EXECUTIVE REPORT
Rishi Sharma
CFMS Director of Education
Annual General Meeting 2020
September 19-20, 2020, London, ON

DESCRIPTION

The Director of Education is responsible for setting the strategic direction of the CFMS Education portfolio and have detailed knowledge of all CFMS policy and activities pertaining to medical education. They will speak to CFMS’ positions on medical education issues at strategic settings including through media. In addition, the Director of Education will serve as the primary contact and spokesperson to a number of external national organizations and stakeholders in medical education. They will attend external meetings on other boards, committees, task forces and working groups pertaining to medical education as the representative of medical students in Canada.

As Director of Education, I had the pleasure of overseeing all Canadian Federation of Medical Student (CFMS) activities pertaining to medical education issues. In this role, I help oversee the monthly Academic Roundtable, CFMS Education Committee, and CFMS Research Committee. I work closely with other CFMS portfolios on priority areas such as advocacy around the unmatched Canadian Medical Graduate (uCMG). I also work closely with the attaché to the Education portfolio, which is Avrilynn Ding this year who serves as one of the Ontario Regional Directors. I also serve as the CFMS representative to a number of external learner organizations including the Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada (AFMC), Canadian Resident Matching Service (CaRMS), and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.

I. ACTIVITIES OF DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

1. Education Committee
   a. Selection and onboarding of incoming National Officer of Education for 2019-2020 – Alex Cohen
   b. Collaborating with Education attaché in supervising the nominations committee process to select new file leads for the Education Committee. New Education Committee members are:
      i. Accreditation – Nilasha Thayalan
      ii. Unmatched Canadian Medical Graduate – Nathan Rider & Lucas King
      iii. Competency Based Medical Education – Daniel Lu & Irena Zivkovic
      iv. Matchbook – Chloe Lim & Adree Khondker
      v. Policy Liaison – Vivesh Patel & Takhliq Amir
      vi. Interprofessional Education – Gladys Bruyninx & Kathleen MacMillan
      vii. Tech & Innovation – Vinyas Harish
      viii. Choosing Wisely – Ethan Zhang
      ix. CITAC – Cory Lefebvre
   c. Assisting in the design of work plans for each file lead, providing feedback and direction based on strategic goals to outline key initiatives to complete for the year
   d. Following up on the main initiatives of each file lead & guiding their work moving forward
   e. Main initiatives for file leads are as follows:
      i. Accreditation – review/update ISA, gather feedback from members on efficacy of toolkit
      ii. Unmatched Canadian Medical Graduate – recruit for Peer Mentorship Network, update uCMG Task Force membership, draft uCMG section for Matchbook, update backgrounder following CaRMS R1 iterations
      iii. Competency Based Medical Education – creation of Transition to Residency Guide
      iv. Matchbook – update and re-design of Matchbook 2019-2020
v. Policy Liaison – review Education position papers from past 15 years and review action items needing to be addressed, collaborate with NOHP to update Advocacy Tracker, assist with position papers being generated within the portfolio
vi. Interprofessional Education – update CFMS IPE position paper, collaborate with external organizations to develop IPE initiatives
vii. Tech & Innovation – prepare position paper regarding AI within UGME, synthesize resources/grants for students interested in pursuing projects that relate to Tech & Innovation
viii. Choosing Wisely – connect with Choosing Wisely and outline initiatives/projects students can partake in
ix. CITAC – develop relationship with CITAC, find opportunities for MD/PhD students

2. Research Committee
   b. Selection and onboarding of Research Committee members
   c. Research Committee consists of:
      i. NOR Sr. – Lia Huo
      ii. NOR Jr. – Ethan Peters
      iii. Research Committee – David Li, Caleb Sypkes & Margaret Sun
   d. Collaborating and providing strategic input into initiatives for the year, which include:
      i. Research Podcast Series
      ii. Research Spotlight
      iii. Creation of research resources for students interested in conducting research
      iv. Infographics
      v. Medical Education Database

3. Academic Roundtable
   a. Co-chaired by National Officer of Education, Alex Cohen & Education attaché and Ontario Regional Director, Avrilynn Ding
   b. CFMS was able to promote collaboration amongst member organizations and VP Academics on topics such as:
      i. Assessment feedback mechanisms for pre-clerkship/clerkship students
      ii. Incorporation of POCUS curriculum in UGME
      iii. Lecture attendance policies and strategies
   c. ART was also an effective platform for schools to share information and discuss key topics this year such as the AFMC 8-week Electives Diversification policy, policies on time off for Match Day, BPAS changes on CaRMS program descriptions, and the wellness curriculum task force work
   d. Plan to implement bi-monthly updates from Education portfolio to ART, which would include updates on key advocacy initiatives, updates regarding work conducted by Education Committee & Research Committee, and any other pertinent news

4. Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada (AFMC)
   a. Steering Portal Committee:
i. Promoting and advocating for recommendations outlined within the position paper published by the AFMC Portal Working Group that was approved at AGM 2019, which included:
   1. Standardizing response times for electives
   2. Continuing to advocate for a shorter window for booking electives, AFMC made the change from 28 to 26 weeks, seeking 24 week window
   3. Standardizing elective reimbursement policies and ensuring that all anticipated costs are clearly communicated
   4. Providing transparent data/information regarding electives, such as stating capacities, dates when electives are not likely to be accepting students, flagging electives that are completely booked

b. Application Fees/Refunds Working Group
   i. National electives fee reimbursement policy
      1. Currently exploring different models of reimbursement via the AFMC Working Group on Application Fees and Refunds
      2. Based on conversations from most recent meeting, most likely will
   ii. Decreasing the electives application window to 24 weeks in advance of elective start date

c. Electives Business Network
   i. Discussed means of improving electives response time. Specific changes brought up for further deliberation:
      1. An automatic 7-day cancellation for electives that are offered but not accepted by a student
      2. Capping the number of concurrent applications students may submit for a given period
      3. Piloting automatic home school verification process to streamline elective confirmation process
   ii. Tool for anonymous reporting of violation of policies listed in the school profiles (e.g. securing electives outside the portal)
   iii. Explore how the portal may be leveraged to enforce the AFMC electives diversification policy
   iv. Ensuring a special designation for previously unmatched students to allow them to apply for electives sooner without severely compromising elective opportunities for current-year students
   v. Standardizing institutional profiles

d. Future of Admissions in Canada Think Tank
   i. Provided feedback on AFMC position paper on diversity, equity, and inclusivity
   ii. Discussion on the following topics in medical school admission:
      1. Central Application Service (similar to OMSAS) with goal of decreasing costs of medical school application
      2. Use of co-efficients/ multipliers in the admission process to admit more students from disadvantaged backgrounds and under-represented groups
      3. Re-examining markers used in medical school admission: GPA, MCAT score thresholds
      4. How best to link medical school applicant, matriculant, and graduate data with a common identifier to analyze how students from different demographic groups fare
   iii. Finalized a paper that is set to be presented at AMEE

e. Entry Routes Working Group
   i. Discussion about decreasing the number of direct-entry route disciplines offered via the
CaRMS R-1 main residency match to graduating medical students, and alternatives

ii. Completed report that was distributed to PGME

iii. Work of this group has been transferred to PG Governance Council as that venue is best suited to discuss the implementation of the various possible solutions

iv. Creation of Entry Routes Harmonization Task Force to address actionable items that are proposed from PG GC

5. **Canadian Residency Matching Service (CaRMS)**
   a. Application Review Committee
      i. Met with committee to address online application concerns and improvements
      ii. Developed 4 priority ideas to implement:
         1. Notification of program description changes by PDs to students in a timely manner
         2. Tracking progress of document uploads on CaRMS and placing space holders so students know which documents are needed for each program rather than confirming back with program descriptions
         3. Making bilingual platform more accessible and accurate
         4. Providing additional word processing options for personal letter section
   b. Best Practices in Applications and Selection
      i. Implemented new R-1 main residency match program description template with more details on selection criteria
      ii. Collaborating with PGME and program directors to ensure selection criteria sections are complete and thorough
      iii. Will utilize example program descriptions that are superior to identify as model examples for other programs
   c. Interview Communications Tool
      i. Implemented for R-1 residency match 2019-2020
      ii. Will monitor outcomes and liaise with programs to see if there are any concerns/items needing to be troubleshooted
   d. Joint Match Violations Policy Committee
      i. Provided feedback on revision of the match violations policy, advocating for more accountability by programs
      ii. Finalized policy that holds both programs and students accountable

6. **Royal College**
   a. Committee on Specialty Education
      i. Ongoing conversation with the Entry Routes Working Group co-led by the AFMC and Resident Doctors of Canada
      ii. Supported Royal College decision to create working group to examine how Indigenous health teaching may better be integrated into all post-graduate education programs
   b. Medical Student Podcast Initiative
      i. Working with Royal College to create podcasts for students to learn more about specialties, particularly those with limited exposure in medical school

7. **Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS)**
   a. Consultation Group
i. Member of consultation group that is tasked with exploring some of the challenges to the medical schools posed by the accreditation elements, documents and processes and to possibly find efficiencies and solutions
ii. Participated in annual consultation group meeting in June 2020 to discuss areas of improvement within the accreditation process
b. Implementation of ISA suggested changes
   i. Collaborating to implement the suggestions outlined by the work of last year’s Accreditation File Lead, Cynthia Min

8. Medical Council of Canada (MCC)
a. Represented by Victoria Januszkiewicz, who is the CFMS MCC Representative
b. Overall, continuing advocacy to decrease fees/cost of completing MCC examinations for medical students
c. Collaborating with Global Health portfolio, specifically HEART, in the creation of objectives regarding climate change and its impacts on health into UGME
   i. Initial draft of objectives created and circulated to FMEQ for review
d. Working with key stakeholders (AFMC, CMA, RDoc) on addressing the significant concerns brought forward by medical students with regards to implementation/delivery/scheduling of the MCCQE I Examination during COVID-19
   i. Issues surrounding communication of the exam and its scheduling
   ii. Issues around discrepancy with scheduling and unfair processes for students to confirm examination date/time/location
   iii. Significant concerns regarding supporting and accommodating students needing accommodations, many of whom were treated unfairly
   iv. Technical issues with the delivery of the exam and day of technical issues/platform malfunctions leading to exam cancellation/deferment
   v. Growing concerns regarding validity of scores granted many students experienced significant concerns writing the exam due to the nature of the exam platform crashing and students being locked out of their exam session. As a result many students were not able to perform to their true ability on this examination
   vi. Advocating for refunds & lowering of threshold to pass given the unique challenges of this year

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9. Canadian Medical Association (CMA)
a. Participated in introductory conference call regarding Education section of task force on Virtual Care
b. Drafted sections of report regarding Education component of virtual care that was sent to task force for integration into overall report
c. Virtual Care Task Force Report has been published by CMA

10. Other Projects
   a. Match Supports
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i. Collaborating with SA portfolio to house supports for students entering residency match in one location on website

ii. Improved access of resources and updated website layout to ensure ease of access

iii. Assisting uCMG File Leads in the recruitment and implementation of the Peer Support Network for students that may go unmatched

iv. Collaborating with MD Financial Management to ensure that $150 reimbursement for unmatched students is secured and provided

b. National Annual Survey

i. Creation of inaugural National Annual Survey, the aim of which is to survey the CFMS General Membership on key organizational issues

ii. Purpose will be to generate a report that will be utilized to assess the initiatives of the CFMS, but also to aid in advocacy with external organizations

iii. Goal is to have this initiative continue on an annual or bi-annual basis to collect data and generate reports for the CFMS

c. uCMG Think Tank

i. Launched this group with our initial meeting to set scope, terms of reference and goals of this group

ii. This group will serve as a strategic planning and forum for collaboration on issues surrounding uCMG in an effort to coordinate initiatives and develop new ideas/action items

11. COVID-19

a. Virtual Learning

i. Due to the effects of this pandemic, virtual learning has become a mainstay of medical education

ii. Continuing to work closely with medical societies to ensure the transition and effectiveness of virtual learning is meeting needs of students

iii. Collaborating with AFMC on strategies to implement effectively for virtual learning

b. Effects on Clerkship

i. Ensuring students are able to meet accreditation requirements in a restricted clerkship model

ii. Advocating for students to gain adequate clinical exposure in disciplines they are wishing to pursue

c. Visiting Electives

i. All visiting electives have been cancelled for the class of 2021

ii. We are working closely with AFMC to ensure that students receive refunds

iii. Depending on the circumstances, advocating for a return to visiting electives when safe to do so for class of 2022

d. CaRMS Residency Match

i. Re-structured CaRMS R1 Match timeline and application process in collaboration with other key stakeholders

ii. Participated in subcommittees of ARMC to address virtual interviews and program
II. NEXT STEPS

1. **Education Committee**
   a. Review current positions and need for continuation as well as need for new/additional positions
   b. Recruit new file leads
   c. Set directions for upcoming year based on priorities outlined in Education Strategic Plan 2020-2022

2. **National Annual Survey (NAS)**
   a. Finalize report for publication
   b. Begin work on next year’s NAS, taking into account challenges/lessons learned from this year’s iteration

3. **AFMC**
   a. Portal Steering Committee
      i. Continue to work on improvements to AFMC Portal as outlined in Education Strategic Plan 2020-2022
      ii. Provide feedback on Automatic Home School Verification Process, New Search Criteria and Institutional Profile Standardization
   b. Electives Network
      i. COVID-19 effects & changes to electives
      ii. Continue to work with AFMC on reduction of elective booking window
   c. Fees/Refunds WG
      i. Established current method of refunds, work to improve implementation
      ii. Collaborate with UG Deans to advance initiative to reduce elective fees

4. **CaRMS**
   a. Application Review Committee
      i. Improvements to the online platform, continuing to advocate for student needs
      ii. Advocating for changes as outlined in the Education Strategic Plan 2020-2022
   b. Interview Communication Tool
      i. Improve utility of tool with changes to interview format given COVID-19

5. **Royal College**
   a. Specialty Podcast
      i. Collaborate on creation of specialty podcasts to help educate students on Royal College specialty residency programs
      ii. Collaborate with key stakeholders (FMEQ, RDoc, FMRQ)
6. **COVID-19**
   
a. Collaborate with local medical societies to address concerns/challenges brought about due to COVID-19
   
b. Continue to work with external organizations (AFMC, CaRMS, MCC, etc.) to ensure that the effects of the pandemic on students are mitigated and reasonable solutions are developed to address the changes to medical education/residency match/graduation

### III. MEETINGS ATTENDED

*Meetings listed below are those that fall within the purview of the Director of Education portfolio.*

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 6, 2019</td>
<td>Academic Roundtable Meeting</td>
<td>Teleconference</td>
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<td>Oct 6, 2019</td>
<td>Ontario Regional Director Transition Meeting w/ Debbie Brace (outgoing ORD), Felipe Fajardo &amp; Avrilynn Ding (incoming ORD)</td>
<td>Teleconference</td>
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<td>Oct 7, 2019</td>
<td>AFMC Working Group Meeting w/ AFMC Working Group members</td>
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<td>Oct 8, 2019</td>
<td>CaRMS Interview Communication Tool WG Meeting</td>
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<td>AFMC Electives Network Meeting</td>
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<td>AFMC Portal Steering Committee Meeting</td>
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<td>Oct 20, 2019</td>
<td>Call w/ Victor Do (President)</td>
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<td>CFMS Board Teleconference</td>
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<td>Oct 25, 2019</td>
<td>CaRMS Application Review Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Ottawa, ON</td>
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<td>Oct 25 - Oct 27, 2019</td>
<td>CFMS FBM</td>
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<td>Oct 28, 2019</td>
<td>CFMS Education Portfolio Strategic Meeting w/ Avrilynn Ding (Ed Attaché) &amp; Alex Cohen (NOE)</td>
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<td>Oct 29, 2019</td>
<td>ARMC Definitions Meeting</td>
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<td>EdComm – Matchbook File Lead Onboarding</td>
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<td>EdComm – Tech &amp; Innovation File Lead Onboarding</td>
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<td>Nov 7, 2019</td>
<td>EdComm – Policy Liaison File Lead Onboarding</td>
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<td>EdComm – IPE File Lead Onboarding</td>
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<td>EdComm – Accreditation File Lead Onboarding</td>
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<td>Nov 22, 2019</td>
<td>CaRMS Learner Meeting</td>
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<td>Nov 25, 2019</td>
<td>CFMS Research Committee Strategic Planning Meeting w/ Avrilynn Ding (Ed Attaché), Lia Huo (NOR Sr.) &amp; Eagan Peters (NOR Jr.)</td>
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<td>Nov 25, 2019</td>
<td>MCC Strategic Planning Call w/ Victor Do (President), Avrilynn Ding (Ed Attaché) &amp; Victoria Januszkiewicz (MCC Representative)</td>
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<td>CFMS Education Portfolio Strategic Meeting w/ Avrilynn Ding (Ed Attaché) &amp; Alex Cohen (NOE)</td>
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<td>Dec 12, 2019</td>
<td>Board Check-In w/ Victor Do (President)</td>
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<td>CFMS Education Committee Teleconference</td>
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<td>Entry Routes Working Group Teleconference</td>
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<td>Dec 20, 2019</td>
<td>Future Admissions of Canada Think Tank (FACTT) TC</td>
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<td>Jan 3 - Jan 5, 2020</td>
<td>CFMS Winter Board Meeting</td>
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<td>Feb 12-13, 2020</td>
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<td>Mar 9, 2020</td>
<td>Royal College Specialty Video Meeting w/ Dr. Ken Harris</td>
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<td>Apr 3, 2020</td>
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<td>CFMS Education Portfolio Check-In w/ Victor Do</td>
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<td>Apr 18-19, 2020</td>
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V. CONCLUSIONS

I am incredibly honoured and humbled to have served as the CFMS Director of Education 2019-2020. The Education portfolio is vast in scope and filled with many advocacy initiatives for medical students. I am proud to have represented the medical student perspective on a national stage and working to improve the medical education experience for each Canadian medical student.

This year has seen a lot of change/adjustment when it comes to the Education portfolio. COVID-19 has truly changed the landscape of medical education, forcing medical students and educators to re-imagine the way we receive/deliver education. Although COVID-19 has brought about many unwanted and at times unfortunate changes, it has also been the spark to consider innovative and progressive changes to the way medical education is administered. I am hopeful that as we continue to learn and adapt to this global pandemic, we will continue to advocate for changes that are in the benefit of medical students.

I am proud of the work we have done as a portfolio. Our launch of the National Annual Survey was a success and I am hopeful that this initiative will continue in the future so that we can gather important data from our members to drive organizational decision-making, stay tuned for our formal report coming soon. I am also excited for the publication of our Transition to Residency Guide, another new initiative from this year. Lastly, the creation of the unmatched Canadian medical graduate (uCMG) Think Tank this year will allow for us to unify our efforts and work collaboratively across various portfolios to address this multifaceted issue. We are hopeful that this group will be able to strategically plan initiatives/advocacy regarding this very important issue.

In addition to all the new initiatives, we continue to forge ahead with our long-standing advocacy/initiatives such as the CFMS Matchbook, AFMC Student Portal advocacy, collaborations with CaRMS, and MCC advocacy, to name a few.

It has been a true pleasure working with medical student leaders from across the country, I have learned so much from you and you continue to inspire me each and every day. One of the remarkable aspects of being a board member is getting to work with such wonderful people.

Additionally, I could not have done this role without the excellent support of the Education portfolio team. Firstly, Avrilynn Ding has been instrumental as the attaché to the Education portfolio and bringing her vast experience to the table, I am excited to see you take on this role as the incoming Director of Education and know you will do amazing things. Alex Cohen, our National Officer of Education, has been the glue keeping this portfolio together, your organization, attention to detail and ability to oversee ART & the Education Committee have allowed us to be productive and efficient. Lia Huo and Eagan Peters, our National Officer of Research Sr. & Jr. respectively, have transformed the Research Committee and spearheaded many new initiatives to increase medical student engagement with research.

Lastly, I would like to thank my fellow board members, this year was not what we had expected and it disheartens me that we were not able to spend more time together, but I have been so impressed with all the work you have all done and your passion for medical student advocacy. I know this is only the beginning for your careers.
as leaders in the medical community. Victor, Steph, Sarah, Achieng, Helen, Adel, Anson, Avrilynn, Felipe, Devon, Henry, Clara, and Corinne - I wish you all the best and thank you for making this year so memorable. Finally and definitely most importantly, I want to thank our administrative staff - Rosemary & Stephanie. You make the CFMS what it is and allow us students to succeed in our roles by handling all the behind the scenes work. Your efforts do not go unnoticed and I am so grateful for you both, the CFMS would not be what it is without you!

Thank you for this incredible opportunity, it has been a wonderful experience that I will never forget!

Sincerely,

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