



## Mind Advisory Group

The Advisory Group is working on a number of changes which will need to be made to both the Disciplinary Process and the Incapacity Procedure. Most of these changes will be presented to the General Assembly in 2012. There is, however, one matter which has urgency, and it would be most helpful if this could be dealt with by the Mission Council acting on behalf of the General Assembly.

### **Age limit for members of the Assembly Commission Panel (Disciplinary Process) and the Standing Panel (Incapacity Procedure)**

At present there is an age limit of 70 for membership of these Panels; copied below are the relevant paragraphs from The Manual.

#### **Disciplinary Process (Section O) Part II**

*A.6 A.6.1 Subject to the age limit imposed by Paragraph A.6.4, appointment to the Commission Panel shall be by Resolution of the General Assembly on the advice of the Nominations Committee (or such other committee as may in the future perform the functions of the Nominations Committee), who shall in considering persons for appointment take into account (i) the need for balance and for a variety of skills and specialisations, particularly in the following areas – experience in ministerial oversight, theology and doctrine, law, counselling, psychology, mental health, experience in conduct of meetings and tribunals, and (ii) the advantages of including on the Commission Panel persons from a variety of ethnic minority backgrounds.*

*A.6.2 Subject to the age limit imposed by Paragraph A.6.4, members of the Commission Panel shall be appointed for such term not exceeding five (5) years as the General Assembly shall in each case think fit with power for the General Assembly to determine any such appointment during its term or to renew any such appointment for successive terms of five (5) years each, but any person who reaches the end of the term of his/her appointment on the Commission Panel whilst serving as a member of an Assembly Commission in a case in progress may continue so to serve until the conclusion of that case.*

*A.6.4 When any member of the Commission Panel reaches the age of seventy, s/he must forthwith resign from the Commission Panel and shall no longer be eligible to serve on any new Assembly Commission or Special Appeals Body, but any person who reaches his/her seventieth birthday whilst serving on an Assembly Commission or Special Appeals Body in a case in progress may continue so to serve until the conclusion of that case.*

## **Incapacity Procedure (Section P) Part II**

*C.2 Subject to the age limit imposed by Paragraph C.3, members of the Standing Panel shall be appointed for a term not exceeding five years as the General Assembly shall in each case think fit with power to the General Assembly to determine any such appointment during its term or to renew any such appointment for successive terms not exceeding five years each.*

*C.3 When any member of the Standing Panel reaches the age of seventy, s/he must forthwith resign from the Standing Panel and shall no longer be eligible to serve on any new Review Commission, but any person who reaches his/her seventieth birthday whilst serving on a Review Commission in a case in progress may continue so to serve until the conclusion of that case.*

The MIND Advisory Group, having consulted the Synod Clerks and the Secretary of the Nominations Committee, proposes that this age limit be removed. Clearly we need younger people to be involved in this important, but often difficult, task but the pool of potential candidates is not large and it would be helpful in achieving a full Panel if the age limit were removed as there is evidence that in some Synods it has been difficult to find people who could serve for a reasonable period before reaching the age of 70. It will of course be right to consider each person individually. In some cases, it might well be appropriate for a person to withdraw from this work before the age of seventy. On the other hand, some are perfectly capable of continuing for some time beyond that point. In practice, we would not expect anyone who is over the age of seventy to be appointed for the first time.

It should be noted that there is no age limit for appointment to Synod Mandated Groups who undertake the demanding work of enquiring into allegations and, if necessary, presenting a case to an Assembly Commission.

The Group proposes the following resolution which would effect the changes to Sections O and P which are required to remove the age limit.

## **Resolution**

**Mission Council, acting on behalf of the General Assembly, agrees to make the following changes to the Disciplinary Process and the Incapacity Procedure:**

### **Disciplinary Process (Section O, Part II)**

**Paragraph A.6.1 Delete the words: "Subject to the age limit imposed by Paragraph A.6.4," and begin the following word "appointment" with a capital letter.**

**Paragraph A.6.2 Delete the words: "Subject to the age limit imposed by Paragraph A.6.4," and begin the following word "members" with a capital letter.**

**Paragraph A.6.4 Delete.**

### **Incapacity Procedure (Section P, Part II)**

**Paragraph C.2 Delete the words: "Subject to the age limit imposed by Paragraph C.3," and begin the following word "members" with a capital letter.**

**Paragraph C.3 Delete.**