

EXECUTIVE REPORT

*Bryce Durafour, Québec Regional Representative and Executive Vice-President
2014 Spring General Meeting
April 25-26, 2014, Ottawa, Ontario*



I. DESCRIPTION OF POSITION

The regional representatives serve as a voice for their region on the CFMS executive committee. The Québec representative is in a unique position in that only one of the four medical schools in Québec, namely McGill, is an institutional member of the CFMS; all four schools are members of the Fédération médicale étudiante du Québec (FMEQ). As such, the role of the Québec representative is both to represent McGill students at the CFMS, and to act as chief liaison between the CFMS and the FMEQ.

II. ACTIVITIES

Meetings attended:

Date	Meeting	Location
Sept. 20-22, 2013	CFMS Annual General Meeting	Vancouver, BC
Oct. 8, 2013	Teleconference with CFMS President	Teleconference
Oct. 18-20, 2013	CFMS Executive Meeting	Ottawa, ON
Nov. 4, 2013	CFMS RBC Sponsorship Teleconference	Teleconference
Nov. 17, 2013	FMEQ Meeting	Montreal, QC
Nov. 30, 2013	CFMS Website Teleconference	Teleconference
Nov. 30, 2013	CFMS Executive Teleconference	Teleconference
Jan. 9, 2014	CFMS/FMEQ Wellness Teleconference	Teleconference
Jan. 10-12, 2014	CFMS Executive Meeting	Toronto, ON
Jan. 16, 2014	CFMS Executive Teleconference	Teleconference
Jan. 26, 2014	FMEQ Meeting	Sherbrooke, QC
Feb. 2-3, 2014	CFMS Lobby Day	Ottawa, ON
Feb. 4, 2014	CFMS/FMEQ Wellness Teleconference	Teleconference
Feb. 5, 2014	CFMS Executive Teleconference	Teleconference
Feb. 9, 2014	CFMS Presidents' Roundtable	Teleconference
Feb. 10, 2014	Teleconference with CFMS President	Teleconference
Feb. 21-23, 2014	CAIR Board of Directors Meeting	Ottawa, ON
Mar. 8, 2014	CFMS/FMEQ Wellness Teleconference	Teleconference
Mar. 10, 2014	SGM Travel Award Teleconference	Teleconference
Mar. 18, 2014	CFMS Executive Teleconference	Teleconference
Mar. 23, 2014	CFMS Bylaw Review Teleconference	Teleconference
Apr. 6, 2014	CFMS Presidents' Roundtable	Teleconference
Apr. 7, 2014	CFMS/FMEQ Wellness Teleconference	Teleconference
Apr. 24-27, 2014	CFMS Spring General Meeting	Ottawa, ON

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III. PRIORITIES AND PROJECT AREAS

Liaison with FMEQ

A key responsibility of the Québec regional representative is to act as liaison with the Fédération médicale étudiante du Québec (FMEQ). I was invited to continue to attend FMEQ executive meetings as an observer, and attended meetings in November 2013 and January 2014. By attending these meetings, I was able to update their board on relevant CFMS activities, and to bring information back to the CFMS executive. I helped extend an invitation to the FMEQ to send a delegation to the CFMS Lobby Day in February 2014, a practice that began in 2013. The FMEQ once again accepted our invitation and as a result, we had delegates from each of the 17 medical schools in Canada in attendance, further strengthening our message to the parliamentarians we met. I also have helped organize the collaboration between the CFMS and the FMEQ for our joint Wellness Survey project (see below), and I communicate regularly with FMEQ President Valérie Martel regarding this and other relevant issues.

Liaison with CAIR

Again this year, I acted as liaison with the Canadian Association of Internes and Residents (CAIR) and attended their board of directors meeting in February 2014 as an observer. The relationship between the CFMS and CAIR is an important one as we face many of the same issues, and presenting a united front can be advantageous. For example, one of the key items of discussion at their most recent meeting was surrounding health human resources and the need for governments and programs to more closely coordinate medical school admission numbers with residency positions available. This is one of many areas that is also a priority for the CFMS and for which our organizations can continue to collaborate. Additionally, CAIR completed a large scale membership survey in 2013, and was able to offer advice and support regarding our own CFMS/FMEQ Wellness Survey.

Website Bilingualism Project

One of the major projects I spearheaded over the past year was the bilingualism project, which aims to provide services to our members in both official languages. As one of the most important platforms that the CFMS uses to interact with our membership is our website, our objective was to make our core website content available in both English in French. In 2013, the CFMS formed the Bilingualism Task Force, consisting of medical students from across the country who volunteered to assist with content translation. However, it became evident that with the vast amount of content on the website, it was not feasible to rely solely on student volunteers to carry out the initial translation, and the CFMS executive voted to approve the use of professional translation services. In the fall of 2013, our VP Communications, Mimi Lerner, and I selected the most current and pertinent information from our website in order to submit for professional translation. In early 2014, our IT team consisting of Zachery Hynes and Franco Dattilo began the process of making our website support a dual language platform, and

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translated content was uploaded. Our VP Services, Brandon Maser, also ensured that our discounts and partner services descriptions were available in French. After much work by many of our executive, our new CFMS.org/fr French language website will be ready for official launch at SGM 2014!

Bylaw Review Project

In order to comply with the new Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act, the CFMS is mandated to have compliant bylaws approved by October 2014. As such, our VP Finance, Ben Frid, coordinated a bylaw review project to ensure compliance with the new Act. I worked with Ben to make sure that our existing bylaws were modified to reflect the standards in the Act as well as current practices of the organization. Our bylaws were reviewed by our legal counsel and made available to our membership 30 days in advance of SGM 2014, as mandated by law, so that they may be submitted to the general assembly for ratification.

CFMS/FMEQ Wellness Survey

Another project that I have been involved with over the course of the year is the joint CFMS/FMEQ Wellness Survey, which was selected to receive funding from the Canadian Physician Health Institute (CPHI). The objective of this project is to survey medical students from across the country and determine how factors such as tuition and finances, workload, evaluation, and career prospects impact their wellbeing. Our committee has collected input from wellness representatives from all CFMS and FMEQ member schools, and has reviewed the literature for previously validated questionnaires. Question preparation is underway and should be completed by SGM 2014. I have been tasked at overseeing the research ethics board approval process, as we will be obtaining ethics approval from McGill, a CFMS and FMEQ member school. Our objective is to have the survey prepared for distribution for the fall of 2014, with the results available for presentation at CCME 2015.

CFMS SGM 2014 Travel Awards

Another project which I have continued to coordinate this year is the distribution of travel awards for non-elected CFMS members to attend our general meetings. After much discussion among the executive about how we could continue to improve the travel awards program, it was decided that awards would be split among two pools, with applicants divided based on previous CFMS experience. Previous CFMS experience was defined as having chaired or sat as a member on a CFMS committee, or having previously attended an AGM, SGM, or Lobby Day. The rationale behind this decision was to both recognize the past involvement of CFMS members who may be in a non-funded position, as well as to be able to offer a way to promote involvement in the CFMS to students who were looking to become newly involved. The instructions and guidelines were further clarified for this meeting, in an attempt to make the application process as simple as possible and to streamline the work of the selection committee members. Again for SGM 2014, the travel award application deadline was early, such that the

EXECUTIVE REPORT

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travel award applicants would be notified of decisions prior to the registration deadline. Successful applicants were requested to submit confirmation of booked travel within one week of award notification, as early booking reduces costs for the CFMS and allows us to offer a greater number of travel awards.

IV. FOLLOW UP, VISION, GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THIS POSITION

Once again this year, relations between the CFMS and the FMEQ were excellent, and we were able to continue with the practice of inviting a delegation from the FEMQ to attend our AGM, SGM, and Lobby Day. I continued to attend FMEQ meetings, and our organizations worked closely on projects such as the CFMS/FMEQ Wellness Survey. Both our organizations have benefited from our collaborative approach.

We made enormous progress on preparing our new bilingual CFMS website, set for launch at SGM 2014. Moving forward, we should continue to strive towards offering bilingual services and will need to work to make sure our bilingual website is maintained. Some sections of the site which were undergoing review have not yet been translated, and will need to be once the necessary updates to the English language pages are completed. Our bylaws, once ratified by our membership, will also need to be translated. Finally, we will need to ensure that new content is translated in a timely manner for posting to the French language site. I recommend that the Bilingualism task force be renewed starting in the fall of 2014, as relying on volunteers to translate new content is a feasible task that would significantly reduce costs for the CFMS.

Another future goal of my portfolio is to continue to improve the ability of medical students from non-CFMS member schools in Québec to join the CFMS as individual members. Currently, 14 of Canada's 17 medical schools are institutional members of the CFMS, meaning that all students at those schools are automatically members of the CFMS. The 3 remaining schools, Université de Montréal, Université Laval, and Université de Sherbrooke, are members of the FMEQ. The 4th medical school in Québec, McGill University, is an institutional member of both the CFMS and the FMEQ. Currently, medical students from Université de Montréal, Laval, and Sherbrooke can join the CFMS as individual members, but to do so they must write a letter and mail a cheque to pay their membership dues. We are in the process of establishing a PayPal account in order to facilitate the membership application process for students from non-member schools. With our French language website, including member discounts and services, launching shortly, I expect that we may have increased interest in individual membership, and should work to make the membership application as easy as possible. I believe that by having the ability to be members of both the CFMS and the FMEQ, Québec medical students will be best represented by both organizations, and that our two organizations will continue to work closely together in the years to come.

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V. SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The travel awards portfolio is one of the most challenging to manage, as it is always difficult to select from so many high level applicants, and disappointing to be unable to fund every applicant. The current practice is such that the 300 word application statements are blinded and distributed to three individual executive committee members for review and ranking. Although this process is fair and transparent, it is time consuming and difficult to rank applicants solely on the basis of the 300 word submission. Selecting the top applicants continues to be a challenge, and the executive in future years might again consider moving to a lottery based system. However, the current system requires applicants to demonstrate that they are serious in their desire to attend a CFMS general meeting, and to explain the potential benefit of their attendance for them, their school, and the CFMS. Moving to a lottery based system may be less likely to foster serious long-term involvement in the CFMS as a result of meeting attendance.

The pilot project of dividing applicants into pools based on previous CFMS experience appeared to be successful and I recommend that this practice be continued. As a result, we will best be able to balance our recognition of dedicated members while also promoting new involvement. One modification that has been proposed is that travel award winners will be required to submit their travel award expense claims within three months of the meeting. This will eliminate claims being submitted many months later, as if this occurs in the following fiscal year, it can be difficult for accounting and budgeting purposes. Furthermore, this system will allow us to have finalized rather than estimated budget costs for AGM travel awards, allowing us to modify the number of travel awards available for SGM based on the travel award budget for the year. As a result, we will be able to maximize the number of travel awards we can offer for SGM, while respecting the combined budget for AGM and SGM travel awards.