

COMMONWEALTH NURSES AND MIDWIVES FEDERATION



ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024



HEALTH FOR ALL
nurses and midwives – meeting the challenge -showing the way



c/- Royal College of Nursing
20 Cavendish Square
London W1G 0RN United Kingdom
+61 438 647 252
Email: 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 C3 Collaborating for Health; Health Information for All; and the World Continuing Education Alliance, 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 Health Professions and Partners Alliance (CHPA), the Independent Forum of Commonwealth Organisations (IFCO), the Commonwealth Secretariat, and the Commonwealth Foundation.

The CNMF's work is supported by the Royal College of Nursing, United Kingdom (RCN UK), providing a registered address in the UK for the CNMF. The CNMF Executive Officers and Board are extremely grateful to the RCN UK for their collegiate support and advice 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.

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 with an option for a further four years.



The CNMF President, Professor Kathleen McCourt from the United Kingdom, and the CNMF Deputy President, Mrs Rosemarie Josey from the Bahamas, who were re-elected to their second term of office in 2022.

CNMF Board members are: **Europe:** Mr Demetris Loizou (Cyprus); **Asia:** Ms Evelyn Kannan (India); **East, Central and Southern Africa:** Mr Simon Hlungwani (South Africa); **West Africa:** Mr Abdrafui Adanaji (Nigeria). The **Pacific** and **Atlantic regions** are currently vacant at present however Board members for those regions are will take office at the 26th CNMF Biennial Meeting of Members in 2024. Board members serve one four year term with no option for a further consecutive term.



Demetris Loizou
(Cyprus)



Evelyn Kannan
(India)



Simon Hlungwani
(South Africa)



Abdrafui Adeniji
(Nigeria)



Ms Jill Iliffe has been the appointed CNMF Executive Secretary since April 2008.

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 25th CNMF Biennial Meeting of Members in 2022. The CNMF Strategic Plan is also reviewed each two years and submitted to members at the Biennial Meeting, The CNMF Strategic Plan 2022-2024 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.

2.3 26th CNMF Biennial Meeting of Members

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; approve the audited accounts; consider constitutional changes and policy statements, and set directions for the CNMF for the coming two years. The 26th Biennial Meeting of Members will be held 26 September 2024 in Malta at the premises of the Malta Union of Midwives and Nurses.

The three policy statements which were presented to the 25th Biennial Meeting of Members in 2022 have been endorsed out of session: *The Climate Crisis; Gender Equity;* and *The International Recruitment of Nurses and Midwives*. Three further policy statements requested by members: *Health Equity; Emergency and Disaster Preparedness and Response;* and *Universal Health Coverage* will be presented at the 26th Biennial Meeting of Members. Reports of Biennial Meetings are available for download on the CNMF website.

3. ADMINISTRATION

CNMF administrative processes are constantly evaluated for their efficiency, effectiveness, and timeliness. The majority of administrative processes are able to be conducted online or using email, WhatsApp or Zoom rather than on paper or in person. This significantly reduces costs to the organisation. It also contributes to a timely and efficient response, as well as accurate and secure record keeping.

- 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 real time 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 within an alpha-numeric schedule for ease of access. Electronic access to files, email, the website, and the CNMF bank account allows seamless and timely administration regardless of geographic location.
- Regular use is made of electronic communication, such as email, WhatsApp, 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. Major income during 2023-2024 was from Colgate for an oral health project in partnership with C3 Collaborating for Health. Accessing ongoing funding is a perennial and time consuming problem. The CNMF seeks funders and partners from a broader field in addition to traditional Commonwealth sources. 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 2023-2024 audit forms part of this Annual Report.

5. PROJECTS

The CNMF has been involved in two projects during the 2022-2023 financial year. The major project was a continuation of the oral health project in partnership with C3 Collaborating for Health and funded by Colgate. The second was a review of the Jamaica mental health legislation and the development of recommendations for amendment or for new legislation.

5.1 Oral Health Project

The online CPD course Oral Health for Nurses and Midwives continued to be made available on the online platform of the World Continuing Education Alliance. At 30 June 2024, there had been 8,490 successful completions with a 94.4% success rate; a 22.5% knowledge improvement between pre- and post-tests; a 98% evaluation score over eight criteria; and with 97.2% of those who successfully completed the course stating they would be incorporating their learning into their daily practice.

Additionally, resource material for the Oral Health CPD for Nurses and Midwives was translated into Swahili and French. It is also intended for translation into Portuguese.

In April-May 2024 a survey was sent out to all participants who had successfully completed the course in 2023. The survey had a 28.7% response rate (n=841). Of the questions asked: 85.7% of respondents stated they were providing oral health education more often; 81.9% stated they were providing oral health assessments; 81.0% stated they were making more referrals to oral health professionals. 97% stated they had changed their own personal oral health routines; and 95.3% stated they had changed the oral health routines of family members.

Other oral health projects during the reporting period included:

- Ten Oral Health Fact Sheets on various aspects of oral health were developed for parents and subsequently translated into Swahili and French.
- The development of six information sheets about oral health for teachers. It is intended that lesson plans will also be developed so that teachers will be able to provide lessons about oral health to their students.
- The development of an online oral health CPD course specifically for midwives and maternal and child health nurses made available on the WCEA platform. The target country was Kenya.

A song about oral health was written for children, sung to the tune of Frere Jacques and an audio and video production was produced by the Commonwealth Children’s Choir.



5.2 Mental Health Legislation Reform Project

- The CNMF project to work with the Government of the Bahamas to reform their mental health legislation in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities came to a successful conclusion with the passage of new mental health legislation through the Bahamas Parliament.
- The CNMF was invited by the Commonwealth Secretariat to do a review of the mental health legislation of Jamaica with a view to making recommendations for amendment of the existing Act or the writing of a new Act. This work is ongoing.
- Previous work writing new mental health legislation for Botswana also came to a successful conclusion with the passage of new mental health legislation by the Botswana Parliament.

6. COMMUNICATION

6.1 Website

The CNMF website (<https://www.commonwealthnurses.org>) 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.



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 (subscription is 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 and published online 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 Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn. The CNMF closed its Twitter ('X') account due to Board concerns about the platform's lack of policies to minimise or remove inflammatory, offensive, inaccurate, or deliberately false posts.



7. LIAISON

7.1 Commonwealth Liaison

The CNMF maintains close relationships with the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth Foundation. 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.

7.2 The Commonwealth Health Professions and Partners Alliance (CHPA)



The CHPA is an alliance of Commonwealth accredited health and wellbeing 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.

7.4 Commonwealth Civil Society Policy Forum

The CNMF, as an executive member of the Commonwealth Health Professions and Partners Alliance (CHPA), and in partnership with other civil society member organisations of the CHPA, supported the organisation of the 2024 Commonwealth Civil Society Forum (CCSPF) in March 2024.

The title of the Forum was: *Actionable solutions to building resilience in healthcare systems within the Commonwealth, with an emphasis on small and vulnerable states*. The program and speakers focused on:

- The effects of climate change, particularly on small and vulnerable states.
- Strengthening health emergency capabilities.
- Putting education at the heart of ethical recruitment.



The 2020 CCSPF continued the recent tradition of a virtual forum which allowed many more participants from civil society than can usually attend a face to face forum in Geneva. Two hundred and seven participants joined the forum online. A report of the CCSPF, including key recommendations for Commonwealth Health Ministers is available on the CHPA website: <http://www.chpa.co>.

7.5 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.

7.6 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 Health for All and is in partnership with C3 Collaborating for Health and the World Continuing Education Alliance.



8. MEMBERSHIP

The CNMF actively pursues membership. During 2023-2024 the CNMF welcomed several new full, affiliate, associate and individual members. 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. 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. Many CNMF member associations experienced considerable disruption between 2020-2022 due to COVID-19 and the priorities of members to meet population needs for nurses and midwives. In many instances, associations waived membership fees as individuals struggled in the economic environment of COVID-19.

9. CHALLENGES

The CNMF faces three major challenges. The first is building CNMF capacity. The second is maintaining membership; and the third is increasing finances.

9.1 Building CNMF Capacity

Currently the CNMF has only one full-time staff member to manage governance, administration, finances, membership, communication, liaison, and projects. One full-time staff member does not provide the CNMF with the capacity to grow and it invests all corporate knowledge in one individual. While several of the strategic areas of the CNMF such as membership, communication, liaison and projects could be outsourced to volunteers, the full-time staff member would still be responsible to monitor and support the volunteer.

Building capacity for the CNMF is a major challenge, a challenge which many Commonwealth accredited civil society organisations face. The CNMF Board has not yet been able to find and answer to this challenge.

9.2 Membership

More than two thirds of the CNMF membership comes from small organisations in small states which reflects the composition of the Commonwealth. Even though the CNMF membership fee is very low by any measure, the time and effort in pursuing membership fees and the transaction costs means the exercise is not cost effective. This is another challenge for the CNMF Board. Increasing membership costs for small associations who also have a small membership themselves would, in the Board's view, only result in a loss of members. A range of other options are currently being discussed by the CNMF Board.

9.3 Finances

The work of the CNMF is limited only by finances. It is difficult for a small organisation with only one staff member to credibly bid for projects regardless of the track record of the organisation. Ideally, membership fees should cover the salary of the paid staff. At present for CNMF, this is not the case. These means the organisation is dependent on project income which is unsatisfactory for stability and sustainability. A major task for the Board is to develop a sustainable strategy for increasing core income.

10. FORWARD PLANS

The CNMF has a number of priorities for the coming financial year 2024-2025, the major one being the 26th Biennial Meeting of Members on 26 September 2024 in Malta and the 6th Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Conference 27-28 September 2024 also in Malta. The 6th Conference is being held in partnership with the Malta Union of Midwives and Nurses. It is the first time that the conference will be held outside of London and the first time a partnership model has been adopted. Project work will focus on continuing and expanding the oral health project and, with the support of the Commonwealth Secretariat, engaging Jamaica in the work on reforming mental health legislation in Commonwealth countries. The CNMF will continue to meet CNMF objectives and endeavour to 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 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 2024

| <u>Receipts</u> | 2024 | 2023 |
|--|----------------|---------------|
| Member subscriptions | 10,602 | 12,872 |
| Oral Health project | 128,639 | 37,947 |
| Cambodia regulation project | 0 | 13,878 |
| Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Conference 2024 | 4,510 | 0 |
| CHPA | 100 | 0 |
| Miscellaneous | 51 | 0 |
| | 143,902 | 64,697 |
| <u>Payments</u> | | |
| Consultancy Fee | 45,255 | 38,905 |
| Office services - stationery, printing, postage, telephone etc | 144 | 409 |
| Officer travel and accommodation | 1,010 | 0 |
| Capital equipment and Infrastructure | 103 | 0 |
| Communication | 121 | 0 |
| Website | 74 | 794 |
| Auditor's fee | 1,017 | 1,017 |
| Bank fees | 578 | 368 |
| Corporation Tax | 0 | 740 |
| Net Adjustment/Currency exchange (gain)/loss on AU\$ | 444 | 750 |
| Miscellaneous | 52 | 0 |
| Meetings - Board travel and accommodation | 0 | 0 |
| Member activities and support | 0 | 1,006 |
| Company Registration | 13 | 14 |
| CHPA | 356 | 0 |
| Affiliations | 267 | 250 |
| Commonwealth Civil Society Forum | 273 | 285 |
| Oral Health project | 61,700 | 4,800 |
| Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Conference | 4,014 | 0 |
| African Regulatory Collaborative | | 0 |
| | 115,421 | 49,338 |
| Surplus/(Deficit) for the year | 28,481 | 15,359 |
| Surplus b/fwd at 01 July 2018 | 18,755 | 3,396 |
| Surplus c/fwd at 30 June 2019 | 47,236 | 18,755 |
| Surplus represented by: | | |
| Bank balance | 47,236 | 18,775 |
| Cash in hand | 0 | 0 |
| Add debtors and prepayments | 0 | 0 |
| | 47,236 | 18,755 |
| Less creditors and accrued liabilities | 0 | 0 |
| | 47,236 | 18,755 |



Executive Secretary
15 September 2024



President
15 September 2024

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 2024.



Peter Westley, BA, FCCA Chartered Certified Accountant
14 September 2024



Commonwealth Nurses
and Midwives Federation

www.commonwealthnurses.org