



COMMONWEALTH NURSES FEDERATION

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HEALTH UNDER THREAT AT COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT

The CNF has been provided with a copy of a Discussion Paper which outlines a proposed strategic plan for the Commonwealth Secretariat 2013-2016. In this document, the Secretary General proposes to disband the Division within the Commonwealth Secretariat that has responsibility for health, education and gender. Health is at the top of the list of areas for 'diminished focus and external spin off' which in plain English means that the Commonwealth Secretariat will no longer put any resources toward health (or education); that there will be no staff within the Commonwealth Secretariat with health as an area of responsibility; and that responsibility for health at a Commonwealth level will be abrogated to unnamed external organisations. The document lists six areas of future focus for the Commonwealth: peace building and democracy; governance and the rule of law; human rights; economic affairs and trade; environment and sustainable development; and youth development.

The logic behind this proposal is incomprehensible. Good health is the cornerstone of and essential to a country's development. An unhealthy population not only places an economic burden on a country's health system, but unhealthy people cannot contribute economically to their country or participate in the development process. Neither can they advocate for or participate in the democratic government of their country. All the future priority areas identified in the Discussion Paper are dependent on a healthy population for their achievement. Good health is the fundamental foundation on which democracy and development is built.

Commonwealth countries suffer a disproportionate burden of disease including communicable and non-communicable disease. They also struggle with lower health worker ratios than developed countries. Rather than being an area of 'diminished focus' for the Commonwealth Secretariat, health should have an enhanced focus and the Commonwealth Secretariat should be leading the way in promoting universal access to health, both physical and mental.

The lack of consultation in the development of the Discussion Paper is perhaps of the most concern to the CNF particularly consultation with Commonwealth accredited civil society organisations. The Discussion Paper suggests that a collaboration strategy would be developed to work more closely with accredited Commonwealth organisations which is something the CNF would welcome, however the same paragraph goes on to say that the strategy would be accompanied by an operational plan for phasing out those areas of work which the Secretariat proposes to discontinue, health being one of those areas. The Commonwealth Health Professions Alliance (CHPA) has sought an urgent meeting with the Secretary General to discuss the proposals outlined in the Discussion Paper and to advocate for the retention of health as a priority area. A copy of the Discussion Paper can be found on the website of the CHPA: <http://www.chpa.co> and a copy of the letter sent by the President of the CNF to the Secretary General can be found on the CNF website: <http://www.commonwealthnurses.org>.

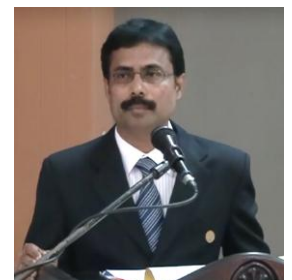
SUCCESSFUL 10TH ECSACON SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE



A very successful ECSACON 10th Scientific Conference was held in Port Louis, Mauritius 5-7 September 2012 attended by over 200 nurses and midwives. The Conference was hosted by the Mauritius Nursing Association (MNA). Highlights of the conference were the excellent presentations from nurses and midwives from the ECSA region and the unique opportunity for nurses and midwives across the region to network and share experiences. Ms Judith Shamian from Canada gave an inspiring keynote address.



Lighting the lamp



President MNA Mr B Kallooa



Mauritius delegation



President ECSACON Mrs Monethi-Seiso



Judith Shamian from Canada who gave the keynote address and who is also running for ICN President



MNA logo



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'BUILDING BRIDGES' DENOSA represents CNF in London



Ms Mmathebe Rachel Serebane a young leader from DENOSA recently represented the CNF in the 'Building Bridges' Leadership Development for Young Women consultation in London. The program enables young women from Commonwealth countries to come together to discuss issues they encounter in their countries that impact on their life. The program was attended by 20 young women from across the Commonwealth: Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and the South Pacific.

The 'Building Bridges' consultation aimed to link young women and older women so that they could stand together in solidarity to support each other and help solve the challenges that effect women everywhere. Some of the more urgent issues were:

- * Health: lack of access to health care; HIV and AIDS; unsafe abortions; and ineffective services for sexual and reproductive health.
- * Education: specifically access to higher education.
- * Violence against women: human trafficking; early or forced marriage; female genital mutilation; and domestic violence.
- * Power: barriers to women in political positions of power and influence.

Rachel said that as a result of her participation in the 'Building Bridges' consultation she gained confidence and appreciated the reason why she is in the nursing profession and a young leader with DENOSA. She sees her role as a 'calling' to help young women who are faced with challenges that are difficult to deal with and to become their voice.



SOUTH PACIFIC
NURSES FORUM

16th South Pacific Nurses Forum

The future of nursing and midwifery: where are we heading?

Monday 19 - Thursday 22 November 2012
Leonda By The Yarra Hawthorn, Victoria, Australia

For more information go to: <http://www.spnf.org.au>



10th CNF Europe Region Conference

Advancing nursing and midwifery through evidence based practice
15-16 March 2013 Larnaca Cyprus

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

Closing date for abstracts: Friday 14 December 2012
For more information go to: <http://www.cyna.org>

THE STORY OF CHOLERA



Global Health Media has collaborated with award winning animator, Yoni Goodman, to produce *The Story of Cholera*, an engaging educational animation in which a young boy helps a health worker save his father and then guides his village in preventing cholera from spreading.

The World Health Organization reports an estimated 3-5 million cholera cases annually, resulting in 100,000-120,000 deaths worldwide. Cholera can kill quickly and, if not contained, quickly spread, yet it is preventable and treatable. The video will help affected populations around the world to better understand cholera and how to prevent it from spreading. The video is available on the web and free of charge to download to mobile devices including iPhones, Android phones, Apple iPads, other tablets and laptop computers.

Global Health Media film: *The Story of Cholera*
<http://globalhealthmedia.org/story-of-cholera/videos/>



ICN 25th Quadrennial Congress *Equity and Access to Health Care*

18-23 May 2013 Melbourne Australia

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

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