



# AGS Special Interest Groups Handbook

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. AGS Special Interest Groups
  - a. What are AGS special interest groups (SIGS)?
  - b. How can someone join a SIG?
  - c. Steps to establish a SIG
  - d. SIG chair responsibilities
  - e. AGS support of SIGS
  - f. SIG meeting planning & virtual meeting schedule
  - g. SIG annual reporting responsibilities
  - h. Dissolution of SIGs

## AGS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

### What are AGS Special Interest Groups (SIGS)?

AGS Special Interest Groups (SIGS) are grass-roots, member-led communities focused on specific areas and topics of interest regarding care for all of us as we age. They provide a forum for members to network, discuss common concerns, share successes, and identify potential collaborations. SIG participation is open to both AGS members and non-members; however, online communities are exclusive to AGS members.

[Click here for a list of AGS SIGs](#)

### How can someone join an existing AGS SIG?

There are multiple ways that one can join an AGS SIG. You do not need to be an AGS member to join an AGS SIG, but SIG online communities are exclusive to AGS members.

1. Contact the SIG Chair with a request to join. The names and contact details of each Chair can [be found here](#).
2. AGS members can join a SIG through MyAGSONline. Members can join a SIG via its [online community](#).
3. Attend a SIG meeting held in conjunction with the AGS Annual Meeting.

### Establishing a SIG

If after reviewing [the AGS current SIG list here](#), you believe that there is a topic or issue that is not currently being addressed, the application steps for establishing a new SIG are below. We encourage members to reach out to chairs of existing SIGs that are focused on a similar topic or issue to discuss whether that SIG is addressing your topic or would consider incorporating it into SIG activities. One of

the criteria used for reviewing and approving applications to establish a SIG is that the proposed SIG does not have significant overlap with the work of an existing SIG.

Applications for establishing a new SIG are accepted on a rolling basis and should be submitted to Ashley Flaherty at [amorris@americangeriatrics.org](mailto:amorris@americangeriatrics.org).

**Step 1:** Contact Ashley Flaherty at [amorris@americangeriatrics.org](mailto:amorris@americangeriatrics.org) with your intent to propose a new AGS SIG. Applicants must provide:

- Proposed SIG name
- Chair or Co-chairs (Chair or Co-chairs must be AGS members)
- Mission & Priorities
- An explanation of why this SIG is needed that is inclusive of a summary of any discussion you had with Chairs of existing SIGs that focus on similar topics or areas.

**Step 2:** Applications will be reviewed and approved by the AGS. The anticipated turn-around time for this review is 4-6 weeks. The AGS team will reach out with any questions or requests for clarification. In the past, this outreach has been centered around whether there is an existing SIG with similar interests where AGS might facilitate collaboration.

**Step 3:** AGS staff will notify the Chair(s) of a proposed new SIG as to whether they have been approved.

## SIG Chair Responsibilities

- SIG Chairs must be an AGS Member
- Promote connections and discussions in the online community
- Plan and hold at least one virtual meeting annually
  - SIGs that have been active for at least one year can hold a meeting during the AGS annual meeting in the Spring of each year (either virtual or in person, depending on the meeting venue that year).
  - SIGs that have been active for less than one year can hold a virtual meeting in February or March (upon request by SIG Chair).
  - SIGs can hold one meeting in the Fall each year (upon request by SIG chair).
- Submit the Annual Summary Report with objectives & membership rosters (inclusive of email addresses) by May 31<sup>st</sup>.
  - Each SIG must maintain at least 15 active members per year.
- Plan for chair succession and onboard new chairs (chairs and co-chairs must be AGS members).
  - AGS does not require term limits for SIG Chairs or a specific process for changes in leadership. We encourage Chairs to plan for succession and to provide leadership opportunities for SIG members. Our experience is that the optimal term for a Chair is three years during which they would mentor the next Chair. For Co-Chairs, rotations should be staggered.
- Notify AGS of any changes to the chair/co-chairs as these occur, along with other roster updates

## AGS Support for SIGS

AGS provides the following resources and support for SIGS:

- One virtual meeting in the Fall each year ([upon request by SIG chair](#)) using AGS zoom license & providing staff support to set up registration for the meeting and start the meeting (staff will turn over hosting duties to the Chair or his/her Vice Chair).
  - To create a safe space for member discussion, we do not permit recordings of SIG or Section meetings.
- **For those SIGS that have been active for one year**, an in-person or virtual meeting space during the AGS Annual Scientific Meeting
- **For those SIGS that have been active for less than one year**, AGS staff will facilitate a virtual meeting in February or March upon receiving a request from the Chair.
- Online community support & engagement best practices
- Promotion of meetings in AGS events calendar, online communities & Week in Review email
- Maintenance of SIG website listing (name, mission, chairs)
- Maintenance of membership roster (informed by annual progress reports submitted and updates provided by the chair)

## SIG Meetings

**Meeting during the AGS Annual Scientific Meeting:** SIGs that are active for at least one year are given the opportunity to meet in-person or virtually during the AGS Annual Scientific meeting. Chairs are assigned a meeting space and time for their SIG meeting by AGS staff and chairs are responsible for hosting and planning meeting content.

**Fall Virtual Meetings:** SIGS that have been active for more than one year can hold one meeting in the Fall each year hosted by the AGS zoom license (upon request by SIG chair). Requests should be submitted to [amorris@americangeriatrics.org](mailto:amorris@americangeriatrics.org). Staff will set up registration for the meeting and start the meeting, turning hosting duties over to the chair and/or vice chair. To provide a safe space for member discussion, we do not permit recordings of SIG meetings. Chairs may request one of the days/times from the virtual meeting schedule below:

### **Fall Virtual Meeting Schedule:**

Months: October - November

Days: Monday- Thursday

Timeslots: 12:30-1:30pm ET, 2-3pm ET, 4-5pm ET

**Q1 Virtual Meeting:** For those SIGS that have been active for less than one year, AGS staff will facilitate a virtual meeting in February or March upon receiving a request from the Chair. Requests should be submitted to [amorris@americangeriatrics.org](mailto:amorris@americangeriatrics.org). Meetings will be hosted via the AGS zoom license. Staff will set up registration for the meeting and start the meeting, turning hosting duties over to the chair and/or vice chair. To provide a safe space for members, we do not permit recordings of SIG meetings. Chairs may request one of the days/times from the virtual meeting schedule below:

### Q1 Virtual Meeting Schedule:

Months: February - March

Days: Monday- Thursday

Timeslots: 12:30-1:30pm ET, 2-3pm ET, 4-5pm ET

## **Annual Reporting Requirements**

SIGS are required to submit an annual summary report to [amorris@americangeriatrics.org](mailto:amorris@americangeriatrics.org) by May 31<sup>st</sup> every year. Failure to submit a report for two consecutive years will mean that the SIG will be dissolved unless there are extenuating circumstances.

The Report must include the following:

- Chair Information including an update if there has been a change in the Chair or Co-Chair
- Meeting Attendance Roster inclusive of email addresses
- Summary of any SIG meetings held since the last annual report
- SIG objectives for upcoming year
- Plans for SIG to meet during the upcoming year

## **Dissolution of SIG**

SIGS may also be dissolved by the SIG membership upon a vote at their business meeting or may be dissolved by the Board of Directors for cause or if the SIG fails to comply with AGS policies. Additionally, SIGs will be automatically dissolved if membership falls below 15 members for two consecutive years; if the SIG does not convene a meeting at two consecutive AGS Annual Meetings; or if the SIG fails to submit an annual report for two consecutive years.