**CFMS Bilingualism Committee – Terms of Reference**

April 2017

Prepared by Lucy Luo, 2016-2017 CFMS Quebec Regional Representative

*Represent, support and connect French-speaking medical students*

The Canadian Federation of Medical Students represents over 8,000 medical students from 14 Canadian medical student societies from coast to coast. The mission of the CFMS is to connect, support, and represent our membership as they learn to serve patients and society. Our members come from diverse linguistic backgrounds and some are pursuing their medical studies in French. In hopes of increasing the accessibility of the organization to French-speaking students, in 2013 the CFMS created a temporary group, the Bilingualism Task Force, to help with the translation of official communications and documents released by the organization. In order to continue our efforts to connect and support Francophone medical students across Canada, the Bilingualism Task Force was renamed the Bilingualism Committee and gained its permanent status following a resolution passed during the CFMS AGM 2016. Since its creation, the Bilingualism Committee, which is composed entirely of student volunteers, have worked diligently to translate various documents ranging from brief weekly social media posts and official lobby day communiqués, to more lengthy publications such as the Matchbook and the CFMS website. The Bilingualism Committee has not only helped the CFMS to reach out to its French-speaking members but it has also allowed a group of passionate student-translators to get involved with the CFMS in a meaningful and rewarding way.

*Promotion of bilingualism*

In light of Canada's increasingly diverse population, there is a growing need to better align medical education with the current and future needs of Canadian society. With the exception of Quebec, which has a majority Francophone population, there exist many French-speaking minority communities across other Canadian provinces. Outside of the Quebec province, there are only two institutions (University of Ottawa and the Centre de formation médicale du Nouveau-Brunswick) offering to train physicians in French. This is why the Bilingualism Committee also has the mandate to promote bilingualism within the CFMS’ constituents such that their future patients may benefit from medical students’ abilities to practice medicine in both official languages. This will hopefully improve access to health services for French-speaking minority communities in the years to come.

*Mandate*

1. The CFMS Bilingualism Committee shall be responsible for the translation needs of the organization.

1.1.  Regular translation tasks include: weekly CFMS Tweets and Facebook posts, regular website updates, and other evolving demands.

1.2.  Special translation tasks may include but not limited to the following: the CFMS Matchbook, Lobby Day communiqués and CFMS press releases.

*Composition*

2. The CFMS Bilingualism Committee will be headed by one of the CFMS Regional Reps, this person will be the CFMS Bilingualism Committee Chair.

2.1.  This individual will be determined following the election of the new Executive at the Annual General Meeting each year.

2.2.  This individual will be responsible for the recruitment and training of student-translators (new and returning volunteers) as well as their subsequent organization into working groups.

2.3.  This individual will also manage the distribution of translation tasks requested by any Executive member such that all tasks are completed in an accurate and timely fashion.

3.     Any CFMS member can apply to be part of the Bilingualism Committee given that they have submitted a short letter of intent in French and completed the initial French level screening assignment. These applications will be reviewed by the CFMS Bilingualism Committee Chair.

*Responsibilities*

4. The responsibilities of this committee will be to translate all documents and resources that are forwarded to the Bilingualism Committee by the Executive Board.

5.     In addition, the Bilingualism Committee will be involved in promoting bilingualism in medicine whenever possible, at the discretion of the Chair.

*Oversight*

6. The Bilingualism Committee through the lead Executive Representative will report to the CFMS Executive Board at the regularly scheduled meetings of the CFMS. Any changes to the Bilingualism Committee shall be made by the Executive Committee.

Overall, this proposed CFMS Bilingualism Committee will meet CFMS’ ongoing need for translation of its resources and increase accessibility of the organization to French-speaking students. It will aim to promote bilingualism and help the CFMS better represent, support and connect members from diverse linguistic backgrounds, including students studying medicine in French.