



Community Membership Policy

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Policy Rationale:

BANA is an incorporated (CIO) charity with a subscribing associate membership of people who affiliate to be involved with and support the charity's cause and to take advantage of certain 'member benefits'. Members may be patients affected by the acoustic neuroma condition, their family or friends, medical professionals or general supporters. The aim of this policy is to set in place guidance and boundaries for associate members, to outline the terms on which membership applies, and to guide BANA employees and Trustees in the management of associate memberships.

Responsible Persons:

The Board of Trustees are responsible for the overall governance of the charity, and the CEO and employees are responsible for overseeing management of associate memberships.

Policy Inclusions:

1. BANA Community

The "BANA Community" is the name of BANA's informal associate membership of subscribers to the charity. Subscription is to the joining of the Charity itself and participation and association within the community whole.

1.1 Member benefits

BANA provides and hosts a number of charitable activities in the provision of its objects for the public benefit, some of which may be available only to subscribing members. Localised activities may not be readily available in all areas, and are subject to change; in particular where volunteers are relied upon to help. Activities are not a prerequisite of membership benefit. Current activities that are specifically available to members are:

- Access to the member restricted area within the BANA website, and use of its forum under the terms of use.

- Access to the member and one close family member to the BANA closed Facebook group, for participation under the terms of use.
- Access to any BANA area group meetings with a guest.
- Provision of any BANA produced magazines and newsletters, either in print form or by email.
- Availability of the BANA Support Register of volunteers, for one-to-one communication with another member similarly matched, under the terms of use.
- Option to hire a Trophic Stimulator machine under the terms of the hire agreement.
- Involvement in member surveys that raise awareness and have the potential to shape the way acoustic neuroma patients are treated.
- Opportunity to access any BANA arranged conference on a first-come first-served basis (nominal delegate fees may apply, in particular for any non-member guest)

2. Membership Access

Access to the BANA Community Membership is by payment of a subscription, or by being provided with an annual period of access free of charge, as part of the charity's Financial Hardship scheme. A number of members may also hold previously acquired Lifetime Memberships, which are no longer available. At this time, the annual subscription fee for a subscribing associate member is £18.

Access may be declined to any person at the point of subscription at the management's discretion if it is deemed that the proposed new member's intention for joining could be counterproductive and detrimental to our cause and/or our community membership, either wholly or individually. Such intentions may include subscribing to use our community membership for their own promotional purposes, whether of a medical, religious, political or business nature. The reasons for refusing access are not exhaustive, and may be considered on a case-by-case basis as occurs.

In the rare instances that this may occur, BANA will inform the new member of the reason for declining the membership and will fully refund the subscription paid.

3. Subscriptions & Membership Administration

3.1 Annual Membership

- 3.1.1 Annual subscription is on an individual basis and is not transferable, and entitles the associate member to a full year of Community Membership access and any available activities and benefits as outlined within this policy available to them and in which they wish to participate.
- 3.1.2 Membership begins from the date of payment and expires at midnight the day before the following year's date.
- 3.1.3 A 7 day cooling off period is applicable to all new subscribers only, with the option for a full refund of their subscription charge within this period if the new member considers the membership not suitable for them, or for whatever reason they do not wish to continue. Cancellations after 7 days will not be eligible for return of the subscription fee.

3.2 Lifetime Memberships

Lifetime memberships are for the members' lifetime and are not transferable. Lifetime memberships can be cancelled in writing by the member at any time, should they no longer wish to

remain affiliated with the charity. Cancelled memberships are not eligible for any refund of the lifetime subscription, in full or in part.

3.3 Financial Hardship

Members on the Financial Hardship (FH) scheme will have access to all membership activities and benefits as if a paying member, without discrimination. Financial hardship may be requested by ongoing members at any time at the point of renewal, or may be offered as circumstances suggest that a person may wish to participate as a Community Member, but is financially restricted and may not be able to benefit without such assistance. Financial hardship members will not be identified as such, and their membership will be reviewed annually alongside general membership renewals. This may be extended on a year-by-year basis at the discretion of the BANA CEO and employee team, who will ultimately make the decisions to provide a FH membership.

3.4 Overseas Members

Community Members who reside outside of the UK are welcomed; however in the interest of BANA's finite resources, overseas subscribers are asked to accept BANA communications, and in particular distribution of our Community magazine, electronically. Overseas members should be aware too that BANA is a UK based and supporting charity, and therefore represents the UK perspective of the condition, treatment and management approaches.

4. Renewals & Overdue Memberships

- 4.1 In the month prior to a membership expiring, BANA employees will send out a reminder that renewal is due in the coming month. Reminders will also be sent in the first and then second overdue month after a renewal was due. In the third overdue month after the expiry month of the membership, a 'sorry you are leaving' message will be sent. 7 days after that final correspondence, the membership will be cancelled if the membership has not been renewed.
- 4.2 Where members have supplied an email address for correspondence, all reminders will be sent this way. To protect against unnecessary postage where a postal member has not responded to the three initial renewal letters, it will be deemed that the member does not wish to stay and a fourth leaving letter will not be despatched.
- 4.3 In the event of a member advising that they do not wish to renew prior to expiry, their membership and ancillary access within the charity's activities will be cancelled on the expiry date. In the event of a member advising that they do not wish to renew post expiry, their membership and ancillary access within the charity's activities will be cancelled immediately.
- 4.4 Members overdue within the approximate three month overdue window will continue to have full access to their Community Membership without any curtailment.
- 4.5 Renewal is from the date the annual membership became due. Where renewals are paid in advance, the member's current annual subscription will remain until the expiry date and then continue from the start date for a further 12 months. Where a membership subscription is renewed and was overdue, the membership will back-date from the date it was due; the member not losing any membership privileges in the interim as at part 4.4.

5. Member Responsibilities

BANA Community members subscribing to the charity do so in support of the charity itself, and also to take advantage of activities and information available within the community network. Members opt to participate at their own discretion, but are encouraged to engage with the charity and to make themselves aware of BANA's work, aims, services, information and developments as made available by the BANA team within various mediums.

Continued membership and receipt of any services of interest may be reliant upon the member;

- Ensuring they inform BANA of any changes to their name or contact information as relevant to their membership;
- Supporting and uphold the charity's cause, objects and values, and to always act in the best interests of the charity and its resources within the community and BANA activities;
- Complying with BANA's constitution and associated policies, as applicable to members (available on request);
- Directing any issues, questions and concerns to the charity's Board of Trustees, via the CEO, as soon as they become known;
- Ensuring the name of BANA and our work is positively projected within the membership and further afield.
- Being supportive, considerate and respectful of everyone within the BANA community - whether member, family member, trustee, employee or other supporter – in their contact with that person, or in the publishing of information or experiences, and how that may impact others or the charity.
- Considering the confidentiality and privacy of fellow BANA members and their experiences in their sharing outside of the community network and activities, and not to publically share BANA material outside of BANA, on the internet or otherwise, that may impose on another person's privacy or that could affect BANA itself.

6. Curtailment & Cancellation of Membership

BANA reserves the right to curtail members' access to any activity if it is deemed that the participant is not utilising the activity in the ethos of the charity and its aims, the responsibilities as outlined in this policy, or that their actions could be construed as to be at the detriment of the charity and our cause or of other members. Such actions, if not revised as requested or within the remit of the activity in question, may constitute a reason for the person's membership to be reviewed and ultimately withdrawn.

6.1 Conduct and Behaviour

BANA Community members are responsible for their own conduct within the charity and in communications within the wider membership and BANA's employees, trustees and volunteers, and at all times are required to communicate with courtesy, understanding and respect. BANA Community members must not use the identity of BANA (name or corporate images) to promote their own politics, principles or personal opinions in communications, whether written or electronic.

6.2 Cancellation Process

In the event that BANA feels it is appropriate to curtail any specific member activity to a community member, or to withdraw their membership*, the following process will be followed:

- i) In the first instance (unless in extreme circumstances) the member will be contacted, usually by the CEO, to explain the issue from the charity's perspective. Such contact will be in written form, by email if the member has email contact, or by letter if not, and will invite personal discussion with the member on the issue raised.
- ii) If the matter is considered resolved and/or the member desists from the activities and concerns raised, then it shall be concluded as an initial caution.
- iii) If the matter is not resolved at this discussion, and the member continues to act inappropriately and contrary to BANA's ethics, constitution and policy provision, then BANA reserves the right to immediately suspend the person's membership with a view to full cancellation of the subscription.
- iv) In the event that the same member is contacted more than once regarding a matter considered for curtailment or cancellation, whether the matters are connected or not, then the person's membership will be immediately suspended at the point of the initial communication from BANA, without warning, and the suspension will continue until the second matter is resolved satisfactorily.
- v) Upon suspension, the member will have 14 working days in which to write a letter of appeal to the Board of Trustees, and thereafter will be given the opportunity to meet with at least two trustees not involved in the matter, with the CEO, to make their appeal personally if they so wish. The member may attend any such meeting with one friend or family member as support.
- vi) Following any such appeal, in whatever form, the trustees reviewing the matter will make a decision, to be sent in writing within a further 14 working days, as regards the person's ongoing membership of the charity. The decision will include the rationale for the revoking of the person's membership of the charity, if the outcome, and all decisions will be final.

BANA reserves the right to instantly suspend a person's membership and access to community activities in certain circumstances, in particular where it may be considered justified in the protection of BANA, its name and work, and its community, as a whole or for member individuals.

All correspondence in such matters will be kept on file for the duration of a person's membership, and for three years thereafter.

*Memberships may be cancelled whether annual, lifetime or Financial Hardship, and where due process has taken place, and a final decision reached, any cancellation will not constitute any refund of subscription fees, in whole or in part, to the exiting member.

References:

Policy CIO-08 Confidentiality & Information Management Policy
Policy CIO-09 Internet & Social Media Policy

Appendices: