



Psychotherapy & Counselling  
Federation of Australia

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**PACFA**

**Restructure Working Party**

**DRAFT PACFA STRUCTURE**

**March 2015**

# Background

- PACFA Council established a Working Party to prepare details of the new PACFA Structure
- Working Party is made up of representatives of PACFA and 14 Member Associations
- Committed to transparency and regular communications with MAs on progress with the restructure
- Additional MAs can join the Working Party if they wish to participate in ongoing work on the restructure

# Future vision

- PACFA is a stronger and better resourced peak body for the psychotherapy and counselling profession
- Government, private health funds and other bodies recognise counsellors and psychotherapists
- The community understands and values the unique selling points of counselling and psychotherapy
- The profession has high professional standards and a robust registration system to regulate the profession
- The diversity of the profession is supported and diverse therapy trainings continue

# Future vision

- The skills and training of both psychotherapists and counsellors are recognised and promoted
- The evidence-base relating to counselling and psychotherapy is developed and promoted through research and publishing
- Members can access high quality, affordable professional development events and networking opportunities
- Our business-like approach secures PACFA's sustainability for the future

# Proposed PACFA structure

## Main elements of the proposed structure:

1. Individual PACFA membership
2. New PACFA Divisions:
  - Branches
  - Colleges
  - Interest Groups
3. Some Member Associations elect to become part of PACFA structurally – their members become individual PACFA members
4. Some Member Associations elect to continue as MAs – the current arrangements remain unchanged
5. Governance arrangements that ensure fair representation of individual members, the new PACFA Divisions, and MAs

# Proposed governance structure

## PACFA Member Congress:

- Peak governing body for PACFA
- Members who meet PACFA's Training Standards can vote:
  - Individual PACFA members
  - Members of MAs for whom a per capita fee is paid
- Member Congress role:
  - Elects the PACFA Board
  - Annual General Meetings and Special General Meetings
  - Approves constitutional changes
  - Forum to inform and consult members on key issues
- Meets annually in rotating locations plus electronic participation

# Proposed governance structure

## PACFA Council:

- Peak strategy and policy-making body for PACFA
- Member Associations, Colleges and Branches and the PACFA Board all represented
- Council to determine whether Interest Groups and Affiliated Organisations can participate as non-voting observers
- Council's role:
  - Sets the PACFA strategic plan
  - Ratifies the PACFA budget
  - Determines PACFA policy on key strategic issues
  - Informs and consults Member Congress when required
- Meets twice a year in Sydney/Melbourne

# Proposed governance structure

## PACFA Board:

1. President
2. Past-President
3. Vice-President
4. Treasurer
5. Secretary
6. Research Chair
7. Professional Practice Chair
8. Psychotherapy Representative
9. Counselling Representative
10. MAs Representative
11. Expert Member
12. Expert Member
13. CEO (ex-officio)



# Proposed governance structure

PACFA Committees would continue unchanged:

- Executive Committee
- Research Committee
- Professional Practice Committee:
  - Ethics Committee
  - Education Program Accreditation Committee
  - Professional Standards Committee
  - Professional Development Committee

12 members elected by the Member Congress plus the PACFA CEO

**PACFA Board**

**PACFA Committees**

**Peak governing body for PACFA**  
1 member = 1 vote for individual PACFA members and MA members for whom a per capita fee paid

**Member Congress**

Membership includes college and branch membership with interest groups being optional

**Individual PACFA Members**

MAs, Colleges, Branches and the PACFA Board make up PACFA Council

**Member Associations**

**Colleges**

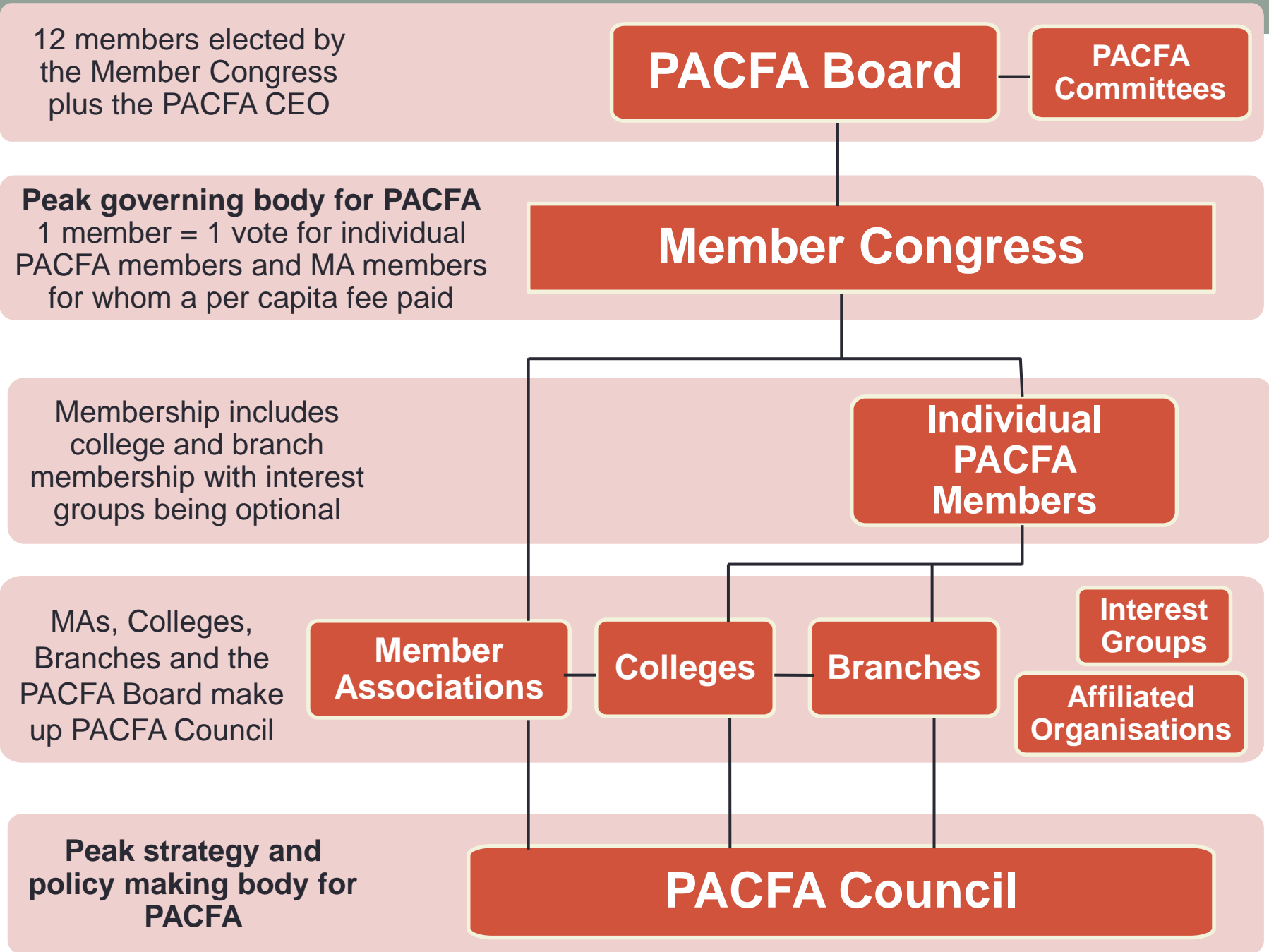
**Branches**

**Interest Groups**

**Affiliated Organisations**

**Peak strategy and policy making body for PACFA**

**PACFA Council**



# Proposed PACFA Membership categories

## Individual members:

- Practitioner (practitioners who meet the PACFA Training Standards)
- Intern (still completing 200 supervised practice hours)
- Student (enrolled in a counselling or psychotherapy course)
- Educator (counselling or psychotherapy educators who are not practising)
- Affiliate (non-practising membership category)
- Life (honorary membership with no fee payable)

## Organisational members:

- Member Association (same as current arrangements)
- Affiliated Organisation (for other organisations that wish to be affiliated with PACFA)

# Registration categories

- Registration categories are different from membership categories
- Only qualified practitioners who meet PACFA's Training Standards are listed on the PACFA Register
- Currently there are three registration categories:
  1. Clinical
  2. Provisional
  3. Intern
- There are other accreditation options for experienced practitioners:
  1. Mental Health Practitioner
  2. Accredited Supervisor
- If Council wishes, it could add additional accreditations linked to College membership, e.g. Registered Psychotherapist, Registered Relationship Counsellor etc.

# Proposed definition of Colleges

- PACFA Colleges provide a focus for members of the College, who come from particular psychotherapy or counselling modalities or who share professional interests, and who meet the standards of admission to the College, to collaborate and advance members' interests.
- PACFA Colleges may:
  - Develop and promote practice standards and guidelines
  - Sponsor and foster research
  - Promote the work and professional identity of members who meet the College's admission standards
  - Provide continuing professional development
  - Provide opportunities for networking and peer support
  - Produce journals and other professional resources

# PACFA Colleges - Proposed Process

- Applications to form a PACFA College to be approved by the PACFA Council
- Applications may be from an existing MA or from individuals within PACFA
- Colleges to have a Leadership Group responsible for leading the College, elected by College members
- Colleges to prepare an Annual Work Plan and Budget using standard templates
- College budgets to be allocated based on the activities planned
- Colleges to receive administrative support from the PACFA Office

# PACFA Colleges - Proposed Process

Applications to establish a College meet the following criteria:

1. The College's admission standards are equal to or higher than PACFA's professional standards
2. There is an evidence-base to support the College's modality or other area of shared professional interest
3. Members of the College are in good standing with the profession and have established links within PACFA
4. Members of the College Leadership Team are eligible for clinical membership of the College
5. The application explains how the College's membership numbers are sufficient to be viable and effective as a College and identifies opportunities for membership growth
6. The College's purpose and activities align with PACFA's constitutional objectives and the College is not established as an alumni association for a single training program
7. The College has an annual plan of activities

# Proposed definition of Branches

- A Branch is a regional presence of PACFA made up of individual members of PACFA in that geographic area. Local branch membership is automatic for all individual members of PACFA.
- PACFA Branches may:
  - Undertake local outreach
  - Provide continuing professional development
  - Provide opportunities for networking and peer support
  - Promote PACFA to local education providers and students
  - Build a vibrant community of practitioners in a particular geographic area
  - Provide opportunities for practitioners in regional and rural areas to participate



# PACFA Branches - Proposed Process

- A Branch will be automatically established in each State or Territory where there are PACFA members
- Branches to have a Leadership Group responsible for leading the Branch and will become an active Branch once the Leadership Group is in place
- Initial Leadership Group could be Committee of the former MA with subsequent Leadership Groups to be elected by Branch members
- Applications to establish additional Branches in a State or Territory to be approved by the PACFA Council
- Branches to prepare an Annual Work Plan and Budget using standard templates
- Branch budgets to be allocated based on the activities planned
- Branches to receive administrative support from the PACFA Office

# Proposed definition of Interest Groups

- Interest Groups are informal groups of members who come together to explore aspects of practice and to provide networking and support opportunities
- Interest Groups may form around:
  - Particular modalities, interventions, client groups or work settings
  - Social policy issues affecting practice
  - Professional standards in areas of shared interest

# Interest Groups - Proposed Process

- Applications to form an Interest Group to be approved by the PACFA Board
- Interest groups to have at least two organising members
- Membership of Interest Groups to be free for members of PACFA and Member Associations to support development of Interest Groups and encourage participation
- Basic resources provided by PACFA e.g. web-conferencing and distribution of communications to members
- Interest Groups would not have a budget allocation and would not have a vote on Council
- Interest groups that are well-developed and active could apply to Council to form a College

# Individual members - Proposed benefits

- PACFA registration for practising members
- Membership of nearest State/Territory Branch
- Membership of up to one College for eligible practitioners (optional)
- Membership of additional Colleges (optional) for additional fees
- Professional development events, including some which may be subsidised or free for members
- Insurance (optional) for practising members for additional fee
- PACFA journal subscription – PACJA
- Subscriptions to other specialist journals (optional) for additional fees
- Free membership of PACFA Interest Groups

# Financing the new structure

- The costings sub-group of the Working Party has been undertaking financial modelling for the new structure
- The draft costings are based on the membership numbers provided by the MAs who wish to become part of PACFA structurally
- It is possible that seven MAs will wish to transition to the new structure in the first year (2016/17) and the draft costings are therefore based on this scenario
- The draft costings for the new structure will be presented at the forthcoming Council meeting in April for discussion

# MA intentions as at April 2015

- Seven MAs have advised PACFA that, at this time, they would like to become part of PACFA structurally as Branches or Colleges, possibly in 2016/17
- Two MAs have advised PACFA that, at this time, they are interested in becoming part of PACFA structurally but these Colleges would take more time to be established
- Thirteen MAs have advised PACFA they wish to continue as Member Associations at this time:
  - Some of these MAs may be interested in joining PACFA structurally at a future time
  - Ten of these MAs are interested in collaborating with new Colleges or helping run them

# MA intentions as at April 2015

- One MA has advised PACFA it is interested in becoming an Affiliated Organisation
  - Another two MAs may decide to take up this option but have not advised PACFA of their intentions at this time
- Another two MAs have not advised PACFA of their intentions at this time

# Finance principles

The Working Party suggests the following principles for financing the new structure:

- Branches and Colleges to receive a budget based on planned activities not on member numbers – this is fairer as small groups will not be disadvantaged
- Colleges and Branches to run in a business-like manner and to be accountable for their budget
- We should aim to make savings through economies of scale so that resources can be allocated for:
  - Staff to service individual PACFA members
  - Staff to provide admin support to Colleges & Branches
- Membership fees should be reasonable and affordable



# Code of Ethics

- An ethics sub-group has been established to work on the process for developing a single Code of Ethics for PACFA and its Colleges and Branches
- This sub-group will consult with those MAs that are planning to become PACFA Branches or Colleges
- The sub-group includes the PACFA Ethics Chair and members of the Ethics Committee
- The sub-group will provide input into the review of the PACFA Code of Ethics which is also underway

# Next steps

- Further consultations
  - Please provide any further feedback to the Working Party via the CEO
  - MAs can consult with their Board Buddies on the proposed restructure at any time
  - There is a webinar planned for Monday 27 April 2015, at 7pm for any individuals with questions about the proposed restructure
- Legal Advice
  - A Constitutional sub-group has been established to prepare draft amendments to the PACFA Constitution based on the structure Council wishes to take forward
  - Legal advice will be sought on the proposed structure and the required constitutional amendments

# Next steps

- Decision
  - If Council wishes to progress the restructure to the next stage, the new restructure will be formally proposed at the AGM in October
- Implementation - If the restructure goes ahead
  - A transition plan will be prepared by the CEO and Operations Manager for the Office to operationalise the new structure
  - MAs planning to become part of PACFA can determine their own timeline for implementation

# Thank you

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