**BSSVD and Patient Support Groups: A Guide**

The BSSVD values the work of the patient support groups. The BSSVD currently financially supports two patient groups (UKLP and the Vulval Pain Society). An annual grant is paid yearly to the two patient groups at the BSSVD council’s discretion and only if a report is provided for the previous AGM. Each affiliated group may send one representative of their choosing to one annual meeting of the society.

**One representative from each group is entitled to;**

* Free registration at the annual conference
* Free accommodation taking account of any disability (to be agreed with treasurer). A budget of £100 per night is the suggested maximum. Normally two nights would be paid for a two night conference and one night for a one day conference (if necessary). If there are any exceptional reasons, for example the conference being more than 3 hours travel from home, a further nights accommodation may be considered at the discretion of the treasurer.
* Travel expenses (2nd class travel or cheapest fare) for annual conference.

**Patient support group responsibilities**

* To submit receipts for expenses incurred at meetings.
* To find their own accommodation at conferences unless organised as part of the conference.
* To liaise with the patient representatives on council and raise concerns with them.
* To support the work of the BSSVD.
* To provide an annual written report for the AGM each year. Written reports to be sent to the secretary two weeks before the meeting. Short written reports will typically include 2-3 paragraphs including information on how the grant was used but detailed accounts are not necessary. A verbal report may also be given at the AGM.

**BSSVD responsibilities**

* To pay discretionary grant in January.
* To make the grant payable to the patient group not to an individual (treasurer to check the correct payee).
* Treasurer to reimburse any expenses promptly, usually at the Annual Meeting.
* Support and promote the work of the patient groups.
* Patient representatives on council will keep the support groups informed of any matters that may affect them.

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