Terms of engagement

1. Background

In many countries around the world, local associations have been created by healthcare managers for sharing knowledge, information and expertise. These healthcare managers’ associations tend to focus their activities at a national level. In some countries, the Associations have a formal mandate to represent the profession, while in other countries they exist as ad hoc groups without regulatory or legal authority. While major differences exist in the contexts where healthcare managers operate around the world, all have a common responsibility to enhance the leadership and managerial capacity and capability of their membership as well as to promote the profession they represent.

Undoubtedly, the performance of any healthcare organization is linked to the level of competency of its core executive team. However, this core team of healthcare managers is often not fully recognized as being part of a ‘profession’. A foundation for formal recognition of this field of practice does exist in some countries, and specific training programs that target healthcare managers are present. Some even have the relevant competency frameworks already in place.

Currently at the international level, there is no dedicated international organization representing healthcare managers. Considering the global world within which healthcare organizations must operate, and that many national associations of health care managers have an interest in international activities that provide opportunities for networking and the exchange of intellectual thoughts and best practices, the need for an international platform for healthcare managers’ associations has arisen.

Creating a new, stand-alone international organization dedicated to health care managers will require substantial input of time, effort and human/technical resources. The organization will need to establish relationships with existing international bodies to become operational and effective in the international scene. Significant investments into the growth and development of this body will be required before it becomes a trusted resource worldwide.

Since 1929, the International Hospital Federation (IHF) has been a widely recognized international organization representing the healthcare organizations. As health managers are entrusted with representing and managing their respective healthcare organizations, the IHF represents a natural home for healthcare managers and the organizations they lead. For this reason, the IHF is offering to create a platform for international dialogue and to promote for healthcare managers’ associations. The IHF will serve as an international hub representing national healthcare managers’ organizations and for promoting the professionalization of healthcare management.

IHF membership is open only to organizations, therefore the relevant members of such a platform are the national organizations of health care managers who have strong links with the national organizations representing the facilities when and where they exist. Having both on board, through the IHF will allow a high level of consistency between the interest of the organizations and of the individuals who are leading and managing these organizations. Because this combination is made at the international level this will also avoid possible conflict of interests that may exist at the national level.
The expansion of IHF membership will strengthen its ability to fulfill its primary goal of improving the performance of health systems and service delivery to both local and international populations. Increased membership from the health care managers’ group will serve to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and best practices between institutions, and individual’s internationally. This exchange will also serve to hone key management/leadership competencies of those leading and managing healthcare institutions.

The creation of such a platform will provide healthcare managers the opportunity to eventually receive international recognition of their knowledge, skills and competencies. As such, a competency framework that defines the knowledge, skills and competencies required for health managers to competently perform their jobs is urgently needed.

2. Mission and Objectives

The International Hospital Federation (IHF) serves as a recognized arena for discussion, and the sharing of knowledge on the organization and delivery of healthcare worldwide. Located in Geneva, Switzerland, the global hub of international healthcare activities, IHF is already engaged in formalized relationships with other key international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Bank, and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Due to this tie to the international community, and the IHF’s reputation for excellence in the healthcare arena, the urgent need for an International platform for Health Care Managers’ Association will be met by the IHF.

A dedicated ‘International Healthcare Managers’ body’ will be created and operationalized as a specific interest group of the IHF; this interest group will function as a network of healthcare managers’ associations from around the world. This group will be called the International Hospital Federation Healthcare Management Special Interest Group (HM-SIG).

The IHF HM-SIG will initiate activities by focusing on the following major themes:

- Working towards the formal recognition of Healthcare Management as a profession at the global level
- Increasing visibility and credibility of the profession of Healthcare Management in the international arena
- Working to increase effective engagement between healthcare managers and clinicians to improve patient and population health outcomes
- Supporting the implementation and adoption of the Global Core Competency Healthcare Management Directory
- Sharing tools and approaches supporting healthcare managers to perform their job effectively and efficiently
- Developing a program for supporting emerging healthcare management associations
- Advocating for merit based career advancement along with a career path for healthcare managers and leaders
- Working to increase the recognition of health care managers’ professional associations as key stakeholders for policy dialogue related to leadership and management and for the advancement of the profession
- Working on projects in response to members shared interests and concerns

3. Members

As a special interest group of IHF, membership is open to IHF Full and Associate Members expressing an interest and commitment to the goals of the HM-SIG.
New members will be joined by the IHF HM-SIG Steering Committee according to the following requirements:

*Members joining the IHF HM-SIG must be recognized as organizations representing healthcare managers in their countries. There may be several organizations from one country as long as they have an effective membership base.*

4. **Invited Organizations and individuals**

The IHF HM-SIG can invite other organizations and individuals to participate partially or fully in the activities.

The invited organizations having participated at the onset of the HM-SIG are:

- Pan American Health Organization
- University of West Indies, Mona campus
- Management Sciences for Health (MSH) Leadership Management Governance Project

Other invited organizations can join the IHF HM-SIG as agreed among IHF HM-SIG members. This invitation can be for the long term or on a topical basis. This invitation does not entitle to IHF membership benefits.

Individuals having duly recognized expertise in healthcare management can also be invited to participate in HM-SIG activities but their participation does not entitle them to IHF membership benefits or a formal membership to the HM-SIG. Their activity will be recognized as a contribution to the HM-SIG work.

5. **Governance**

The IHF HM-SIG is a special interest group of IHF and therefore it complies with the IHF constitution. It is under the broader governance of the IHF Governing Council representing IHF Full Members.

The leadership of the HM-SIG will be agreed upon by the HM-SIG members. The duration of leadership will be of a minimum of two years renewable. The leadership position is of a Chairperson of the group that will be called the President of HM-SIG.

In addition to the leadership a Steering Committee will be formed. Initially this Steering Committee will be made of founding members and invited organizations. The Steering Committee can decide on the size and composition of its membership. The IHF Secretariat will have a permanent seat on the Steering Committee.

The Steering Committees will decide on the nature of activities that HM-SIG will undertake, as well as the distribution of responsibilities and tasks amongst its participants

If necessary, the Steering Committee will establish and approve bylaws which will describe its internal governance and operating structures.

The general rule is one vote per HM-SIG member. Invited organizations have no voting rights but can fully participate to all discussions.

6. **Finance**

Membership of the IHF HM-SIG will not incur additional costs outside of regular IHF membership fees.
Invited organizations and individuals may provide both in kind and financial support in relation with the activities but are not required to pay membership fees.

The activities of the special interest group will be funded through special contributions of its members and external funding if required. This funding will be fully earmarked but under the fiduciary responsibility of IHF Secretariat financial management. If needed, a specific bank account may be opened to track expenses and incomes for the HM-SIG. HM-SIG members will decide on the budgets and sources of funds.

7. Activities and Projects

Each year the IHF HM-SIG will adopt an annual work plan. The results of the HM-SIG’s activities will be presented to the IHF Governing Council as an annual report covering the calendar year.

8. Members’ Communication

For effective communication the IHF HM-SIG will rely primarily on conference calls, video conferences and electronic communication, including planning and management tools.

Face to face meetings will be decided by the Steering Committee and as much as possible will be held concurrently with member’s activities. The Steering Committee will approve a provisional meetings schedule for the year.

A dedicated section of the IHF website will be maintained for the HM-SIG.

10. Role of IHF Secretariat

The Secretariat will provide limited technical support to the HM-SIG.

The HM-SIG will rely on IHF’s existing means of communication.

The HM-SIG will also take advantage of the existing events under the responsibility of IHF Secretariat like the IHF World Hospital Congress where a session will be organized to present either progresses of the work done by the HM-SIG or serve as a platform for members to present their achievements on a topic chosen by the HM-SIG.

The terms of engagement are adopted by the founding members of the IHF HM-SIG and approved by the IHF Governing Council. New members will abide with the terms of engagement. Revision can be made according the same process.

January 2015

Approved by IHF Governing Council:
IHF President Signature