

Minutes of the CMA Annual General Meeting 2021

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Reports and updates

Welcome and outline of the meeting

1. The 154th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) was held virtually on Aug. 22, 2021. Dr. Ernst Schuster chaired the meeting; Dr. Melanie Bechard was the Vice Chair.
2. Dr. Schuster introduced Mr. Eli Mina, Professional Registered Parliamentarian, who then explained his role as an impartial advisor on rules at the meeting.
3. Dr. Schuster commented on a member's request five days prior to the AGM to add to the agenda a motion of nonconfidence in the CMA Board of Directors. Dr. Schuster declared the motion out of order and explained that the motion had been requested far past the deadline, which was 90 days before the AGM, and adding such a motion without sufficient notice to the Board and to the Membership would violate fundamental principles of fairness.

Annual report from Board Chair, President's valedictory address and Francophone Spokesperson update

4. Dr. Suzanne Strasberg, CMA Board Chair, acknowledged the Indigenous land from which she joined the meeting and thanked the membership for their dedication to patient care over the past year battling the COVID-19 pandemic. She presented highlights from the 2021 Annual Report to Members, including advocacy initiatives (e.g., addressing the backlog of other medical services, supporting immunization efforts, etc.), and supports for PTMAs and other stakeholder organizations, hospital foundations and community organizations. Dr. Strasberg also noted that the CMA's new strategy – Impact 2040 – would create long-lasting impact by reimagining the future of health, the health system, and the health workforce, and seizing the moment and acting on the pitfalls and gaps that have been brought to light over the course of the pandemic. Diversity of thought, opinion and experience is needed to ensure the enterprise's leadership positions are well-informed to address contemporary issues facing Canadian physicians and patients.
5. CMA President Dr. Ann Collins commented on the sacrifices doctors made for their patients during a year of unprecedented change and turmoil. Many physicians capitalized on the pandemic response to expose a host of inequities and start important conversations on much-needed changes to health and social structures. She noted that the inexcusable treatment and death of Joyce Echaquan in a Quebec hospital and the ongoing discoveries of residential school mass graves were prime examples of the systemic Indigenous racism that still exists in Canadian health care and society. Reflection is important, but meaningful action is needed to work towards true reconciliation. Dr. Collins underscored that, with Impact 2040 serving as a guide for a better path forward, the CMA enterprise would harness the diverse voices of Canadian physicians and include a broader range of perspectives and backgrounds in medical discourse. In closing, Dr. Collins thanked her family, friends, colleagues, CMA staff, and the CMA Board Chair for their tireless support, and thanked all Canadian physicians for welcoming her into their lives over the past year.

6. Dr. Abdo Shabah, CMA's Francophone Spokesperson, noted that he continues to promote the CMA in Québec and connect with physicians across the province. The CMA's new strategy is striving to create a more sustainable, equitable health care system, grounded in a more diverse and inclusive medical culture. As a measure of physician and public engagement, there were more than 570 CMA mentions in French-language media from August 2020 to June 2021, covering topics such as the pandemic, long-term care, virtual care and physician health and wellness. Dr. Shabah explained that CMA leadership has also been in regular contact with the Fédération des médecins omnipraticiens du Québec (FMOQ), Fédération des médecins spécialistes du Québec (FMSQ), Collège des médecins du Québec (CMQ), and the Collège Québécois des Médecins de Famille (CQMF) to collaborate on medical leadership training, COVID-19 response, and strategic planning. He also noted that the CMA helped organize and fund meetings for the medical profession in Québec this past year, including Innove-Action and *Soigner et inspirer*. Looking forward to 2022, CMA leadership will continue to connect physicians in Québec and their counterparts across Canada.

Governance Committee report

7. Dr. Carl Nohr, Chair of the CMA Governance Committee, outlined the proposed bylaw amendments in three areas: (1) moving to a national presidential election, whereby voting for the President-Elect would be extended to all CMA members (rather than only the province or territory of origin) while maintaining the geographical rotation of nominations; (2) implementing a new leadership diversity model, whereby a proposed Leadership and Diversity Search Committee would replace the existing Nominations Committee and Appointments Committee, and ratification of leadership positions would be expanded to all members of the AGM; and (3) housekeeping changes to remove archaic provisions (including a reference to the corporate seal).
8. He explained that many CMA members and segments of society are calling for changes to champion greater equity and diversity in the medical profession. While medical leadership has made significant headway in terms of gender balance it is still very under-represented by racialized and marginalized groups. The leadership at the CMA needs to lead by example to forge a new more inclusive path forward.
9. Dr Nohr explained that the CMA consulted with members and stakeholders on the proposed bylaw amendments and heard about the need for sponsorship, training, and mentorship for underrepresented individuals to attain and succeed in leadership positions. The CMA also heard about the desire to maintain democratic principles and to avoid a tokenism approach to diversity.
10. Delegates engaged in a question and answer session about the proposed bylaw changes. In response to questions, Dr. Nohr explained that nominations from the floor are no longer allowed, as per a bylaw amendment passed at the 2019 AGM, and that the Board of Directors' fiduciary duty is to the organization, not directly to members. He also clarified that members of the proposed Leadership and Diversity Search Committee (LDSC) would possess the necessary competencies in equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), acquired either through lived experience or through training, and that the LDSC would employ a framework of target ranges for the required skills and attributes being sought of new CMA leaders. In expanding the ratification of leadership positions to all members present at the AGM (as opposed to only General Council delegates), the CMA would instil greater democracy by ensuring that more members are involved in the ratification of the slate of nominees.

The bylaw amendments related to the national presidential election included in Appendix B of the Canadian Medical Association 2021 Report to Members are hereby adopted as the bylaws of the Association. ***Defeated***

The bylaw amendments related to the leadership diversity model included in Appendix B of the Canadian Medical Association 2021 Report to Members are hereby adopted as the Bylaws of the Association. ***Defeated***

Motion was put forward to postpone the decision to a future special meeting, which the Chair and Parliamentarian ruled out of order. This ruling of the Chair was appealed. The ruling of the Chair on the point of order was upheld.

Motion to extend the 2021 AGM until 7:00 pm Eastern Time.
Resolution AGM 21-1 ***Carried***

The bylaw amendments related to housekeeping changes included in Appendix B of the Canadian Medical Association 2021 Report to Members are hereby adopted as the bylaws of the Association. ***Defeated***

11. Dr. Nohr noted that several corporate business proposals had been submitted to the CMA by the 2021 deadline. One of the proposals was determined to be related to health policy and was referred to the health policy proposal stream for appropriate follow-up. The remaining four proposals were referred by the Board to the Governance Committee for further study and consideration, in accordance with the provisions as outlined in the Operating Rules and Procedures.

Audit and Finance Committee report and appointment of auditors

12. Dr. David Cram, Chair of the CMA Audit and Finance Committee, provided an overview of the CMA Enterprise's financial position, noting that the Enterprise is in excellent financial health and that auditors provided an unqualified audit opinion of the CMA's 2020 financial statements. Dr. Cram highlighted that, in 2020, the CMA Foundation donated \$30M to pandemic-related causes. He also noted that the CMA membership fees for students, residents and retired physicians will remain at zero for 2022; the fee for regular members will be maintained at \$195.

The Canadian Medical Association hereby appoints Ernst & Young LLP as external auditors of the association, to hold office as auditors to the association until the next annual meeting of the association or until their successors are appointed.

Resolution AGM 21-2 ***Carried***

Q&A with President, Board Chair, and Francophone Spokesperson¹

13. The Question and Answer session was postponed due to time constraints.

Nominations Committee report and General Council ratification

14. This portion of the meeting was chaired by Dr. Sandy Buchman, Chair, CMA Nominations Committee.
15. Only delegates were eligible to participate in the ratification vote, and nominations from the floor were no longer possible, stemming from a bylaw change adopted at the 2019 AGM. Dr. Buchman explained the process to delegates and noted that new terms would commence following the close of the meeting.

President-Elect

16. Dr. Arika Lafontaine (AB) was confirmed as President-Elect for the 2021-22 association year.

Board of Directors

17. The following individuals were confirmed to the Board of Directors for a 3-year term, starting on August 22, 2021:
- Dr. Rachel Forman (ON) (2nd term)
 - Dr. Courtney Howard (NT) (2nd term)
 - Dr. Nigel Walton (BC)
 - Dr. Paula Cashin (NL)
18. The following individual was confirmed to the Board of Directors for a 1-year term, starting on August 22, 2021:
- Dr. Emily Stewart (Resident)

Dr. Buchman explained that the candidate for the student position (1-year term) on the Board of Directors had withdrawn and, as provided in the CMA Bylaws, the CMA Board of Directors would fill what is considered a vacancy. He noted that the Board was working closely with the Canadian Federation of Medical Students to identify an appropriate candidate, and an individual would be named shortly

Annual General Meeting

19. The following individuals were confirmed for a 3-year term, starting on August 22, 2021:
- Dr. Melanie Bechard (AGM Chair)
 - Dr. Kimberley Kelly (AGM Vice Chair)

¹ Postponed to a later date

Committee on Ethics

20. The following individuals were confirmed to the Committee on Ethics for a 3-year term, starting on August 22, 2021:
- Dr. Jesse Kancir (BC/YT)
 - Dr. Gilles Beauchamp (QC)
 - Dr. Sharron Spicer (Prairies/NT)
 - Dr. Robyn MacQuarrie (Atlantic provinces)
 - Dr. Julie Richer (ON)
21. The following individuals were confirmed to the Committee on Ethics for a 1-year term, starting on August 22, 2021:
- Dr. Olivia Lee (Resident – second term)
 - Sandhini Lockman (Student – initial term)

Governance Committee

22. The following individuals were confirmed to the Governance Committee for a 3-year term, starting on August 22, 2021:
- Dr. André Bernard (Member-at-large)
 - Dr. Boluwaji Ogunyemi (Member-at-large)

Audit and Finance Committee

23. The following individual was confirmed to the Audit and Finance Committee for a 3-year term, starting on August 22, 2021:
- Dr. Lowell Van Zuiden (Member-at-large)

Nominations Committee

24. The following individual was confirmed to the Nominations Committee for a 3-year term, starting on August 22, 2021:
- Dr. Conrad Schulte (AB)
25. The following individual was confirmed to the Nominations Committee for a 1-year term, starting on August 22, 2021:
- Dr. Emily Stewart (Resident)
26. Dr. Buchman explained that the candidate for the student position (1-year term) on the Nominations Committee had withdrawn and, as provided in the CMA Bylaws, the CMA Board of Directors would fill what is considered a vacancy. He noted that the Board was working closely with the Canadian Federation of Medical Students to identify an appropriate candidate, and an individual would be named shortly.

General Council delegates ratify en bloc all candidates as presented in the CMA Nominations Committee booklet and as projected during the Nominations Committee report on August 22, 2021.

Resolution GC 21-01

Carried

Installation of CMA President and inaugural President's address²

27. The installation of the 2021-2022 CMA President and inaugural address were postponed due to time constraints.
28. The meeting adjourned.

² Postponed to a later date

Officials

AGM Chair and Vice Chair, 2021

Chair / Speaker	Ernst Schuster, MD
Vice Chair / Deputy Speaker	Melanie Bechard, MD

Board of Directors, 2020-21

Board Chair	Suzanne Strasberg, MD
President	Ann Collins, MD
President-Elect	Katharine Smart, MD
Past President	Stephen (Sandy) Buchman, MD
Alberta	Carl Nohr, MD
British Columbia	Nigel G. Walton, MD (December 2020 -August 2021) Charles Webb, MD (August - December 2020)
Manitoba	David Cram, MD
New Brunswick	Allison Kennedy, MD
Newfoundland and Labrador	Yordan Karaivanov, MD
Nova Scotia	Gerard MacDonald, MD
Northwest Territories	Courtney Howard, MD
Ontario	Rachel Forman, MD
Prince Edward Island	Larry Pan, MD
Québec	Abdo Shabah, MD
Saskatchewan	Clare Kozroski, MD
Yukon	Alexander Poole, MD
Public Member	Janet Ecker
Resident	Michael Arget, MD
Student	Victor Do, MD