

ENDOCRINE WORKING GROUP

Terms of Reference

The WADA Endocrine Working Group (Endocrine WG) is a specific Working Group created by WADA Management.

These Terms of Reference (ToR) are approved by the WADA Director General, following consultation with the responsible Director in charge of the Group and the Chair of the WADA Health, Medical and Research Committee (HMRC).

Purpose

To be responsible for providing expert advice, recommendations and guidance to WADA Management with regards to methods for the detection of prohibited substances modulating endocrine pathways not directly linked to steroid doping or hematopoiesis, with a focus on GH (Growth Hormone)-related pathways including, for example, GH, its fragments and releasing factors, insulin-like growth factor-1 (IGF-1) and its analogues.

At the time of drafting the ToR, there was no defined end date¹ to the mandate of the WG.

Objectives/Key Activities

- 1) To oversee the use and further development of the Isoforms Test and GH Biomarkers Test.
- 2) To assist WADA in the development and application of the Endocrine Module of the Athlete Biological Passport (ABP), including updating the ABP Operating Guidelines and related International Standards, Technical Documents and other Guidelines.
- 3) To examine the performance of existing biomarkers and assist in the identification and understanding of potential sources of variance and confounding factors in order to provide recommendations for the improved effectiveness and efficiency of the endocrine module.
- 4) Provide guidance for research for the development of the endocrine module of the ABP, in particular through the identification, validation and implementation of new biomarkers (e.g. -omics) and methods for their detection.
- 5) To monitor and examine trends in the use of methods for the detection of prohibited substances by Anti-Doping Organizations (including, but not limited to, improving target testing, additional analyses and establishing analytical and non-analytical anti-doping rule violations) and to identify potential threats/risks to the ABP.
- 6) To assist WADA in the event of a review and/or appeal of cases, upon request.

¹ Extract from Overview of WADA Working Groups: “Although WGs are not considered permanent, they are not exclusively short term. It may be anticipated that some need to run over a number of years. In these cases, they are to be reviewed at least every three years to ensure that their purpose remains relevant and necessary. A decision may be taken to adjourn their work and reactivate it when the need arises. In such circumstances, the mandate and new timelines are to be redefined before resuming their work.”

- 7) Monitor existing and future trends in the Endocrine WG's fields of expertise having the potential to impact the anti-doping system and propose new ideas to WADA for consideration.

Reporting Structure

The Endocrine WG reports to WADA's Science and Medicine Management team and provides an annual report to the WADA HMRC.

Membership/Composition

The composition of the Endocrine WG shall not exceed a maximum of 8-10 members however an exception may be applied if deemed necessary.

The WADA Director General, following consultation with the responsible WADA Management team member in charge of Endocrine WG and the Chair of the WADA HMRC will appoint members to the Endocrine WG.

Members are selected on the basis of their relevant background and experience (e.g. expertise in GH doping, metabolism, clinical endocrinology, the ABP, and/or laboratory analysis, as they relate to GH doping).

Member terms² are for the duration of the mandate of the WG, however shall not exceed three years. The purpose of the WG and its membership are to be reviewed at least every three years. Members may be considered for reappointment to continue with the WG if their expertise remains current and applicable.

The membership of the Endocrine WG is published on the WADA website.

If required, additional experts may be called upon on an ad-hoc basis for their contributions.

Chair/Rapporteur

The Endocrine WG Chair is selected based on his/her proven record and expertise in GH doping, metabolism, clinical endocrinology, the ABP, and/or laboratory analysis, as they relate to GH doping.

He/she shall act as the official reporter who is responsible for ensuring appropriate coordination with WADA Management, delivering the annual report to the Chair of the WADA HMRC and for providing accurate and timely information on all relevant issues.

WADA Liaison

The WADA Science and Medicine Department, and in particular the Associate Director, ABP, will serve as the primary liaison between WADA and the Endocrine WG.

² Should the member come from a WADA-accredited laboratory whose accreditation is revoked during their term, the member's term on the Endocrine WG will cease immediately. If the Laboratory is suspended or under an Analytical Testing Restriction, subject to WADA's discretion, the member may continue on the Endocrine WG.

The Associate Director, ABP will be an observer to the Endocrine WG in the sense that they will contribute to and bring expertise to support the work of the Endocrine WG but will not have a voting position. Additional WADA Science and Medicine Department staff may also participate in Endocrine WG meetings as WADA experts on particular subject matters and to provide general support to the group where required.

Meetings and Working Norms

The Endocrine WG will generally meet once a year in person for a two-day meeting, or virtually via video or teleconference (as determined by WADA) as many times as is necessary to complete its mandate.

The Endocrine WG normally operates on the basis of consensus and maintains as informal a manner as is possible or appropriate for the conduct of business. Consensus will be sought whenever possible. In the event of divergence of opinion or disagreement concerning recommendations, the absolute majority (determined by vote by hand) will rule. In the event of a tie, the Chair has the casting vote. There is presently no formal practice concerning a quorum. The Chair has the responsibility to determine if a quorum is present. Meeting notes will record any dissenting opinion on request.

The Chair may limit discussion of resurfacing issues by referring to previous recommendations or conclusions of previous discussions.

Meeting notes of the Endocrine WG meetings, reports and correspondence relative to the group's work shall be retained at the WADA Headquarters.

Code of Ethics, Conflict of Interest, Confidentiality and Media

Upon their appointment and again annually, all Endocrine WG members are required to sign a document, pursuant to which they undertake (i) to comply with the Code of Ethics adopted by the WADA Foundation Board (as amended from time to time); (ii) to comply with the Conflict of Interest policy adopted by the Foundation Board (as amended from time to time); (iii) to keep all matters related to WADA confidential; and (iv) to comply with the WADA Media Relations Policy issued by the Agency (as amended from time to time).

A) Code of Ethics

The purpose of the WADA Code of Ethics is to establish clear ethical standards over the activities of WADA Officials (as defined in Section 2 of the Code of Ethics) to allow WADA to achieve its mission and protect its core values. WADA and all its Officials undertake to foster a culture of ethics, loyalty, and integrity within their respective areas of competence.

B) Conflict of Interest

Endocrine WG members will be bound by the WADA Conflict of Interest policy. They will be required to annually complete and sign a Statement of Absence of Conflict of Interest in accordance with the policy, and to update such statement if and as necessary during the year.

C) Confidentiality

All Endocrine WG members are required to sign a Confidentiality Declaration upon appointment and again annually. This ensures all members reflect on the confidential nature of their WADA work and confirm their adherence to such confidentiality rules.

D) Communications and Media

All Endocrine WG members must read and comply with WADA's Media Relations policy. If a member should receive a request for an interview in relation to their role in WADA or WADA's work in the fight against doping in sport, they should first consult with the WADA Head of Media Relations or (if absent), with the WADA Communications Director.

Budget and Financial Support

WADA shall provide the necessary administrative and operational resources for meetings. WADA will cover certain expenses and compensate members for meetings in accordance with its applicable indemnity policy.

It is acknowledged that some experts go above and beyond, including providing extensive advice throughout the year, outside of annual meetings. WADA offers a further indemnity to experts for such work carried out. The specific indemnity details are outlined in the "Overview of WADA Working Groups" document provided to Members each year.

Effective Date

The mandate of the WADA Endocrine WG formally commenced on 1 January 2022. It should be noted that the WG evolved from the previous WADA Growth Hormone WG, which originated in April 2004 but is presently inactive. Administrative updates were made in January 2023 and January 2024.

These ToR are published on the WADA website.