

4.14.6 Promoting professional awareness and development by organizing local training and educational events.

4.14.7 Regularly communicating with branch members

4.15 The branch committee should work in partnership with the Executive Committee ensuring there is good communication and that local issues are reported to the Executive Chair.

4.16 In respect to matters attaining to the ACA all branch committee members are answerable to their branch membership and to the executive committee.

## **5 Person Specifications**

5.1 To be able to work and communicate effectively within a multi professional team

5.2 Be prepared to work alone and on sub groups for individual projects

5.3 Be prepared to represent the ACA to other organisations when necessary

5.4 Provide a friendly welcoming atmosphere to potential new members

5.5 Be honest and will act with integrity and probity at all times.

## **6 The employer of the prospective candidate**

Anyone wishing to stand for election to the branch Committee must obtain the support of his or her employer. Depending upon the organisation this may need to be written.

Employers may consider that there is a degree of prestige from the involvement of an employee being a member of a branch committee of the ACA

## **7 Time commitments**

The time commitment will vary but it is anticipated that attendance at branch meetings and branch committee meetings and the 2 meetings per year with the executive committee would be required.

## **8 Branch meetings**

8.1 The branch committee will arrange a program of meetings and events to meet the needs of members. Such meetings should have a defined purpose and members should receive notification of these events.

8.2 The branch must hold at least one branch general meeting for all members, each calendar year, the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

- 8.3 The branch AGM will take place between February and May, prior to the June Executive AGM, and the date and venue should be notified to all branch members using agreed communication channels, at least three weeks in advance of the meeting.
- 8.4 The purpose of the AGM is for the branch membership to review, agree the Branch annual report and financial statements up to the end of the previous financial year (1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December of any year), to elect the Branch Committee, and to ratify the elected ACA representatives. Develop a branch plan and review (**Appendix 2, Template 1**). These should be sent to the Executive secretary at least 3 weeks prior to the Executive AGM in June.
- 8.5 An Extraordinary General Meeting of the Branch will be convened if the Chair so determines, or on the written request of ten (10) members of the Branch, provided notification of the date and venue goes to all branch members through agreed communication channels, at least three weeks in advance of the meeting.
- 8.6 The quorum for any general branch meeting, including the AGM, is ten (10) members, including three (3) committee members.
- 8.7 The branch committee may set up any other committees or arrange regular meetings of another other segment of their branch membership.

## **9 Finances**

- 9.1 One member of the branch will be elected to act as treasurer for the branch. They will be a member of the branch committee.
- 9.2 The treasurer is responsible, on behalf of the branch committee for the financial stewardship of branch funds, ensuring they are expended in pursuit of the ACA Standard Financial Objectives, as set out in the Treasurers Role, protecting them from fraud and abuse.
- 9.3 All branch funds must be kept in the branch's designated according to the ACA financial Instructions. There must not be any other branch bank accounts all transactions through the bank account must have two signatures from amongst the agreed signatories in accordance with the ACA "Standing Financial Instructions" (**Appendix 3**) and complete the standing financial instruction declaration form (**Appendix 4**) and return to the ACA Executive secretary.

## **10 Remuneration**

There will be no financial gain by becoming a member of the branch committee. Whilst all legitimate expenses of the office are met they must be kept to a minimum. All members of the branch committee must sign that they are in agreement with the ACA Standing Financial Instructions (SFIs)

## **11 Amendments to the constitution**

- 11.1 The Executive Committee has the power to vary this constitution, or make other provisions for the conduct of branches, in such manner as the Executive, at its discretion, may from time to time determine.
- 11.2 The Executive will produce readily available guidance and protocols for branches on how to operate aspects of this constitution.

## **12 Dissolution**

- 12.1 The branch may be dissolved, merged with another branch or its geographical boundaries altered by the Executive. Before making such a decision, the Executive will consult the branch members at a general meeting of which due notice has been given, and Executive shall subsequently be notified of the decision.
- 12.2 Where such a decision is made, the Executive shall be responsible for the transfer of branch funds and assets to the new branch that the members will be part of.

## **13 Summary**

Membership of an ACA branch committee does require commitment and therefore should not be undertaken lightly but it can be very rewarding and it also provides a good opportunity for personal development.

## Appendix 1



# Association for Continence Advice

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## **Role of the Branch Chairman**

### **Introduction**

The Branch Chairman is elected by the branch membership at the branch Annual General Meeting (AGM)

### **Duties**

The branch chairman's responsibilities include:-

- Presiding as chairman at all regional meetings that he/she attends. In their absence another branch committee member will chair the meeting.
- If needed, has the casting vote at branch committee meetings
- Acting as spokesperson for the branches to organisations outside the ACA or in the absence of the branch organiser
- Being available within a reasonable timeframe to answer questions from the branch membership
- Writing yearly report for the branch AGM. This report should be forwarded to the ACA secretary for information

### **Relationship**

The branch chairman will be expected to develop good working relationships with other branch committee members within their region, other branch committees, the ACA executive and ACA management services.



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## Role of the Branch Treasurer

### Introduction

The branch treasurer is elected by the branch membership at the Annual General Meeting (AGM)

### Duties

The treasurer's responsibilities include:

- The branch bank account including cheque books, statements, etc. which should be held in the name of the ACA branch, not in the name of the treasurer or of any other member.
- To be the main signatory on cheques and to ensure that there is at least one preferably two other signatories
- To maintain hard copies of financial transactions made by the branch running from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December of any year
- To ensure these balance at the end of the year
- To provide accounts on a quarterly basis
- To submit year end accounts
- To have financial records available on request ( for audit purposes)
- To have completed end of year finances available at the branch AGM
- To represent the branch 's financial interests when required

### Relationships

The branch treasurer will be expected to develop good working relationships with other branch committee members the branch membership, ACA management services, auditors and the ACA Hon. Treasurer



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## Role of Branch Organiser

### Introduction

The branch organiser is elected by the branch membership at their Annual General Meeting (AGM)

### Duties

The branch organiser's responsibilities include:

- Arranging the agenda for the branch meetings. This is often carried out with the branch chairman
- Maintaining an up to date membership list
- Attending and reporting back from Branch Organisers Meetings
- Acting as link person between the branch and the ACA centrally

### Relationships

The branch organiser will be expected to develop good working relationships with other branch committee members, the branch membership, other branch organisers, executive committee members and ACA management services.



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## Role of the Branch Secretary

### Introduction

The branch secretary is elected by the branch membership at the branch Annual General Meeting (AGM)

### Duties

The branch secretary's responsibilities include:

- Dealing with correspondence for the branch
- Taking the minutes at branch meetings and branch committee meetings
- Sending out minutes and other correspondence as needed
- Ensuring that the branch records are kept securely for a period of 6 years
- Arranging venues for meetings
- Ensuring that news and information from their branch are sent for inclusion in the ACA newsletter and on the ACA website on a quarterly basis in line with the dates and deadlines for the journal

### Relationships

The branch secretary will be expected to develop good working relationships with other branch committee members, the branch membership, other branch secretaries, executive committee members and ACA management services.



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## **Role of the Branch Education Officer**

### **Introduction**

The branch education officer is elected by the branch membership at the branch Annual general Meeting (AGM)

### **Duties**

The branch education officer responsibilities include:

- Chairing any education sub committees or study day committees
- Accountable to the branch membership for the educational content of branch meetings
- Organising the provision of educational packs materials and events
- Working closely with and feeding into the ACA education group

### **Relationships**

The branch education officer will be expected to develop good working relationships with other branch committee members, branch membership, other branch education officers, executive committee members, ACA management services and corporate member's representatives with a view to attracting sponsorship for educational activities.

## Appendix 2

### **Annual branch review – developing a branch annual plan**

Planning the activities of the branch on an annual basis will help with preparation for events and communications with members. It will also help the branch committee consider priorities, identify key objectives for the branch, consider financial implications and identify support required from the Executive Committee.

Once the branch starts planning in this way, it can review its activities against the plan and celebrate its successes or discuss why objectives were not met. The plan needs to have some flexibility built in, so unforeseen circumstances can be managed.

The branch should create an annual plan/ review template (Template 1). This has been developed to help you generate discussion about, and formulate your plan. Or you can use this as a basis to create your own.

When compiling your plan and review, bear in mind the following areas:

- Branch compliance with the ACA constitution
- Level of branch activity and membership engagement
- Recruitment and retention of members and representatives
- Level of branch communication

#### Developing the plan

- **When to plan?** Establish the plan following the branch AGM, when the branch committee members are in place. The branch executive committee is the appropriate group to propose the plan, but they may want to involve other members.
- **Review the previous year.** Consider what went well. This might include regular meetings, good attendance, increases in numbers of members or representatives, or a successful study day. Consider what planned activities the branch did not achieve, and why. For example, a planned study day had to be cancelled through lack of support. What lessons can be learned from this?
- **Mark on a year planner all the ACA Executive events;** AGM, Conference and branch meetings.
- **Agree a date** for the following year's branch AGM and note on the planner.
- **Generate ideas for activities.** Think about the ACA objectives:
  - Represent the interests of our multi-professional membership by communicating effectively, for example, through its newsletter and website.

- Lead educational activity and support research development within the organisation.
- Initiate projects and engage with internal or external groups, organisations or companies; and likewise, contribute to projects that aim to maximize evidence-based continence care.
- Influence UK wide clinical, professional and political developments in the field of continence care policy.
- Promote safe, high quality continence services that reflect UK wide policy developments.

What can the branch do under each of the objectives?

- **It is all too easy to ‘over do’ the number of activities**, so agree to a minimum number of events or activities. Some suggestions:
  - Run a member recruitment campaign
  - Arrange a study day
  - Network with adjacent branches and plan joint events
  - Identify a local issue and focus on this. For example; reducing CAUTI
  - Promote the branch to local independent sector organisations
  - Contributing Bi annually to the ACA newsletter
- **Branch meetings** – once you have organised the date for your annual required branch meeting (the AGM), decide if you need any further meetings and plan dates. Don't be too ambitious – it's better to run fewer really successful meetings which attract good attendance, than monthly meetings where very few members come along. You could consider holding events such as talks or learning sessions which branch members may find useful and interesting to attend. The branch committee may wish to meet on a regular basis to conduct any branch business such as the ratification of a workplace election of a representative.
- **How will you communicate with members?** Can you mail or email the plan for the next year to all members? Email the plan to the Executive secretary so it can be added to the branch section of the website. Can you rely on members accessing information on the website?
- **Consider finances.** As your plan develops, think about the financial and other resources you will need to implement it. Does the branch have sufficient funds available?

## **Completing the annual branch review**

The ACA Executive has agreed that branches should undertake an annual review and plan of the branch in order to carry out their governance responsibility.

The reviews can be completed by the branch committee ideally or by the secretary, who would send the completed form to the Executive Secretary. The review should be an opportunity to celebrate branch successes and to identify any additional staff support or development needed. The information you provide will be made available to the ACA Executive to enable them to monitor branch activity and plan future branch support.

**Template 1.**

**Template for developing a branch annual plan**

**Annual branch review and Annual plan template**

<b>Branch:</b>	
<b>Year planned:</b>	
<b>Date plan agreed:</b>	

**Who is involved – enter names below**

<b>Branch committee members</b>
<b>Chair:</b>
<b>Secretary:</b>
<b>Treasurer:</b>
<b>Representatives</b>

**Members****Summary of previous year and vision for coming year**

Report from committee members –

- Focusing on the successes and challenges of the branch and how this will influence its planning for the coming year (100 to 150 words) – note, the three reports can be merged into one and finalised as the branch chair report if repetition becomes an issue.

**Branch chair report:**

**Branch secretary report:**

**Branch treasurer report:**

**Review of the previous year**

**What went well?**

This may be regular meetings, good attendance, increases in numbers of members or representatives, or a successful study day.

**Why was it successful?**

**What was not achieved?**

For example, a planned study day that had to be cancelled.

**Why it was not achieved and what lessons can be learned?**

For example, lack of support for the study day.

## Proposals and plans for future activities and events

Some suggestions:

- Run a member recruitment campaign
- Arrange a study day
- Network with adjacent branches and plan joint events
- Identify a local issue and focus on this. For example CAUTI reduction
- Promote the branch to any independent sector organisations
- Contribute to the ACA newsletter

**Planned future meeting dates**

**National Level** - example: conference

Event	Date

**Branch Level** - example: AGM, local activities and events (enter event and date)

Event	Date

**PLANNED OBJECTIVES FOR THE COMING YEAR**

<b>Description of activity</b>	<b>Budget and other resources (£)</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Staff Identified</b>	<b>Links with other forums or external bodies</b>
<i>Eg. Contribute to ACA Newsletter</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>Twice a year</i>	<i>Branch staff</i>	
<i>Eg. Study day: 30<sup>th</sup> Sep 2015</i>	<i>Room hire £x Speaker £x Catering £x</i>	<i>Professional development topic: Continence care in the Private sector</i>	<i>Local Nurse Specialist</i>	<i>Events</i>
<i>Twitting on Twitter @ACA_Continence</i>				
<i>Recruit 4 new members each year</i>				

## Event plan form and checklist for events

### Event Plan

Name of event:
Type of event:
Event date and timings:
Postal address of event venue:
Contact details of event venue:
Name of branch members and reps attending the event, including mobile contact numbers:
Profile of the prospective audience eg. Members/ non-members, HCAs, part-time workers etc:
Number of people expected to attend:
Is this a chargeable event?    Y / N            Cost:
Catering requirements:
Equipment requirements:
Evaluation of the event:



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## *STANDING FINANCIAL INSTRUCTIONS*

*Standing Financial Instructions will be reviewed each year in the light of current good practice*

*It must be noted that signing of the Declaration form is mandatory when appointed to a post on either a branch or to the Executive Committee of the Association*



# Association for Continence Advice

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## **1.0 Introduction**

*The ACA operates under strict legal guidance termed ‘**The Articles of Association**’.*

*To ensure good practice and probity and to ensure that all officers and employees of the ACA are able to operate at the highest standards, a series of Guidance Notes are being developed. The Guidance Notes will ensure that Branch Officers as well as the National organisation comply with Charity Law and other legal obligations.*

*This document makes no attempt to be an authority on either Charity Law or Company Law. However it does set out to provide simple statements and best understanding of how to ensure that ACA complies with the general Rules of Charity Law and in particular SORP 2000 and the relevant sections of Company Law. If anyone requires additional guidance then all questions should be directed in the first instance to the Honorary National Treasurer. Any complex issues will be directed on to specialist advisors to whom the Association has access.*

*Branch Officers (and in the context of this document) particularly Branch Treasurers, will operate within the framework of this document.*

*Safe handling of monies either to or by the national ACA or its Branches will ensure both personal safety and probity of the Association.*

*Any issues arising of a financial nature should be addressed either to the Honorary Treasurer or directly to the ACA secretariat.*



# Association for Continence Advice

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## Executive Summary

***The ACA operates Standing Financial Instructions (SFIs).***

***The ACA for administrative purposes operates from the offices of Fitwise Management Ltd, Blackburn House, Redhouse Road, Seafield, Bathgate, Scotland EH47 7AQ. It is then sub-divided into Branches.***

***In principle, these Branches follow the normal geographical boundaries of the Regional Health Authorities in England (1999) and, in addition, there is one Branch for Scotland, one Branch for Wales and one Branch for Northern Ireland.***

***A list of all current Branches is to be found in appendix No. 1***

***In principle, each Branch should be set up and operate in a similar manner to the national organisation. They are governed in the same manner as the national ACA.***

***All Branches should adopt the information that follows in these guidance notes. This will ensure that good practice and probity will always be maintained.***

***It should be noted that this guidance is not optional.***



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14	<i>Appendix 1 - The ACA Branches</i>
15	<i>Standing Financial Instruction document for signature by all Executive and Accountable Branch Officers serving on Branch Committees and members of staff.</i>

## Standing Financial Instructions (SFI's)

***This is an accepted document of the ACA; its Executive Committee members, Branch Accountable Officers serving on Branch Committees will read and sign the SFI declaration when appointed to office and these will apply for the duration of a full term of office. By signing and returning the enclosed declaration you agree to be bound by the Association's SFIs.***

### General

These Standing Financial Instructions (SFIs) are issued for the regulation of the conduct of the Association for Continence Advice (ACA), its Executive Committee, Branch Officers and Agents in relation to all financial matters. They shall have effect as if incorporated in the Standing Orders (the Articles of Association) of the ACA.

*The Articles of Association* of the ACA determine the number and form of the Executive Committee to manage the affairs of the organisation. This body will henceforth be known and referred to in this document (SFIs) as 'The Executive Committee'.

The Executive Committee of the Association for Continence Advice will be established from a group of elected members and co-opted persons from allied professions. The Executive Committee has the responsibility to manage the affairs of the Association.

The Executive Committee shall delegate its executive responsibility for the day to day performance of its financial functions to the Honorary Treasurer. The Executive Committee will appoint the Company Secretary and shall exercise financial supervision and control under the guidance of the Honorary Treasurer by:

- (i) requiring the submission and approval of business plans and budgets and also expenditure that is not agreed within the budget
- (ii) approving the use of an appropriate accounting system which will allow for an overview of the association finances on any day of the year
- (iii) ensuring value for money.

\* The Executive Committee shall be the final authority in the interpretation of SFIs on which it shall be advised by the Honorary Treasurer and appropriate legal and financial advisors.

\* Should particular circumstances render any of the specific instructions inappropriate, the Chairman of the ACA, acting on the advice of the Company Secretary and the Honorary Treasurer of the ACA, shall have power to issue a written dispensation so as to cater for the exceptional circumstance, providing the intentions of these instructions is met to the maximum extent possible in the particular circumstances which apply.

\* A copy of such dispensation must be retained by the recipient and a record of all such dispensations should be held by the Company Secretary.

\* All ACA staff, individually and collectively, are responsible for the security of the ACA's property, for avoiding loss, for economy and efficiency in the use of resources and for conformity with the requirements of all financial procedures including SFIs issued by the Honorary Secretary on behalf of the Executive Committee.

- \* The Honorary Secretary's duties shall include:
- the provision of financial advice to ACA Executive Committee
  - having access to financial and/or legal advice as appropriate
  - the design, implementation and supervision of systems of financial control

- the preparation and maintenance of such accounts, records, reports, certificates and estimates as the Executive Committee may require for the purpose of carrying out its statutory duties.
- \* The Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer shall be consulted in respect of any matter which is likely materially to affect the ACA's finances, before any provisional or firm commitment is incurred outside agreed budgets.
- \* The Executive Committee shall monitor all investments made on behalf of the ACA and shall seek advice from the necessary financial consultants concerning the performance of investments held.
  - The operation of investment accounts and the record maintained must be in accordance with procedural instructions issued by the Executive Committee.
  - In placing investments it is a requirement that ACA operates within the restraints of its Investment Policy Statement
  - Additional bank accounts will not be set up in the name of the ACA or any of its Branches without the explicit approval of the Executive Committee.

### **Payment of Accounts**

- \* The Treasurer shall be responsible for the proper payment of all accounts and claims
- \* The Treasurer shall be responsible for maintaining a system for the verification, recording and payment of all accounts payable by the ACA. This system should comply with the SFIs and should include details confirming that all goods or services have been duly received, examined (where necessary) and are in accordance with specification and order and are satisfactory and that the prices are correct.
- \* The Treasurer shall check that all work done or services rendered have been satisfactorily executed to the required standard and that the charges are correct.
- \* Where appropriate, the expenditure should be verified to ensure that it is in accordance with all regulations and that all necessary authority or management authorisations have been obtained.
- \* Instructions should be issued to the appropriate staff regarding the handling and payment of accounts.
- \* Where applicable, details of the ACA's Financial Year should be notified to all necessary staff and relevant parties.

It will be considered normal to make payment for all things properly verified and authorised within 30 days following receipt of account payment due.

All approved expenses of office will be paid within 10 working days of receipt.

The Executive Committee will give authorisation to the Bankers of the Association's funds to make payments from its accounts by properly authorised means (manual or electronic) using agreed signatories that the Executive Committee will authorise from time to time on its various accounts.

All payments, transfers of funds between accounts held by the organisation or to other accounts will require no less than two authorised signatories from the agreed list.

## Income

Income paid into The ACA (and its Branches) will be listed in the accounts and books of the Association as:

- (i) **Unrestricted**
- (ii) **Restricted, or**
- (iii) **Designated**

These funds are described as:

**Unrestricted.** The money is paid into the Association for its general purposes. There are no restrictions, covenants or stated purposes for this money other than it is used for the work of The ACA. The majority of the ACA funds will fall into this category.

**Restricted.** The money paid into the Association for use on specific named projects. It can only be used for this purpose and no other. There may be a covenant associated with it. This type of funding may be e.g. Lottery Funding, Bequests, Grants, etc. Restricted funds should be fully utilised for the designated project and not used for any other purpose.

**Designated.** This money is unrestricted on its arrival into the Association. The Association chooses to allocate this money to a certain project. **It is however not restricted.** This money can be reallocated by the Association to another project or back to its general unrestricted funds at any time.

- \* The Treasurer shall be responsible for maintaining systems for the proper recording and collection of all monies due, including income due under contracts or extra-contractual arrangements for the provision of goods or services.
- \* All officers and agents should promptly inform the Treasurer of any monies due to the ACA arising from transactions which they or other designated officers initiate; including all contracts, leases or any other relevant transactions, cash or cheque remittances.
- \* The opening of incoming post should be undertaken by a person or agent designated for the purpose and all cash, cheques, postal orders and any other forms of payment should be entered immediately in an approved form of register and certified by an appropriate Officer.
- \* All monies received will be held in a secure container until it is ready to be banked.
- \* Whenever a cheque is paid into any of the ACA Bank Accounts, sufficient details to identify the transaction must be quoted on the paying-in slip, including identification of the payee and an official receipt number if one has been issued by request.
- \* Official receipts should be issued in all cases involving cash. Where cheques have been received, these should be matched with the relevant applicable raised invoice.
- \* With reference to all BACS transfers, there shall be a method of identifying the person/organisation making/receiving this transaction and the purpose of the transaction.
- \* Invoices should be raised in respect of all potential financial income no less than 7 days from the agreement that this financial income is approved.

## **Security of Assets**

- \* The Treasurer shall issue procedural instructions on the security, checking and disposal of all assets to the ACA (including cash, cheques, plant and equipment, vehicles and any donated assets).
- \* A register of assets shall be maintained and formal verification of assets inclusion or removal shall be formally logged and verified by a second member of staff on at least one occasion during the fiscal year. This would normally take place at the time of financial audit to ensure that the Auditors of the ACA would be able to make correct judgements in relation to assets.
- \* Each member has a responsibility for the property of the ACA and should ensure that equipment and property is secured when not attended and should report any suspicious incidents and losses to the Executive Committee. It is the responsibility of all members where appropriate to apply routine security practices in relation to all ACA property.
- \* Inventories should also be kept to record equipment utilised by ACA.

## **Internal Audit**

- \* The Treasurer will be responsible for ensuring that an internal audit system is in place.

## **Data Processing**

- \* The Treasurer will ensure that all aspects of Data Protection and Communications under the Privacy and Electronic Communications regulations 2011 will be adhered to.
- \* ACA Executive Committee will ask all members conducting association business to complete a declaration of interest form
- \* All members are requested to inform ACA Executive Committee or its representative of any conflicts of interests that may arise where by a spouse or partner or associate may be involved in a transaction involving ACA and a third party.

## **Setting Up and Maintaining Branch Finances:**

At all times, the financial acquisitions of any of the Branches of the ACA are the property of the Association for Continence Advice and as such are governed by the same standing financial instructions. Within the Branch the Terms 'Executive Committee' are to be read as 'Accountable Branch Officers'.

The Branch will have at least three officers who are full members of ACA and these will include:

Branch Chairman

Branch Treasurer

Branch Organiser

Branch Secretary

In some Branches one or more officer role may be combined with the role of Branch Organiser.

These members are 'Accountable Officers' within the Branch and as such are responsible and will be held liable for ensuring best practice and compliance with the *The Articles of Association* of the ACA within the Branch.

The Branch Treasurer will maintain a bank account where all monies are held. This bank account shall be called ACA (name of Branch) or any other such name that is both approved by the ACA and recognises that the Branch is a charity and part of the Association.

The Branch bank account must have at least 2 authorised signatories must sign/approve all transactions out of the account. Any additional signatories agreed by the Branch must also be members of the ACA.

No person who is not a registered member of the ACA (in any part of its membership groups) can act in any capacity within the Branch.

The Branch Treasurer will ensure books are kept to indicate all financial transactions in and out of the bank accounts.

Value Added Tax (VAT) is complex and as such it is reasonable to suppose that there will be no person within the Branch that will have this experience. Any issues relating to VAT will be directed to the national ACA book keeper.

Branches should conduct their financial years commencing January 1<sup>st</sup> in any year and accounts for the year should be closed on 31<sup>st</sup> December each year.

Branch Treasurers should produce a yearly return and present this to a Branch Meeting. A copy of this return should be sent to the office of the ACA secretariat.

On a monthly basis branches will send in all transaction paperwork to the ACA book keeper within 14 working days from the end of the month. At the yearend (31<sup>st</sup> December) accounts will be prepared and sent to the ACA auditors by the ACA book keeper. A statement of accounts will be presented at the ACA Annual General Meeting.

The Accountable Officers will ensure that income and expenditure is used ONLY for the general purpose, aims and objectives of the ACA.

Approved Expenses of the Branch are those incidental expenditures that are approved by at least 2 of the Accountable Officers.

It is the responsibility of the Branch Treasurer or other Accountable Officers to advise the Branch of any financial concerns that they have in relation to their finances.

In the event of financial problems or concerns within the Branch it is the responsibility of the Branch Accountable Officers to inform both the ACA book keeper and the national Honorary Treasurer.

It will be the responsibility of the Honorary Treasurer to discuss with the Accountable Officers of the Branch the nature of their problems or concerns. The Executive Committee will be notified at the first reasonable opportunity and will act to support the Branch in any problems they experience.

At the end of each financial year the Branch Treasurer will produce a financial statement identifying the Branch income, expenditure and final balances. This statement should identify the name of the bank, sort code and account number where the Branch finances are held. The statement should show interest accrued and should be signed by the Branch Treasurer as a full and factual account of the financial business of the Branch.

At the Annual General Meeting of the Branch the signed financial statement should be made available.

### **Winding up of the Branch/Formation of New Branches:**

From time to time it may be necessary for one reason or another to either close, disband or amalgamate.

If this seems likely, the Accountable Officers in post at that time will be responsible for ensuring best practice and in the first instance they should notify the ACA Executive Committee in writing to the Honorary Secretary.

The Honorary Secretary or a member of the Executive Committee will then make contact with the Accountable Officer(s) to establish the nature and cause of the pending cessation of the Branch and support the Accountable Officer(s) in either re-establishing the Branch or assisting with a safe and effective closure. This will minimise risk to either the name of the ACA, its Directors, and Executive Committee, Accountable Officers or staff and ensuring that all legal and financial requirements are met.

The Branch Treasurer will present at the first opportunity all books, ledgers and statements, cash boxes, cheque books and cash pending banking so that a safe 'winding up' protocol can be followed. The Accountable Officers shall not close the bank account or issue any cheques from the account that will cause its closure. All further financial dealings will be enacted by the national office of the ACA with the assistance of the Accountable Officers and all monies in Branch Accounts will be held 'In Trust' until the re-establishment of the Branch in the future.

In a similar way where Branches wish to split or amalgamate, the Accountable Officers within each Branch should make contact with the national office of the ACA and the Honorary Secretary in writing and/or a Director will then make contact with the Accountable Officers of the Branch(es) to discuss how this should be taken forward.

At no time should any one or more branch accountable officers enact business of the ACA that is contrary to these guidance notes.

**As each member of the Association for Continence Advice is liable under the Companies Act for the Association, it is in the interests of all members to ensure that financial probity and these guidance notes are followed.**

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### **Relationships: Branches and the national ACA.**

An ACA Branch does not exist in its own right. Branches exist as a result of the structure of the national body of the ACA.

Standing Financial Instructions of the ACA apply equally to Branches, regardless of whether they sign documentation accepting them or not. Signed statements will be requested from the 'accountable officers' on taking up accountable posts.

In an attempt to ensure probity within the Association, which includes both Branches and specific fund raising (conferences, exhibitions, study days etc.) the Branch is required to act in the same way as specified for the national body.

Branch Treasurers must not allow ACA funds to be used for business other than approved by the ACA. Funds will be used strictly for the objects stated in the Article of Association.

The point of fundraising within the Branch is to ensure financial stability within the Branch and to promote the work and existence of the ACA, its aims and objectives.

To ensure probity and best financial practice, if any Branches collect money on behalf of ACA members in the branch, e.g. for social functions or presentations, it should be entered in the accounts as such and the individual amounts contributed by members should be noted. This is to avoid any confusion with the central funds of the Branch and also reassure members that money they have contributed for a specific purpose will not be diverted for any other objective.

In all matters the ACA guidance should be followed, failure to do this could render the Branch Treasurer and Accountable Officers liable under Charity and Company Law, Criminal and Civil Law for any wrong doings.

The ACA (nationally and at Branch level) is a charity and as such should identify itself as such in all matters.

Under normal working conditions the ACA Executive will not wish to be involved in any way with the Branch finances other than;

To ensure probity

To ensure that Standing Financial Instructions are in existence and acted upon.

To ensure that a copy of the finances are lodged with ACA monthly

To ensure that Branches are aware of their responsibilities.

To ensure that financial best practice is carried out

To support Branches experiencing difficulties.

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## **Where to Get Help**

In the event that you or your Branch has financial concerns, please contact the National Honorary Treasurer or one of the other Executive Committee members either via:

The Treasurer / ACA Secretariat:

Tel: 01506 811077

Fax: 01506 811477

Email: [aca@fitwise.co.uk](mailto:aca@fitwise.co.uk)

Alternatively details can be obtained from the ACA Website:

[www.aca.uk.com](http://www.aca.uk.com)

## **Appendix No. 1**

### **ACA Branches:**

**East Anglia**

**London**

**North West (Includes Mersey)**

**All Ireland**

**Scotland**

**South West**

**West Midlands**

**Yorkshire**

**Appendix 4**

Please return a signed copy of this Declaration for the SFIs to the ACA Secretariat



# Association for Continence Advice

Driving Excellence in Bladder and Bowel Care

## STANDING FINANCIAL INSTRUCTIONS

**Standing Financial Instructions are designed to support a robust and safe policy in relation to all matters financial and corporate.**

### Declaration

- (1) I the undersigned, have received a copy of the Standing Financial Instructions of the Association for Continence Advice and agree to abide by them.

and

- (2) I will declare any interest each year to the ACA that I, or any member of my family, have that may involve any form of business transactions involving the ACA.

I have the following interests/no interests (delete as appropriate) to declare:

.....

.....

.....

.....

Signed: ..... | .....

Please Print Name

Committee: ..... | .....

Executive Committee Role  
*(if designated one)*

Date: .....

**This document will be issued on taking up office to all Branch and National ACA officers, and personnel dealing with ACA Business. On signing this document these instructions will apply for the duration of term of office.**

**Standing Financial Instructions will be reviewed each year in the light of current good practice**

