

Terms of Reference

FIP Ethics Advisory Group

1. Introduction

Ethics is the field of study concerned with what is morally right and wrong. Ethical questions are commonly encountered globally, in pharmacy education, pharmacy practice, and pharmaceutical science. These questions are often triggered by the introduction of new technologies, new medicines and new roles for pharmacists. Professionalism in pharmacy practice is the broader *application* of ethics in the professional practice of pharmacy. Hence, it is appropriate for FIP to create and support an advisory body on ethics.

The FIP Ethics Advisory Group was established for consultation and advocacy for FIP. The mission of Ethics AG is to advocate for ethics and professionalism in all contexts of pharmacy practice and the pharmaceutical sciences as they relate to the profession. The group brings together ethics experts from within FIP membership to exchange ethical views on current professional activities and issues in pharmacy practice, provide ethics expertise where needed, establish new contacts, and work together on joint projects that add value and are aligned with the FIP Strategic Plan.

This group began its foundational work in 2012 on the topic of professional autonomy and foundations for Codes of Ethics in pharmacy for adoption around the world, generating two major documents adopted by FIP:

- FIP Reference Document Pharmacist Ethics and Professional Autonomy: Imperatives for Keeping Pharmacy Aligned with the Public Interest. FIP, 2014. Available at: www.fip.org/statements
- FIP Statement of Professional Standards – Code of ethics for pharmacists. FIP, 2014. Available at: www.fip.org/statements

The Ethics Group also introduced the well-known FIP Oath of the Pharmacist, which was first taken en masse by around 3,000 delegates at the opening ceremony of the 2015 FIP congress in Dusseldorf, and subsequently up taken by Pharmacy Schools around the world:

- Oath of a Pharmacist
<https://www.fip.org/file/1514#:~:text=As%20a%20pharmacist%2C%20I%20vow,of%20all%20th ose%20I%20serve>

The Ethics Group has also contributed to several FIP congresses with presentations and workshops, the most recent being:

- 2019 in Abu Dhabi – on Conscientious Objection and Euthanasia, which was attended by many delegates.
- 2022 in Seville on Advancing Ethical Competency, Health Equity, and Social Responsibility in Pharmacy. *It's not enough to be ethical...we also need to be socially responsible.*

And most recently (March 2023), the Ethics Group, in collaboration with FIP administrative support personnel, posted several “Ethics CPD Bites” on the FIP website for educational and professional

purposes, with the intent of raising awareness about ethical decision making in practice. For these “Bites” the Ethics Group received many appreciative comments and accolades from around the world.

2. Composition

It is expected that every member of the FIP Ethics Advisory Group should be an **individual member of FIP** to serve on the Group. An exemption from individual membership will be given to the individuals supported by FIP Member Organisations or FIP Sections who have the expertise to contribute and who would bring important perspectives to the Group.

The FIP Ethics Advisory Group is made up of people with expertise or interest in ethics and areas related to the scope of the Group. The Group can be consulted when specialist expertise in ethics is needed (e.g., policy development, insight boards, request for contribution or revision of a publication, etc.). The Group is led by at least **one (Co-) Chair from the FIP Bureau (to be appointed), with the option of an additional Co-Chair who is not a Bureau member (to be elected / by the Group).**

Every two years, an open call will be sent to individual FIP members and member organisations who may wish to nominate themselves or another person to the Ethics Advisory Group. The number of vacancies will depend on the number of Group members exiting the Group in line with the criteria set out under Point 5, ‘Duration’. The number of members of the Group shall be decided by the **Co-Chairs**.

The following information will be requested from candidates seeking nomination to the group:

- A recent short biography (max. 500 words).
- A statement from the candidate outlining the expected value and contribution they will bring to the group.
- A completed conflict of interest (COI) form.

The Group Co-Chairs and those selecting new members will regard the current Group's composition in terms of the range of competencies, experience and specialisation represented in the Group. The composition of the Group should always aim to be aligned with the Scope and Objectives of the Group.

All nominations will be acknowledged through email. All candidates will receive an email informing them about the outcome of their nomination. FIP reserves the right to reject a nomination with reference to special situations.

Working Groups

Group members are free to propose to the Bureau that a **‘working group’** be established to address a particular issue or task. A working group of the Group will comprise a subgroup of Group members and may also include experts who are not members of the Group and whose expertise is considered necessary to the working group’s objectives. Group members may apply to join a working group or nominate an expert for it. FIP Bureau appoints the working group members and its Co-Chairs.

To create a new working group, the purpose, alignment and outputs must be specified and presented to the FIP Bureau (supported by the Bureau Co-Chair). Terms of reference (ToR) must be proposed for the working group, and these are then considered and approved by the FIP Bureau.

The experts' input to the working group is in-kind. The working group is encouraged to work on a voluntary basis, with no support from FIP in terms of staff and/or budget. However, the group may apply for support from FIP in terms of staff and/or budget, which requires approval by the FIP Bureau and CEO.

3. Scope

The scope of the FIP Ethics Advisory Group should encompass:

1. Professional and ethical practice in pharmacy and healthcare.
2. Raising and maintaining ethical awareness on pertinent aspects related to the pharmacy profession and pharmaceutical sciences.
3. Work with the relevant AGs and Sections to ensure the relevant ethical issues are included (eg: Technology AG and Regulators AG)
4. Provide ethics advice to researchers or research projects within FIP.
5. Work with the BPP, the BPS, FIPed and ECPG to provide advice and support on ethics in pharmacy education, pharmacy practice and pharmaceutical sciences.
6. Responsibility for suggesting educational programming on contemporary ethical issues to the committees that plan FIP conferences.

4. Objectives

The FIP Ethics Advisory Group has the following objectives:

1. To provide expertise on ethical and professional matters to FIP and its members.
2. To provide expertise for FIP partners (for example WHO), in the area of ethics and professionalism related to pharmacy.
3. To explore global initiatives and developments and the impact on the role of pharmacists. To provide guidance and education for FIP members on ethics and professionalism.
4. To facilitate the gathering and sharing of best practices with respect to ethics and professionalism in pharmacy.

5. Duration

The FIP Ethics Advisory Group's duration will not be limited to a task or a time, but FIP leadership reserves a right to set up or dissolve a group or modify its scope.

Individual membership to the FIP Ethics Advisory Group may be terminated in the following cases:

- **Members who do not attend four (4) consecutive meetings.**

- **Members who have completed a term of two years on the Group.**

In these cases, members will receive notification from the Co-chairs of the Group that membership has ceased.

Members may be re-appointed for a further two-year term with the consent of the Group Co-Chairs. No member should serve more than two consecutive terms.

6. Communication by the FIP Ethics Advisory Group

Progress reports will be submitted every six (6) months to the Bureau by the Co-Chairs and anytime the Bureau considers necessary.

7. Financing

Financial support for the group may be sought and approved by the FIP Bureau.

8. FIP Head Office support

FIP Head Office will provide support to facilitate meetings and follow ups of specific projects, recording of minutes of the Group's meetings and will also endeavour to provide administrative assistance to any working groups of the Group where such resources are available.