

## from the PRESIDENT



**Ramziah Binti Ahmad**  
CNMF President

I feel very proud to have been elected unopposed as President of the Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Federation (CNMF), especially as I am the first President of the CNMF to be elected from Malaysia. I am humbled by the trust that has been extended to me from CNMF members and I will work hard as CNMF President to represent all CNMF members and to build on the legacy I have inherited.

I would like to pay tribute to Miss Susie Kong who was CNF President for nine years and who has passed on to me a very vibrant and well respected organisation which is making a significant contribution to nursing and midwifery across the Commonwealth.

I come to the Presidency of the CNMF at a very historic time. At the 21<sup>st</sup> CNMF Biennial Meeting held in London on 7 March 2014, the Commonwealth Nurses Federation changed its name to the Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Federation. The change of name is a reflection that in some Commonwealth countries, midwifery is a separate, although closely related, profession to nursing. In other Commonwealth countries, a nursing qualification is a pre-requisite to undertaking a midwifery qualification. In relation to the name change, the CNMF Board emphasised the inclusion of midwives in the title did not constitute an endorsement of midwifery as a separate profession to nursing. Each country has the right to be self-determining in relation to this issue. The circumstances for one country may be very different to the circumstances for another country.

Another significant change for the CNMF was an expansion of membership categories to allow midwifery organisations to join the CNMF as full members and the creation of affiliate, associate, and individual membership categories which will open the CNMF to international, regional, and national specialist nursing and other health related associations. One of the underpinning values of the CNMF is inclusiveness, and it is this philosophy of inclusiveness, as well as the many requests received by the CNMF for membership of the organisation, that motivated the change of name and the expansion of membership categories.

CNMF members also endorsed the inclusion of a values clause within the CNMF constitution. The values on which the work of the CNMF is based are:

- to be committed and contribute to the objectives of the CNMF,
- to be an effective and efficient organisation,
- to be responsible in the use of internal and external resources,
- to be inclusive and involve members in decision making,
- to be cooperative and work as a team with members,
- to be consistent, congruent and ethical in decision making and behaviours,
- to respect the human rights of members and other people,
- to avoid discrimination of members or other people,
- to be protective of the privacy and confidentiality needs of members and other people,
- to be tolerant and accepting of members and other people,
- to be open, forthright and have integrity in dealing with members and other people,
- to be flexible, innovative, and determined in order to achieve CNMF objectives,
- to be compliant with relevant legislation and regulation.

The new constitution is available on the CNMF website: <http://www.commonwealthnurses.org>.

During my term of office I would like to visit each CNMF region and as many members as I can. My first visit is to a national nursing organisation which has just re-joined the CNMF and I would like to welcome Brunei Darussalam back into the CNMF family. I am very excited to be able to visit our newest national nursing association member as the CNMF President and discover from them how the CNMF can support the growth of the national nursing association and nursing in their country.

This edition of The Commonwealth Nurse highlights the 21<sup>st</sup> Biennial Meeting which was held in London on 7 March. The CNMF is grateful to the Royal College of Nursing, their Chief Executive Officer, Dr Peter Carter; their President, Mrs Andrea Spyropoulos; and the RCN Council for providing the venue for the Biennial and other support services. The RCN generously provides office space and support services for the CNMF on an ongoing basis which is greatly appreciated. The 21<sup>st</sup> Biennial Meeting was attended by representatives from eighteen CNMF member countries. Further details of the decisions taken can be found later in this edition of The Commonwealth Nurse.