

Memorandum of Understanding

Introduction

This document describes the mission, vision, governance, membership and funding principles of the Belgian Diabetes Forum.

VISION & MISSION

The Belgian Diabetes forum brings together multiple stakeholders from across the diabetes landscape in Belgium.

Intention – The common intention for the Forum, which forms the “field” around it and holds the project together

- The Forum makes it possible for all diabetes stakeholders in Belgium to be heard and speaks with one voice in order to ensure that cost-effective policy action can be directed towards better diabetes prevention, diabetes care and patient well-being.

Vision – What does the Forum want to see in the “world”?

- The Forum builds harmony and common ground between all diabetes stakeholders in Belgium to reach efficient policy engagement in diabetes and to make better prevention of diabetes, better care and a higher level of well-being for people with diabetes a reality.

Mission – What will the Forum do to work towards that vision?

- It is the Forum’s mission to identify what is going well, what is missing and what can improve in diabetes prevention and care in Belgium, and based thereon, to provide guidance for policy makers for filling the gaps, and for aligning existing initiatives regarding prevention, care and well-being in a cost-effective way.

GOVERNANCE

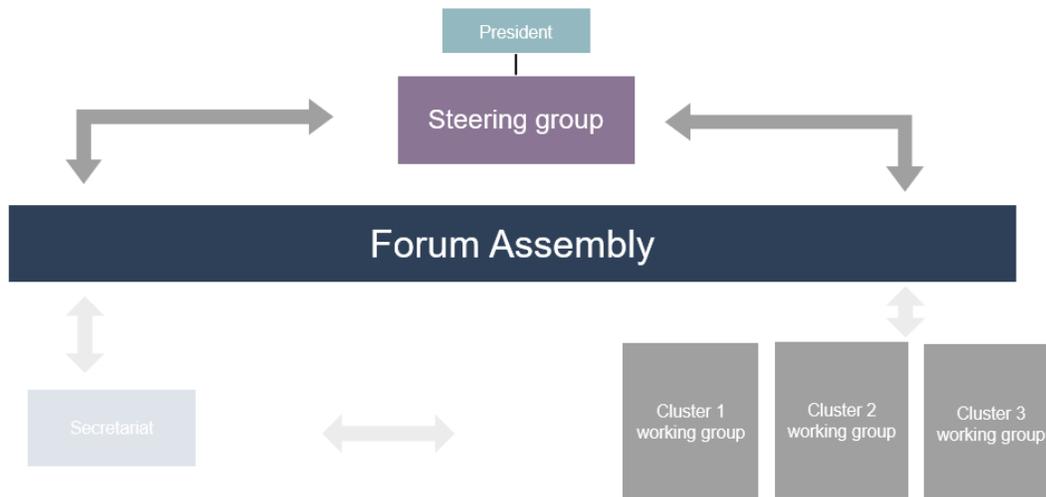
Belgian Diabetes Forum has the aim to be an efficient platform where decisions can be taken in full respect of the specific identity of every member. Independence and multi-stakeholder approach must be guaranteed at all times in the decision-making processes.

The Forum Assembly gathers all stakeholders of the diabetes prevention and care landscape.

The Steering Group leads the BEDF. This body will focus on the strategy and will guide the discussions and will be supported by a Secretariat, which is responsible for the operational and administrative functions.

Next to the Assembly and Steering Group, stakeholders from the broader diabetes prevention and care landscape will be invited to join working groups that focus on a specific topic.

The overarching governance structure is depicted below, and the role of each group is described in more detail thereafter.



Forum Assembly

The Assembly gathers stakeholders of the entire diabetes landscape. This multidisciplinary body identifies and prioritizes the topics on which the BEDF wants to enable policy action.

At least the following stakeholder groups are represented in the Assembly:

- Patient associations and patients
- Diabetes specialists and academics
- GP's or GP's associations
- Payers (health funds and NIHDI)
- Hospitals or hospital associations
- Paramedicals (nurses, dieticians, podiatrists) and their associations
- Pharmacists' associations
- Unions and employers' associations
- Administration and public institutions (FPS, Sciensano)
- Industry related to diabetes

Steering Group

The Steering Group is a multidisciplinary, multi-stakeholder body which establishes and oversees the strategic direction of BEDF. It bases its strategy on the topics identified and prioritized by the Forum Assembly.

Composition

Members of the Steering Group are appointed by the members of BEDF.

Any member of BEDF can be nominated (or nominate themselves) to be part of the Steering Group. The composition must nevertheless respect the multi-stakeholder approach of BEDF. Therefore, the Steering Group must consist of the representatives of one of the following stakeholder groups

- at least one representative from patient advocacy;
- at least one healthcare professional or researcher;

- at least one funding partner (i.e. private sector partner).

The Steering Group strives to achieve a geographical spread within Belgium between its members.

Steering Committee members are appointed for a one-year term, which can be renewed if they are voted in again. Members of the Steering Group provide their involvement pro bono.

The Steering Group meets at least once every quarter. Extra sessions can be planned in function of the activities.

Decision making

The Steering Group strives to take its decisions in consensus.

However, when consensus is not reached, a voting process leads to a decision.

When voting is needed, a decision is taken with majority vote (50% +1).

To respect the multi-stakeholder approach of BEDF, every stakeholder group gets the following voting rights:

- stakeholder group: patient advocacy: 2 votes
- stakeholder group: healthcare professionals or researchers: 2 votes
- stakeholder group: funding partner (i.e. private sector partners): 2 votes

In case of cessation of voting, the decision is negative.

Role & tasks

The Steering Group :

- Is responsible for all decisions relating to the scope of activities of BEDF;
- Approves of new members;
- Appoints a Chair;
- Validates priorities & positions determined by the Assembly;
- Decides on projects and creation of project working groups;
- Ensures the budget is being spent appropriately to achieve its stated goals;
- Reviews quarterly reports from the secretariat.

Working groups

To ensure effective elaboration of the BEDF projects, working groups can be created by the Steering Group.

All members are invited to join the working group of their choice. Each Steering Committee member must be member of at least one of the working groups.

The Steering Group can decide to invite non-members to participate in the activities of a working group in function of the topic and scope of the working group. This should bring specific expertise and positions to the discussions in the working group. This should also create broader support for the final outcome of a working group.

Each working group will work on a specific project. Each project should be accompanied by a clear project brief, including objectives, proposed approach, outputs, timelines and budgets which should be drafted by the secretariat and approved by the relevant working group.

Chair

The Steering Group appoints a Chair. The Chair presides the Steering Group and can act as spokesperson.

The appointment is valid for one year. Yearly renewal of this position is allowed.

Funding members can't be appointed as Chair.

Secretariat

All Forum bodies are supported by a secretariat, which performs the operational function of BEDF (manage, follow up and facilitate the activities). Its mandate is set on an annual basis and is reviewed annually by the Steering Group.

It presents quarterly reports of activities and outcomes to the Steering Group members.

The secretariat is currently provided by Whyte Corporate Affairs, a Belgian independent corporate affairs agency based in Brussels and Antwerp.

MEMBERSHIP

Principles of membership

Membership of BEDF is open to any key stakeholder who:

- shares the mission and vision of the initiative
- agrees to observe this Memorandum of Understanding
- is willing and able to take an active and constructive role in the initiative.

There are two types of membership:

1. General members: This includes all non-profit organizations or individuals wishing to contribute to BEDF activities
2. Funding member: This includes for-profit companies contributing financially.

Member benefits

All members enjoy the same benefits, which include the following:

- Invitation to join any of the BEDF working groups
- Possibility to be appointed to the Steering Group (respecting its multi-stakeholder composition)
- Inclusion of organization logo on BEDF website and in all official outputs

Member obligations

- Organization or individual committed to helping to achieve BEDF vision & mission
- Ambassadorial role for BEDF
- Commitment to Memorandum of understanding
- Include a link to BEDF on your website, if applicable
- Help publicize eventual upcoming events or publications on your website, if applicable

All interested new members must apply with a written motivation indicating how they would fulfill the above-mentioned obligations.

New members are approved by the Steering Group.

If members no longer wish to be considered part of the BEDF, they are free to leave at any time – but are asked to notify the secretariat of their decision in writing.

All members provide their time to BEDF on a volunteer basis and cannot be remunerated for their participation in any BEDF activities – including speaking or moderating events.

FUNDING

Principles of funding

BEDF is funded by several funding members, who provide minimum 10.000 euro on an annual basis to the secretariat to perform a set of agreed activities. Funding is provided via sponsorship of the entire initiative. Funding members are integral members of BEDF and have the same rights as other members. To ensure transparency, all funding partners are listed in all BEDF materials, including its website. The current funding members are Astra Zeneca, Bemedtech, Boehringer-Ingelheim, Eli Lilly, MSD, Novo Nordisk and Sanofi.

Independence

BEDF has been established for advocacy purposes and not to promote or endorse the individual treatments, medicines or technology of any of its funding members – either directly or indirectly.

Contact:

Belgium Diabetes Forum secretariat
Attn. Whyte Corporate Affairs
Clos Lucien Outers Gaarde 11-21
1160 Brussels – Belgium