

# **Annual Report 2010**

**Issued by the CMA Secretariat**



## **Brief Introduction**

The Commonwealth Medical Association was established in 1969. The role of the Association is to promote, assist, and strengthen the capacities of the member national medical associations of countries within the Commonwealth and provide leadership and services for the benefit of the health and welfare of the people within the Commonwealth.

The CMA is an independent civil society organisation which is governed by the Council of the Association. The Association is administered by the Executive guided by the decisions of the Council. It is committed to an open and transparent relationship with its stakeholders. In carrying out its constitutional mandate the Executive works closely with a diverse group of people and organizations including other health professionals and social services providers, private and voluntary providers at national and international levels. The Commonwealth Secretariat and its funding agency, the Commonwealth Foundation remain the key partners in the execution of most of the programmes of the association.

This annual report summarises the work of the Executive and key activities of the CMA from January 2010 – December 2010.

## **Office and Location**

The CMA office is located in the International Department of the British Medical Association House with the following contact details:

Commonwealth Medical Association  
International Department  
BMA House  
Tavistock square  
London WC 1H 9JP  
Telephone: +44 207 383 6069  
Fax: + 44 207 383 6644  
Email: [cmaliason@cma.bma.org.uk](mailto:cmaliason@cma.bma.org.uk)

Ms. Janet Adrah is the Liaison Officer at the secretariat.

## **Meetings**

### **Official Working Visit**

The President and Secretary were in the UK on a two day working visit from 19<sup>th</sup> -20<sup>th</sup> May 2010. They held separate meetings with the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Commonwealth Foundation as well as the Chairman of the British Medical Association.

### ***Meeting at the BMA House***

The Executive team together with the Liaison Officer met with the Chairman of Council of the BMA, Dr. Hamish Meldrum, and the Head of the International Department Richard Beresford. The Executives expressed their gratitude to the BMA for the support that the CMA continues to enjoy from the BMA. The meeting acknowledged the need to enhance CMA and doctors representation at consultations and engagements with the commonwealth offices based in the U.K and called on the BMA to file for a position during elections at the 22<sup>nd</sup> Triennial Conference in Malta. The team also requested for assistance towards improving the CMA website, an enclosed office, and directional signs at the BMA house to direct visitors to the location of the CMA desk. The meeting also discussed collaborations with the British Medical Journal (BMJ) towards making the publications of the BMJ accessible to practitioners in many more commonwealth countries.

### ***Meeting at the Commonwealth Foundation***

The team met with Dr. Mark Collins, Director of the Commonwealth foundation who also pledged the Foundation's support for CMA's activities and his readiness to assist the CMA in offering quality leadership towards improved and better healthcare services to the people of the Commonwealth.

The CMA team also held a meeting with Ms. Shabinah Ossman (Grants Administrator) and Ms. Rose Longhurt, then newly appointed officer for Grants and Capacity Building for the Commonwealth Associations (CAs). Ms. Longhurt indicated that her role involved strengthening organizations in areas of training, networking, lobbying and fund-raising. The interactive meeting identified areas of collaborations and assistance between the Grants departments of the Foundation and the CMA.

### ***Meeting at the Commonwealth Secretariat.***

The President, Secretary and the Liaison Officer also paid a courtesy call on Dr. Indrajit Coomaraswamy, the interim Director for the Social Transformation Programmes Division (STPD ) of the Commonwealth Secretariat who was in the first week of his assumption of post. The meeting highlighted the aims and objectives of the CMA and considered areas of collaborations between the Commonwealth Secretariat and the CMA. The leadership appealed for support towards the 22<sup>nd</sup> triennial conference in Malta later in the year.

### **CHPA pre-CHMM inaugural debate**

The President and Secretary of CMA participated in a special debate organized by the Commonwealth Health Professional Alliance (CHPA) as a prelude to the CHMM in May

. The debate entitled “The health MDGs by 2015: possible or impossible for Commonwealth countries”. The ‘possible’ team was led by Dr Mark Collins, Director of the Commonwealth Foundation and included the President of the CMA and President of the Malaysian Nurses Association. Dr Danny Sriskandarajah, Director of the Royal Commonwealth Society led the ‘impossible’ team which included President of the Commonwealth Association for Paediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition; the Director of Nursing and Health Services, Royal College of Nursing United Kingdom. It was a very interesting event as the participants engaged in very lively debate on the MDGs. In the ensuing analyses of the factors and issues of the challenges, opportunities and successes of the MDGs the final vote was split equally among the ‘possible’ and ‘impossible’ teams.

### **The Commonwealth Health Ministers’ meeting 2010**

The President and Secretary subsequently attended the Commonwealth Health Ministers’ Meeting (CHMM) held in Geneva on 16th May under the theme “Commonwealth and the health MDGs by 2015” The CMA extends its appreciation to National Medical Associations who participated in the survey on the MDGs which formed the basis of a CHPA paper which was published in the 2010 Commonwealth Health Ministers’ Book. The CMA also took part in the Commonwealth Advisory Committee on Health ,CACH meeting which proposed the agenda for the 2011 CHMM to be on *‘Non Communicable Diseases’*

### **BMA Annual Representative Meeting in Brighton**

The Secretary, Dr Oheneba Owusu-Danso honoured the invitation of the British Medical Association to its Annual Representative Meeting held in Brighton, United Kingdom, from 27<sup>th</sup> June to 1st July 2010. He reported a very hospitable welcome at the meeting including some very positive networking. One of such interaction led to the sponsorship involvement of the BMJ in the triennial conference held in Malta. Dr Michael Chamberlain leading the BMJ team also made a presentation on the possible publication of the BMJ International edition to enhance access to its publications by doctors in the developing Commonwealth.

### **22<sup>nd</sup> Triennial Meeting, Malta**

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Triennial Conference of the Commonwealth Medical Association (CMA) was held in Tal Qroqq, Malta from 11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> November 2010 under the theme “*Management of Infectious Diseases - Challenges and Prospects*”. The conference was organised in conjunction with and hosted by the Medical Association of Malta (MAM) and was supported by the Commonwealth Foundation, Commonwealth Secretariat, the European Social Fund and MAM. A very comprehensive list of important topics were dealt with during the scientific sessions. These included:

- HIV/AIDS Stigma and Discrimination in healthcare setting
- HIV/AIDS chronic complications
- The challenge of infectious diseases: a historical perspective
- Hepatitis C: current standards of care
- Infections in Intensive Care Unit
- Where art thou; Influenza?
- A Clinical Pharmacist in Infectious Diseases
- Essentials of Antibiotic Stewardship Eugaoras
- The Challenge of Infectious Diseases: the Future
- HIV in pregnancy
- HIV in pregnancy/Perinatal HIV prevention
- HIV and viral Hepatitis: challenging interactions
- Challenges in Prosthetic Joint Infections
- Malaria: Counting it out 1
- Malaria: Counting it out 2
- Immunization: the Paradigm of Prevention?

The topics were very well delivered and the participants took keen interest in the discussion segments. Attendance at the conference, especially the international participation was the largest since 1998. The total attendance was 144 including 32 international delegates. The decision of the Executive to channel all conference funding in 2010 towards the Malta conference paid off very well. A Commonwealth Foundation grant sponsored 7 NMA representatives while the Commonwealth Secretariat also supported the participation of 6 NMA delegates and some secretariat expenditure. The Medical Association of Malta hosted a very successful conference and provided huge logistical support in collaboration with the European Social Fund. The CMA is also grateful to the MAM for sponsoring the participation of some Executive members. A comprehensive report on the conference will be published shortly.

### **CMA Projects and Business Plan for 2011-2013**

A major issue that was considered on the agenda of the Council meeting at the 22<sup>nd</sup> triennial conference was a review of CMA projects document and adoption for the triennium 2011-2013.

Health issues in the Commonwealth that will be focused on include; Infant and Maternal Mortality, Patient safety, Caring for Carers, e-Health, Pre-hospital Trauma and Emergency Care, Lifestyle and Non-communicable diseases and Commonwealth International Exchange Programme for health experts. The reviewed plan has been circulated to all relevant stakeholders and is also available upon request from the secretariat.

The CMA will provide online learning, online exchange of expertise, regional workshops and professional exchanges to enhance sharing of knowledge and information.

To achieve a major objective of reaching out to the NMAs much more easily and broadly the association's official website will be developed into an enhanced and modern site while the *CommonHEALTH* newsletter will be increased in frequency and quality.

### **Election of Officers for 2010-2013**

As part of the Council meeting at the triennial conference, elections were held and the following officers were elected for the subsequent triennium 2010-2013. The Executive was thus constituted as follows;

1. Dr. Gordon Carunna-Dingli, Medical Association of Malta, President
2. Dr. Sundara Arulraj, India Medical Association, Immediate Past President
3. Dr. Oheneba Owusu-Danso, Ghana Medical Association, Secretary
4. Dr. Margaret Munghera, Uganda Medical Association, Treasurer
5. Dr. Mphata Norman Mabasa South African Medical Association, Vice-President for Eastern, Central and Southern Africa region
6. Dr. Kwabena Opoku-Adusei, Ghana Medical Association, Vice-President , West Africa region
7. Dr. Solaiman Juman , Trinidad and Tobago Medical Association, Vice President Canadian/Caribbean region.
8. Prof. Vivienne Nathanson, British Medical Association, Vice-President for European region
9. Dr. Lalitha Neelangani Mendis, Sri Lanka Medical Association, Vice-President for Central Asia region.
10. Dr. David Quek Kwang Leng , Malaysia Medical Association, Vice-President for South East Asia/Australia region

### **Companies House Registration**

The CMA has updated its records with the Company's house and filed the appropriate Annual Returns and audited accounts.

### **Subscription Fees**

The financial situation of the CMA is still a challenge as the current subscription rates for NMAs are inadequate. Council still maintains its position that NMAs in arrears of dues should make payments. It is however encouraging that since the 22<sup>nd</sup> triennial conference the response to payment of subscriptions has began to improve. All NMAs are encouraged to pay up their annual subscription in accordance with the subscription demand notices issued.

### **CMA Auditing**

The Executive Council approved the nomination of Mr. Peter Westley a Certified Chartered Accountant as the Auditor for the CMA. His engagement has been capped for a period of five (5) years. Mr. Westley who audits for a sister Professional Association

was chosen over the incumbent auditor as his fee was reasonable for the modest account holding and financial activities of the CMA.

### **CommonHealth Newsletter**

The Newsletter is meant to disseminate information on the activities of the CMA and the component NMAs to member associations in particular and the global society. By courtesy of Prof. Wole Atoyebi, (immediate Past Vice President for West Africa) the CMA published the second edition of the CommonHealth newsletter. Council approved his nomination as the Editor for the news letter.

All NMAs are encouraged to file relevant news and notices on their activities for publication to increase publicity and enhance information sharing. National Medical Associations are advised to contact the CMA secretariat for further information.

### **Website**

The CMA website is still under development to bring it to the acceptable standard. Prof. Atoyebi doubles up as the webmaster. The address is [www.commonwealthmedics.org](http://www.commonwealthmedics.org)

### **23<sup>rd</sup> Triennial Meeting**

Following the inconclusive discussion on the host for the 23<sup>rd</sup> triennial conference the Executive was mandated to open up fresh bids for the selection of the host NMA.

### **Conclusion**

The CMA has made remarkable improvement in its strategic planning, as well as civil society engagements over the period under review. National Medical Associations receiving this report are welcomed to send comments and also make proposals to the Executive where necessary.