



COMMONWEALTH NURSES AND MIDWIVES FEDERATION

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SUCCESSFUL 5th COMMONWEALTH NURSES AND MIDWIVES CONFERENCE

6-7 March 2020 London UK

*Nurses and midwives: breaking down barriers,
leaving no-one behind*



The CNMF was very fortunate to be able to host the 5th Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives conference 6-7 March 2020 in London UK 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 was 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>.



The Commonwealth Children's Choir brought tears to the eyes of delegates as they performed so beautifully at the opening ceremony of the conference. It was such a privilege to hear them sing.



Delegates at the conference closing ceremony were entertained by six talented musicians from the Commonwealth Youth Orchestra.



Delegates gave Commonwealth tenor, Mr Joseph Aquilina from Malta, a standing ovation for his thrilling performance of *Anthem* from the musical *Chess*, and the Neopolitan serenade *O Sole Mio*. What made Joseph's performance all the more special is that Joseph is also a nurse and a member of the Malta Union of Midwives and Nurses.



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24th CNMF Biennial Meeting

Thursday 5 March 2020 London UK

The 24th CNMF Biennial Meeting of Members was held on Thursday 5th March 2020 in London, UK. The Biennial Meeting of Members is the decision making body of the CNMF. Eighty CNMF members and observers attended the meeting and participated in the debate and decision making. Reports were received from the CNMF President, the Executive Secretary and the Honorary Treasurer, as well as from Regional Board Members.

The meeting endorsed constitutional changes and two new Policy Statements: *The Relationship between Nursing and Midwifery* (presented by Mr Simon Hlungwani, President of the Democratic Nursing Organisation of South Africa) and *Continuing Professional Development for Nurses and Midwives* (presented by Mr Obonolo Rahube, President of the Botswana Nurses Union). The new constitution and the policy statements can be downloaded from the CNMF website <https://www.commonwealthnurses.org>.

Three further issues recommended by members for policy statement development were debated: *The Climate Crisis* (presented by Australia); *Gender Equity* (presented by Malta); and *The International Recruitment of Nurses and Midwives* (presented by the United Kingdom).

The CNMF would like to welcome two new Board Members: Mr Dimitris Loizou from the Cyprus Nurses and Midwives Association, the new Regional Board Member for the CNMF Europe Region; and Mr Adeniji Abdrafu Alani, President of the National Association of Nigeria Nurses and Midwives, the new Board member for the CNMF West Africa Region. The CNMF farewelled Ms Hossinatu Mary Kanu former Regional Board Member for the West Africa Region and Mr George Saliba, former Regional Board Member for the Europe Region.



Dimitris Loizou George Saliba Abdrafu Alani Hossinatu Kanu

The CNMF Board want to particularly mention the contribution of two of our members and thank them for their commitment to the CNMF. The first is the Malta Union of Midwives and Nurses who brought 55 members to the CNMF Conference. This is an amazing contribution and one which the MUMN makes every conference. The other member, the Sierra Leone Nurses Association is from the poorest country in the Commonwealth. This conference, there were 34 nurses and midwives from Sierra Leone at the conference. Well done MUMN and SLNA.