CMA BOARD OF DIRECTORS HIGHLIGHTS
Summary of February 2024 Meeting

The CMA Board of Directors ("the Board") met for three hours on February 21st and a full day on February 24th, 2024 by videoconference to receive updates from the President, President-Elect, Immediate Past President and Chief Executive Officer, provide direction to management on priorities for the coming year, receive an update on engagement activities, review a draft Social Media Policy, and conduct other Board business. Highlights include:

CMA Presidents and Spokesperson Updates

- The Board received updates from Dr. Kathleen Ross, President, as well as Dr. Alika Lafontaine (Immediate Past President), Dr. Joss Reimer (President-Elect) and Dr. Jean-Joseph Condé (French spokesperson).

- Dr. Ross provided an update on various advocacy and engagement activities undertaken to advance health care reform, including the joint CMA / College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) statement calling on governments to act urgently to address Canadians’ concerns, with a focus on primary care, meetings with the Deputy Minister of Health and various Members of Parliament, and connecting with physicians at Doctors of BC, NWTMA, Canadian Association of Emergency Physicians over the last few months. In addition to the foregoing, the CMA also partnered with the Canadian Federation of Independent Business to highlight red tape in medicine and call for solutions, co-hosting an event with the Public Policy Forum to address health misinformation, and continuing to engage with physicians and the public through the Globe and Mail Town Halls on the balance of public and private health care in Canada.

- Drs. Reimer and Lafontaine also spoke to the Board about the work they continue to do to support the President and the CMA in moving the conversation forward on a number of topics related to the CMA’s Priority Strategic Initiatives.

- Dr. Condé updated the Board on initiatives in the Province of Québec, with a focus on the sweeping health-care reform legislation, Bill 15 (adopted December 9, 2023), which centralizes much of the health-care system in Quebec in a new entity, Santé Québec. He also updated the Board on draft regulations recently put forward which would require physicians to, among other things, specify how they add patients to their rosters and to submit their hours of availability with the government. The CMA will be launching webinars relating to this new Act in partnership with the CMPA in March.

Priority Strategic Initiative and Emerging Issue Updates

- Mr. Tim Smith, CEO, CMA and CMA Group of Companies, presented his report to the Board, highlighting his top-of-mind issues.

- The Board spent time prioritizing work for the coming year. After deliberation and discussion, the Board supported the following key areas of focus and deliverables for 2024, including:
  
  - **Public Apology to all Indigenous Peoples**: Continuing to advance the CMA’s commitment to reconciliation through an apology on behalf of the CMA and the profession, a national conversation and an action plan.
– **Integrated Health Human Resources Plan**: Establishing a planning framework in 2024 that will contribute to systems level change in addressing the health care crisis.

– **Public Private Health Care in Canada**: Fulfilling the CMA’s commitment to report on consultations held in 2023/24 and updating its policy accordingly.

– **Improving Physician Wellness by Reducing Administrative Burden**: Implementing the recommendations of the Working Group, funding recipients of the Health Care Unburdened Grant, acting as Secretariat for Canada Health Infoway’s Digital Health Interoperability Task Force (DHITF), identifying a role for the CMA in Artificial Intelligence, and developing plans to address sick notes and federal/national forms.

• Notwithstanding these areas of focus, the Board requested that management continue to move forward the other Priority Strategic Initiatives, as resources are available. In particular, the Board focused on Pan-Canadian licensure (PCL) and the need to continue making efforts in 2024 on the creation and adoption of a national policy framework for PCL implementation, as well as supporting the measurement and evaluation of the Atlantic registry. Several Board members also commented on the need to maintain momentum for the work on net zero health care and climate change.

• **Emerging Issue Updates**: The Board then received a more detailed update on two Emerging Issues:

  – **Public Apology to all Indigenous Peoples**: The CMA will apologize for the CMA’s past actions or inactions at key points in history that have contributed to causing harm to Indigenous Peoples. The CMA has completed its review of the CMA archives, all of its Codes of Ethics, its Policy base, and its social media. The CMAJ will also be completing an independent review of its own publications. To inform this work, the CMA will be initiating a national conversation tour to foster and strengthen relationship with First Nations/Inuit/Métis groups to build trust and allyship and share CMA’s journey with them. The CMA will also be sharing its journey with national, provincial and territorial medical organizations to support and encourage their own journeys. A draft apology statement framework was reviewed by the Board.

  – **Public-Private Consultations**: The objective of the public-private consultations was to support and foster a respectful dialogue within the medical profession and Canadian public to clarify the role, if any, for increasing the private provision of health care in Canada. Based on these consultations, the CMA will now review its policy and provide recommendations to governments, funders and other stakeholders. Over the past year, the CMA has hosted 4 Globe and Mail Town Hall sessions, nine physician dialogues (face-to-face and virtual), 8 dialogues with persons with lived experience (face-to-face and virtual), has surveyed 2,602 physicians and 3,002 members of the public, engaged in public opinion research and has held numerous consultations with various stakeholders. The Board discussed the high-level themes and observations to date and the tensions at play. The CMA will now move forward with finalizing a systematic evidence review of the issues. Next steps include a release of the evidence review and a summary of the consultation results in the Spring of 2024, followed by an updated policy on the issue later in 2024. The Board was pleased with the progress made to date.

• **Profession Engagement Strategy**: Building on the work of the 2021 Profession Engagement Advisory Group (PEAG), the management team presented the CMA Board with an update on its profession engagement work and strategy. The update began with a look-back on the engagement efforts made in 2023 to engage with and on behalf of the medical profession. The 2024 Engagement Plan was presented to the Board for its review and feedback.
Oversight

• **Social Media Policy:** The Board provided feedback on a draft Social Media Policy designed to guide the Board and non-director Committee members when engaging on social media. Management will incorporate the feedback into a revised version for the approval of the Board at its next regular meeting.

• **Governance Committee Report:** The Board received a report from Dr. André Bernard, Chair, Governance Committee.
  
  – **2024 Bylaw Amendment Proposals:** The Board approved the bylaw changes to be presented at AGM 2024 to be held virtually on May 29. (For more information: [Link here](#)) A brief survey was sent to members outlining the concepts in January 2024. Results of the survey were supportive. A pre-AGM session will be organized to review the proposed bylaw changes in advance of the AGM. An ongoing CMA Community engagement platform will also be open to members to discuss the proposals.
  
  – **2025 Bylaw Amendments Proposal:** The Board approved consulting with members on proposed bylaw changes in 2025 to move to a nationally elected President-Elect for which General Council ratification is not required. Consultation on this topic will begin this year with the pre-AGM session and throughout 2024.
  
  – **Operating Rules of Procedure:** The Board approved amendments to the CMA Operating Rules and Procedures to confirm that the Chair of the Nominations Committee has the authority to assess requests from President-Elect applicants for accommodations based on prohibited grounds of discrimination.

• **Additional CMA-appointed professional member to CACMS:** The Board approved a motion supporting an additional CMA-appointed professional member position on the Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS). This addition was requested by the Secretariat of CACMS to address its increased workload and ensure continued excellence in undergraduate medical accreditation.

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**Mission:** Empowering and caring for patients

**Vision:** A vibrant profession and a healthy population

**Guiding Principles:** Equity, diversity, engagement, accountability, transparency, impact