

# COMMONWEALTH NURSES AND MIDWIVES FEDERATION



## ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020





c/- Royal College of Nursing  
20 Cavendish Square  
London W1G 0RN United Kingdom  
+61 438 647 252

Email: [cnf@commonwealthnurses.org](mailto:cnf@commonwealthnurses.org)

Website: <http://www.commonwealthnurses.org>

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Federation (CNMF) was established in 1973 and accredited to the Commonwealth in 2004. The CNMF is registered in the United Kingdom as a private limited company (Company No: 8781428). The CNMF works with its membership: national nursing and midwifery associations from Commonwealth countries, affiliates, associates and individual members, in order to influence health policy, develop nursing networks, improve nursing standards and competence, and strengthen nursing leadership throughout the Commonwealth.

The CNMF maintains close links with Commonwealth bodies and civil society organisations within the Commonwealth 'family' and liaises with international bodies, such as the International Council of Nurses and the International Confederation of Midwives. These links enable the CNMF to plan strategically on issues of concern to nursing and midwifery in a global context. Additionally, the CNMF is affiliated with other international bodies such as the Global Health Workforce Alliance; the White Ribbon Alliance; C3 Collaborating for Health; and Health Information for All; and liaises with regional bodies such as the Caribbean Nurses Organisation; the South Pacific Nurses Forum; the East, Central and Southern African College of Nursing (ECSACON); and the West African College of Nursing (WACN). The CNMF participates actively in the work of Commonwealth bodies: the Commonwealth Foundation, the Commonwealth Secretariat, and the Commonwealth Health Professions and Partners Alliance (CHPA).

The CNMF's work is supported by the provision of office space within the Royal College of Nursing, United Kingdom (RCN UK). The RCN UK also provide administrative and collegiate support and advice. The CNMF Executive Officers and Board are extremely grateful to the RCN UK and appreciative of the excellent support they provide and their encouragement for the work of the CNMF. The strategic directions for the CNMF focus on seven key areas: governance, administration, finance, projects, communication, liaison, and membership. This Annual Report is structured under these headings.

## **2. GOVERNANCE**

The CNMF is governed by an elected Board consisting of a President, Deputy President and an elected Board member from each of the six CNMF Regions (Atlantic; Asia; East, Central and Southern Africa; Europe; the Pacific; and West Africa). The major governance instruments of the CNMF are its Constitution and Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan is supported by an annual work plan which forms the basis for a quarterly report from the Executive Secretary to the CNMF Board.

**Cover photograph:** The Commonwealth Children's Choir which performed at the opening ceremony of the 5<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Conference.

## 2.1 CNMF Board

The CNMF President and Deputy President are elected by all CNMF members. Board Members are elected by members from their region. Elections are conducted according to the CNMF Constitution. The Term of Office is four years.



The CNMF President, Professor Kathleen McCourt from the United Kingdom, and the CNMF Deputy President, Mrs Rosemarie Josey from the Bahamas, who commenced their first four-year terms in 2018.

CNMF Board members are: **Atlantic:** Mrs Bettyann Murray-John (Trinidad and Tobago); **Asia:** Ms Evelyn Kannan (India); **West Africa:** Mr Adeniji Abdrafui Alani (Nigeria); **East, Central and Southern Africa:** Mr Paul Magesa Mashauri (Tanzania); **Pacific:** Ms Annie Butler (Australia); and **Europe:** Mr Dimitris Loizou (Cyprus).



Bettyann Murray-John; Evelyn Kannan; Adeniji Abdrafui Alani; Paul Magesa; Annie Butler; and Dimitris Loizou



Ms Jill Iliffe has been the appointed CNMF Executive Secretary since April 2008. Mr Brian Christopher has been the CNMF Honorary Treasurer since 1 January 2017.

## 2.2 Other Governance Structures

The CNMF Constitution, which is publicly available on the CNMF website, <https://www.commonwealthnurses.org>, is reviewed each two years prior to the CNMF Biennial Meeting of Members. The Constitution was most recently reviewed at the 24<sup>th</sup> CNMF Biennial Meeting of Members in 2020. The CNMF Strategic Plan is also reviewed each two years and submitted to members at the Biennial Meeting, The CNMF Strategic Plan 2020-2022 is also available on the CNMF website. The CNMF Executive Secretary provides a quarterly report to the CNMF Board addressing the seven CNMF strategic areas. Additionally all the requirements of being a registered company with UK Companies House are met as well as taxation obligations to Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs as a company registered in the UK.

24<sup>th</sup> CNMF Biennial Meeting of Members



## 2.3 24<sup>th</sup> CNMF Biennial Meeting of Members

The 24<sup>th</sup> CNMF Biennial Meeting of Members was held in London Thursday 5 March 2020 hosted by the Royal College of Nursing UK. The CNMF Biennial Meeting of Members is the decision making body of the CNMF. At the Biennial Meeting, members receive reports from the President, Executive Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, and Regional Board Members; consider constitutional changes and policy statements, and set directions for the CNMF for the coming two years.

Seventy five delegates from 22 countries attended the Biennial Meeting. Constitutional changes were endorsed as well as two policy statements: *The Relationship between Nursing and Midwifery* and *Continuing Professional Development for Nurses and Midwives*. A further three policy issues were discussed for development: *The Climate Crisis*, *Gender Equity*, and *The International Recruitment of Nurses and Midwives*. The CNMF Strategic Plan 2020-2022 was also endorsed. The report of the Biennial Meeting is available for download on the CNMF website.



## 3. ADMINISTRATION

CNMF administrative processes are constantly evaluated for their efficiency and timeliness.

- Contact details for all CNMF member associations, Chief Nursing Officers and Nursing Registrars are updated annually to ensure reliable and consistent communication.
- The CNMF website is regularly updated.
- The CNMF bank accounts allow online access and electronic transfer of funds and constant monitoring of income and expenditure.
- The CNMF has a comprehensive data base which includes regular contacts as well as subscriptions to the monthly *e-News* and the bi-annual CNMF journal: *The Commonwealth Nurse*.
- The CNMF has eliminated paper files and all files are now stored in an electronic format. Electronic access to files, email, the website, the internet and the CNMF bank account allows seamless and timely administration regardless of geographic location.
- Regular use is made of electronic communication, such as email, Skype, and Zoom to reduce communication costs.

- The CNMF has established an online digital file archive attached to the CNMF website. The archive has the capacity to store all CNMF files from 1973 in an orderly searchable format. The archive is password protected, however is accessible to researchers and students on request. Gradually, existing digital files and digitised paper files are being transferred to the online archive, securing the history of the CNMF for future generations.

## 4. FINANCES

The CNMF is funded through a combination of membership fees, grants from funding bodies, consultancy fees, donations, and gifts. Grant funding during 2019-2020 was received from the International Training and Education Centre for Health, University of Washington. Accessing ongoing funding is a perennial and time consuming problem. The activities and impact of the CNMF is limited only by access to funding. Considerable savings are generated by the use digital media to maintain contact with members rather than telephone and postage; and by uploading documents to the website rather than printing. Savings are also generated by the opportunistic planning of activities to coincide with other events. The CNMF financial records are independently audited. The 2019-2020 audit forms part of this Annual Report.

## 5. PROJECTS

The CNMF focus is on in-country, rather than regional, project work. In-country project work allows the CNMF to extend its reach, reduce costs, and achieve a greater impact with a critical in-country mass enhancing effect and outcome. The CNMF also seeks partners from a broader field in addition to traditional Commonwealth sources. There is a focus on supporting national nursing and midwifery associations so they can have a greater impact at government level (leadership, governance, capacity building, media, lobbying) and working with national associations to provide them with evidence to support their lobbying (surveys and research).

### 5.1 5<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Conference

The 5<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Conference was held in London 6-7 March 2020. The CNMF was very fortunate to be able to host the conference before country lockdowns due to COVID-19. Looking back, if the conference had been held just one week later we would have had to cancel. The conference was a great success. One hundred and forty presenters from every region of the Commonwealth (35 different countries) presented papers and posters to nearly 350 delegates, showcasing how individual nurses and midwives, or nursing and midwifery groups, associations or institutions, are contributing to global health and wellbeing across the lifespan in all settings. Three symposia were also conducted: Strengths Based Nursing and Healthcare from a McGill University team; Year of the Nurse and the Midwife by a team from Nursing Now; and Skills Development in Nursing and Midwifery using Digital Technologies by a team from the International Institute of Health Sciences Sri Lanka.



The conference was opened by the Commonwealth Secretary General, the Rt Hon Patricia Scotland QC. Welcome greetings were given by Ms Elizabeth Iro, Chief Nursing Officer, World Health Organisation; Lord Nigel Crisp, Co-Chair of the Nursing Now campaign; and Mr Howard Catton, Chief Executive Officer of the International Council of Nurses.

The conference is a wonderful opportunity for nurses and midwives across the Commonwealth to come together to share with and learn from each other, make friends, and establish strong and supportive networks. Presentations, the program, and the Book of Abstracts are available on the CNMF website <https://www.commonwealthnurses.org>.

### 5.2 Mental Health Legislation Reform Project

The CNMF is continuing to work with selected Commonwealth countries to reform their mental health legislation. New mental health legislation has been enacted in the Seychelles and a final draft Bill has also been presented to the Ministry for Health in Botswana for submission to Parliament. The CNMF, supported by the Commonwealth Secretariat, is currently working with a National Mental Health Advisory Committee established by the Government of the Bahamas to write new mental health legislation for the Bahamas. This work was disrupted throughout the reporting year due to the impact of Hurricane Dorian on the Bahamas as well as the impact of COVID-19 however is on track to have a draft Mental Health Bill ready for stakeholder consultation by March 2021. It is anticipated that the work on supporting the reform mental health legislation will continue with other countries in the Commonwealth.

### 5.3 Scopes of Practice and Standards of Practice for Midwives and Nurses in Cambodia

Cambodia is of course not a Commonwealth country, however the CNMF has worked closely with the International Training and Education Centre for Health, University of Washington on a number of projects in Africa: Tanzania, Malawi, South Africa and Botswana. The initial focus of the Cambodia project, which began in August 2019, was to develop a scope of practice and standards of practice for midwives. The project was later extended to develop a scope of practice and standards of practice for nurses.



## 6. COMMUNICATION

### 6.1 Website

The CNMF website provides an interactive environment in which to publicise and report on CNMF activities. The website is an essential and integral component of the CNMF communication strategy. The website is managed in-house to reduce operating costs. The website contains a secure site for the CNMF Board and Appointed Officers. A searchable digital archive has been attached to the CNMF website to provide permanent and secure storage for all CNMF files. Old paper files are gradually being scanned, digitised, and added to the archive to secure the CNMF history for the future. The archive is password protected however is available to researchers and students on request.



<http://www.commonwealthnurses.org>

## 6.2 CNMF e-News

The CNMF produces a monthly e-News bulletin to keep members and other relevant organisations and interested stakeholders informed of CNMF activities, and bring to them up to date information about other relevant global issues and events. The e-News has a wide circulation and is extremely popular. A subscription form is available on the CNMF website (subscriptions are free). CNMF members and friends are encouraged to distribute the e-News within their own networks.



## 6.3 CNMF Journal: *The Commonwealth Nurse*

The CNMF journal, *The Commonwealth Nurse*, is produced twice yearly and provided free to members. The journal is produced in-house to reduce costs. Apart from providing an overview of CNMF activities, *The Commonwealth Nurse* provides information and also publishes articles submitted by members. *The Commonwealth Nurse* is an open access journal, freely available from its own website: <http://www.thecommonwealthnurse.com>. The journal is no longer produced in print form. The journal can be downloaded in its entirety or by individual article.

## 6.4 Social Media

The CNMF has a presence on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram and regularly posts to those media.





## 7. LIAISON

### 7.1 The Commonwealth Health Professions and Partners Alliance (CHPA)



The CHPA is an alliance of Commonwealth accredited health professional associations. By working together, members of the CHPA can more efficiently and effectively represent and support health professionals in Commonwealth countries and promote high standards of care and equity in access to care for Commonwealth peoples.

### 7.2 Commonwealth Civil Society Policy Forum

The CNMF, as an elected executive member of the Commonwealth Health Professions and Partners Alliance (CHPA), and in partnership with the Commonwealth Foundation and other civil society organisations hosted the 2020 Commonwealth Civil Society Forum (CCSPF) in May 2020 which was organised by the Commonwealth Medical Association. The title of the Forum was: *Strengthening health systems using digital technologies in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure universal health coverage*. Presentations were focused on the role of digital technologies in the response to a global pandemic and included a moderated panel discussion covering front-line issues. The 2020 CCSPF, unlike previous years, was a virtual forum which allowed many more participants from civil society than can usually attend a face to face forum in Geneva. The CHPA will consider combining future face to face meetings with live streaming given the benefit of increased access this allows. A report of the CCSPF, including key actions for Commonwealth Health Ministers is available on the CHPA website: <http://www.chpa.co>.

### 7.3 Commonwealth Liaison

The CNMF maintains close relationships with the Commonwealth Foundation and the Commonwealth Secretariat. The CNMF is a Commonwealth accredited civil society organisation. The Commonwealth Secretariat has developed a process of annual reporting for Commonwealth accredited civil society organisations. The CNMF meets all annual reporting requirements. The CNMF endeavours to be represented at all relevant meetings of the Commonwealth Secretariat.

### 7.4 Regional Liaison

All CNMF Board Members participate in regional activities on behalf of the CNMF. The CNMF Europe Region holds a biennial nursing and midwifery conference; the Caribbean Nurses Organisation also holds a biennial conference in the CNMF Atlantic Region; the East, Central and Southern Africa College of Nursing (ECSACON) holds a triennial scientific conference in the CNMF ECSA Region; the West Africa College of Nursing (WACN) holds a biennial conference in the CNMF West Africa Region; and the South Pacific Nurses Forum holds a biennial conference in the CNMF Pacific Region. These regional activities provide an opportunity for CNMF Regional Board Members to interact with members in the region and share CNMF activities.

## 7.5 International Liaison

The CNMF has a positive relationship with the International Council of Nurses and the International Confederation of Midwives. The CNMF participates in celebrations for International Day of the Midwife 7 May and International Nurses Day 12 May. The CNMF is a member of the Global Health Workforce Alliance; Health for All; and the White Ribbon Alliance for Safe Motherhood.



## 8. MEMBERSHIP

The CNMF actively pursues membership. During 2019-2020 the CNMF welcomed several new full, affiliate, associate and individual members. The CNMF membership fees are published on the CNMF website: <http://www.commonwealthnurses.org>. Two thirds of CNMF members pay the lowest membership rate, currently £100.00 per annum. Transaction costs for these small amounts are quite high. The purpose of the CNMF is to support members with capacity building, education and training, networking, and developing leadership. There is great need among CNMF members, and the capacity to respond to those needs is limited only by access to funding. The time spent in making funding applications is onerous for small organisations however the CNMF has demonstrated that a great deal can be achieved with a relatively small amount of funding.

## 9. CHALLENGES AND FORWARD PLANS

### 9.1 COVID-19 and the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife

In May 2019 the World Health Assembly confirmed that 2020 would be the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife in honour of the 200<sup>th</sup> birthday of Florence Nightingale and in recognition of the significant contribution nursing and midwifery make to global health. The first State of the World's Nursing Report was also expected to be released in 2020. The International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife was to provide an opportunity for nurses and midwives to showcase the incredible work they have done, are doing, and intend to do in the future.

The global COVID-19 pandemic meant that the planned year of celebrations did not eventuate. Instead, nurses and midwives were needed at the front-line to care for people who had contracted the virus and celebrating was the last thing on their mind. Nurses faced high client throughput; shortages of staff, especially when staff had to quarantine; poor infection and prevention and control training; and lack of personal protective equipment. The International Council of Nurses (ICN) estimated in early June that globally around 230,000 health care workers had contracted COVID-19 through their work, with 600 nurses globally dying from the disease.

The response of nurses and midwives to the pandemic clearly demonstrated how dependent health systems are on their presence, their input and their care. Many Commonwealth countries are now facing a second wave of infections with infectious disease experts forecasting that countries will not be able to resume normal social and economic activity until a vaccine becomes available which is not anticipated before the end of the year at the earliest. The CNMF President, Deputy President and Board pays tribute to the many nurses and midwives across the Commonwealth who responded so courageously and selflessly to the needs of their populations.

**9.2 Forward plans**

CNMF project work during the remainder of 2020 and the first half of 2021 will be very dependent on the global situation with COVID-19 and the possibility and safety of international travel. The CNMF will continue to meet CNMF objectives and grow membership to provide a stable core income on which project work can be built. The CNMF is greatly indebted to the President, Council, Chief Executive, and staff of the Royal College of Nursing United Kingdom for the ongoing support provided to the CNMF. The President, Deputy President, Board members, Executive Secretary, and Honorary Treasurer would like to formally thank all CNMF members who are so diligent in providing input and direction to the work of the CNMF and all the many friends of CNMF for their contribution toward making the CNMF a successful and dynamic organisation.



Jill ILIFFE  
Executive Secretary  
Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Federation

# COMMONWEALTH NURSES AND MIDWIVES FEDERATION

## RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020

	2020	2019
<b>Receipts</b>		
Consultancy income (Cambodia project)	36,450	0
Other travel and accommodation reimbursement	0	1,394
Miscellaneous reimbursement	262	134
Commonwealth Civil Society Policy Forum	0	12,163
Member subscriptions	4735	17,991
Member activities reimbursement (Bahamas project)	423	53
Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Conference	110,194	0
Burdett Trust Grant	0	75,000
African Regulatory Collaborative	196	0
		<b>106,735</b>
<b>Payments</b>		
Consultancy Fee	52,431	24,905
Office services - stationery, printing, postage, telephone etc	351	901
Office attendance (travel, accommodation)	748	2,065
Officer travel and accommodation	1,738	1,505
Treasurer's Honorarium	1,441	1,500
Capital equipment and Infrastructure	108	0
Publications	98	326
Website	1,378	592
Products	1,291	0
Auditor's fee	1,017	1,000
Bank fees	340	472
Corporation Tax	0	57
Net Adjustment/Currency exchange (gain)/loss on AU\$	3,681	1,677
Miscellaneous	0	982
Meetings - Board travel and accommodation	11,046	0
Company Registration	13	58
CHPA	478	335
Subscriptions	167	147
Commonwealth Civil Society Forum	790	10,133
Member activities (for or by members)	2,393	10,709
Bahamas Mental Health Legislation project	6,680	0
Cambodia Nursing and Midwifery Standards and Scope of Practice project	3,298	0
Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Conference	72805	22,194
Commonwealth Foundation Grant	0	8,506
Burdett Trust Grant	0	18,807
African Regulatory Collaborative	136	130
	<b>162,428</b>	<b>107,001</b>
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	(10,168)	(266)
Surplus b/fwd at 01 July 2018	14,966	15,232
Surplus c/fwd at 30 June 2019	<b>4,798</b>	<b>14,966</b>
<b>Surplus represented by:</b>		
Bank balance	4,798	14,966
Cash in hand	0	0
Add debtors and prepayments	0	0
	<b>4,798</b>	<b>14,966</b>
Less creditors and accrued liabilities	0	0
	<b>4,798</b>	<b>14,966</b>



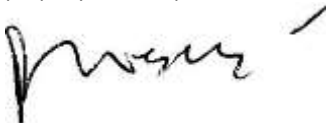
Honorary Treasurer



Executive Secretary

### AUDITOR'S REPORT

I have audited the Receipts and Payments Account of the Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Federation (CNMF) with the books and vouchers of the CNMF, and have obtained all the necessary information and explanations. In my opinion the receipts and payments are properly drawn up so as to exhibit a true and fair view of the affairs of the CNMF for the year ended 30 June 2020.



Peter Westley BA, FCCA Chartered Certified Accountant 30 September 2020