

# EXECUTIVE REPORT

*Victoria Turnbull  
CFMS Interim Director of Education  
Spring General Meeting 2022  
April 21-23, 2022, Calgary, Alberta*



## DESCRIPTION

The Director of Education is responsible for setting the strategic direction of the CFMS Education portfolio and having detailed knowledge of all CFMS policy and activities pertaining to medical education. They will speak to the CFMS's positions on medical education issues at strategic settings including via various forms of media. In addition, the Director of Education will serve as the primary contact and spokesperson to several 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. I serve as the CFMS representative to several 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.

It is well known that this has been a particularly challenging year at the CFMS, to say the least. I was appointed as the Interim Director of Education following recent challenges faced by our organization and the resignation of the former Director of Education, Neha Malhotra. Certainly, this position can bring challenges that lead to stress and burnout. Coming into this role following this turnover meant that the portfolio required restructuring and a plan for future stability.

As the Interim Director of Education, I have had the pleasure of engaging in all CFMS activities pertaining to medical education issues. I oversee the Academic Roundtable and both the CFMS Education Committee and CFMS Research Committee. I work closely with many other portfolios for priority areas of advocacy and communication around unmatched Canadian Medical Graduates (uCMGs). I also work closely with multiple Regional Directors, including Alvin Qiu, Sherry Mahmood and Sara Abdessamie who work tirelessly to support the restructuring and work of this portfolio.

Please note that this report is the first executive report from the Director of Education since AGM 2020. Where possible I have tried to provide the historical context that I am aware of, but unfortunately, I am unable to speak to meetings and activities prior to my entering the role.

## I. ACTIVITIES OF DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

### *I. Education Committee*

- a. The education committee is responsible for supporting projects which support students as they navigate medical education
- b. In looking at our education resources from this Committee, we started with a framework of breaking down the medical education pathway into important steps:
  - i. Admissions
  - ii. Matriculation + Pre-clerkship
  - iii. Clerkship

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- iv. Participating in the Residency Match
- v. Transition to Residency
- c. Our goal with breaking this pathway down was to create resources aimed at all landmarks of medical education
- d. In overseeing the education committee, I have partnered with our 3 National Officers of Education to assign our committee members as file leads to the following projects:
  - i. Accreditation – Julia Chai
  - ii. Guide to Starting Medical School – Jules Perez, Elaine Liu, Seung Ho Lee
  - iii. Position Paper: AI in medical school – Mehrshad Hanafimosalman, Geoff Elder
  - iv. Mentorship Pilot Program – Aruni Jayatilaka, Michael Aaw
  - v. Match Task Force and Related Projects
    - 1. Guide for Clerkship – Elaine Liu, Simone Dew
    - 2. Guide to Navigating the Match in COVID – Kayleigh Yang, Jason Vu
    - 3. CFMatcheS Social Media Resource, focus on creating accessible match resources – Mairead Cavinaw, David Wu, Seung Ho Lee
    - 4. Political Advocacy Lead (Cross appointed through Government Affairs) – Or Golan
    - 5. The Education Committee and Match Task Force specifically have been well supported and greatly benefited from the work done by our Communications Liaison, Andrea McGrath-Janes
  - vi. Transition to Residency Guide – Parsa Tahvildar, Geoff Elder
  - vii. Report on the 2021 Match – Kayleigh Yang, Cameron Wong, Mairead Cavinaw
  - viii. Policy Liaison – Mehrshad Hanafimosalman
- e. The Director of Education supports and guides the creation of Work Plans which outline the principles and deadlines of each resource
- f. The main initiatives for each file lead at present are as follows:
  - i. Accreditation – as a National Officer and representative of the Education Committee and the CFMS, Julia sits on the Committee on the Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools
  - ii. Guide to Starting Medical School – creating a guide that will support students with useful advice and resources as they navigate matriculation into medical school
  - iii. Position Paper: AI in med school – cross-written through Government Affairs, with support from the Education Committee
  - iv. Mentorship Pilot Program – using novel virtual platforms that enable walkability to connect students and residents to support increasing mentorship and engagement, with the first event set to occur between matched clerks and penultimate clerks in May
  - v. Match Task Force – intended to be a source of local expertise on topics relating to match advocacy including application-related topics (eg timelines, CaRMS interface), visiting electives, and unmatched Canadian Medical Graduates

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1. Guide for Clerkship – intended to provide students on advice, resources and tips for navigating clerkship, particularly with respect to how it has changed in COVID
  2. Social Media Resource: CFMatchES – providing a way to tell stories of uCMGs and provide low barrier advice and tips from residents for navigating the match depending on which specialty students are applying to
  3. Match Day Resources – including our Peer Support Network both as manually paired mentors and as the Forum, our Reimbursement Grant, and our CMA SafeSpaces (cross-organized through Student Affairs)
  4. The Matchbook will be housed within this task force and will be produced every two years for the future. This will allow these resources to be distributed to other projects and was necessary for the time being given some external tumultuousness faced by the Education Committee
  5. Political Advocacy Lead – in partnership with the OMSA, we advocated to the OMA’s Human Resources Committee on the importance of increasing PGME seats
- vi. Transition to Residency Guide – we will be reviewing the previous Transition to Residency Guide and either adding new information and resources, or potentially creating a report or guide to transitioning to competency-based models of education
- vii. Report on the 2021 Match – our external partners have created their own Report from their perspective, this Report will be similar but will focus on the perspectives of students and the unique challenges that they faced being the first cohort to navigate the Match virtually. It will also encompass MatchStats
- viii. Political Advocacy – we will be reviewing all prior Education Position Papers and reporting the asks from each, and identifying which have been completed and which require further advocacy work
- g. Overall, the Education Committee is passionately working to produce useful resources for students by students and has weathered significant challenges in the last 18 months. The three National Officers of Education and myself have rebuilt this Committee and its resources from the ground and hope to continue this important work. Bringing stability to this Committee and Portfolio have been important goals of mine. Within that, we recently passed a motion at the Board for one of these National Officers to participate in an extended term to maintain the current projects and vital institutional memory that will help to support this Committee.

## **II. Research Committee**

- a. The Research Committee is led by the:
  - i. NOR Sr – Margaret Sun
  - ii. NOR Jr – Bonnie Niu

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- b. The Research Committee consists of: Alexander Moszczynski, Jusitn Lin, Robert Gill, Jim Xie, Kevin Zhao, George Kachkovski, Lorena Mija, Dominique Boucher
- c. The Research Committee oversees and produces the following projects:
  - i. Research in Medicine Podcast Series
  - ii. Research Highlights
  - iii. Research Methods and Statistics Manual
  - iv. Research Infographics
  - v. Collaboration Between Physicians and Researchers Seminars
  - vi. [Scholarship Database](#)
  - vii. The National Annual Survey
  - viii. Cross-project with Government Affairs: Addictions Medicine Study
  - ix. SSHRC Initiative on Data Sharing in Canadian Medical Education
- d. The main direction and future of these initiatives is:
  - i. Research in Medicine Podcast Series
    - 1. Continue to produce an 8-episode series highlighting research in various clinical domains
  - ii. Research Highlights
    - 1. Highlight medical student research, with the potential to create a contest and add prizes, as well as featuring students and their projects on our social media pages
    - 2. We are editing the submission form to streamline the sign-up process
  - iii. Research Methods and Statistics Manual
    - 1. Intended to be an introduction and brief overview that students can access to understand engaging, participating in and producing medical/clinical research
  - iv. Research Infographics
    - 1. Design and collate graphics about research, research methods & analysis which can be uploaded onto the website or to social media as a digestible source of information for students
  - v. Collaboration Between Physicians and Researchers Seminars
    - 1. Sessions that provide the differing perspectives of medical students, clinicians, and active academic researchers on interesting topics in research, with the first session ideally set to occur in late May/Early June
    - 2. We may be raffling prizes to increase student participation and engagement, currently in discussions
  - vi. Scholarship Database
    - 1. Provides information on available grants and scholarships to participate in research
  - vii. National Annual Survey
    - 1. An initiative founded by former Director of Education Dr. Rishi Sharma. The existing 2020 report is stored in CFMS archives. We are in the

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process of compiling and publishing the 2020 report. Once this has occurred, we will be re-starting the NAS process of surveying students annually. This involves the school with the highest engagement on the survey receiving a prize.

2. The NAS is used to assess both engagement with the CFMS itself as well as student opinion on important advocacy topics. Each Portfolio submits their own set of questions, and these are compiled to create a larger survey.

### **III. Academic Roundtable**

- a. Co-chaired by myself (Interim Director of Education), Alvin Qiu (Western Regional Director), and the three National Officers of Education (see separate Executive Report)
- b. Initially this year, ART meeting less frequently (bi-annually) was trialed in an effort to reduce ‘Zoom fatigue’ and burnout faced by our student representatives. The intention was that communication between meetings would occur via text virtual formats. Unfortunately, this proved to be quite challenging. ART was recently re-established as a live, synchronous meeting and meets approximately every month to two months.
- c. Through the ART, CFMS was able to promote collaboration between member schools on such topics as:
  - i. Student mistreatment
  - ii. Curriculum changes pertaining to EDI, for example the incorporation of programs such as Visual Dx to aid in diagnosis of skin conditions on different skin tones
  - iii. Duty hour work policies
- d. ART also acts as a vital platform for us to gather input from students on vital advocacy initiatives, including visiting electives, reference letter formats (narrative v. structured), standardized ethics examinations in the match (FMProC, Casper), interview formats and recording (synchronous v. asynchronous)
- e. ART allows the Director of Education and more broadly the Portfolio to update the schools on our initiatives and advocacy work

### **IV. Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada (AFMC)**

- a. Portal 2.0 Steering Committee
  - i. Promote the initiation of the new Portal in time for visiting electives for the class of 2024, to avoid difficulties faced in instituting it for the class of 2023, namely readiness in time for 3-year schools to book their electives
  - ii. Promoting and advocating for recommendations outlined in the position paper published by the AFMC Portal Working Group and approved at AGM 2019 which included
    1. Standardizing and improving the response time for electives

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- a. With regards to improving the response time, previously the change was made from 28 to 26 weeks, and we continue to advocate for a shorter time frame
  2. Standardizing elective reimbursement policies, ensuring all anticipated costs are communicated
  3. Providing transparent data regarding electives including the elective capacities and dates over which students are not likely to be accepted for electives
- b. Match Committee
- i. Advocating for improved match timelines as discussed at ART and PRT and with students broadly
  - ii. Discussing and advocating for changes to the 2021 AFMC Match Report
  - iii. Discussing and advocating for the recommendations laid out in the 2017 Position Paper: Support for Unmatched Canadian Medical Graduates (passed at AGM 2017)
    1. Adopt a standardized extension of clerkship curriculum for all medical students who remain unmatched after the second iteration of the CaRMS residency match in their graduating year
    2. Provide better education and awareness about both preventable and non-preventable red flags to students throughout their four years of medical school, with increased emphasis on the final year
    3. Offer comprehensive wellness and mental health resources to any student who remained unmatched following the residency match
    4. Provide personalized career planning resources to unmatched medical students
    5. Student status should be extended to all unmatched students entering the extended clerkship curriculum to ensure student loans do not go into repayment during the unmatched cycle
    6. Student status should be extended to all unmatched students entering the extended curriculum to ensure that provincial medical associations that provide insurance to students should officially extend their coverage
    7. Postgraduate programs should provide feedback to unmatched students to help them better understand the reasons for going unmatched and to allow them to improve for future residency matches
    8. Explore development of an unmatched network (beyond the unofficial one that exists within the CFMS)
  - iv. Advocating for the implementation of the CaRMS Self Identification Questionnaire for data gathering about differences in match performance from an EDI perspective
  - v. Advocating for structured reference letters

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1. Prior studies show that narrative letters reflect known biases in our society that structured reference letters may help to reduce. We continue to discuss this at Academic Roundtable and have also liaised with Regional Directors to ensure students' opinions are heard on this matter. Overwhelmingly, students have been in support of programs moving to structured reference letters, with occasional concerns that we have aimed to address.
- vi. Interview Formats: synchronous v. asynchronous and recording of interviews continues to be an ongoing discussion item at the ARMC and is reciprocally an ongoing discussion item at ART as the AFMC develops a policy on this.

## ***V. Canadian Residency Matching Service (CaRMS)***

- a. Application Review Committee
  - i. Attended by ORD
  - ii. Met with the committee to address student concerns about online applications
  - iii. Recommended implementation of word counts for personal letters as opposed to page counts as the CaRMS interface provides a disparate number of pages from the word processors in which students often draft their letters
  - iv. Recommended policy of removal of photos from custom CVs
  - v. Discussed the appropriateness of 'fit' as a selection criterion
  - vi. Discussed blinded applications, templates for CV, and the utility of the custom CV in addition to the existing CaRMS CV, recommended that going forward only one is required as this doubles student workload

## ***VI. Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS)***

- a. Onboarded CACMS Representative Jr, Julia Chai
- b. CACMS continues to discuss changes to the ISA process of which we participate in discussions

## ***VII. Other Projects***

- a. Match Day Supports
  - i. Collaborating with SA portfolio to provide supports for unmatched students at a joint CMA SafeSpaces session
  - ii. Collaborating with SA portfolio to ensure accuracy of the wellness resources on the website
  - iii. Re-establishing the Peer Support Network
  - iv. Collaborating with VP Finance and MD Financial Management to ensure that \$150 reimbursement for unmatched students will continue to be secured and provided
  - v. With input from our Peer Support Network, we designed an unmatched advice book to provide students who have gone unmatched with written support

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- b. CFMSxMD Financial Management Interview Looks Contest
  - i. Designed a social media contest to increase engagement during interviews with the CFMS and to support students as they progressed through interviews
- c. National Annual Survey
  - i. Housed within the Research Committee we continue to work on collating and publishing the original 2020 report and re-establishing the survey as an important means for students to get involved

## II. NEXT STEPS

### *I. Education Committee*

- a. Review current positions and projects and determine strategic direction of projects and committee
- b. Ensure projects within the Committee add value to student supports
- c. Set directions for the upcoming year, and review the prior Education Strategic Plan 2020-2022
- d. Confirm which National Officer will be remaining this year as NOE Sr, to continue to establish and stabilize the projects within this committee
- e. Transition the match day supports back under the direction of file leads within the Education Committee, with publication of the Matchbook every two years
- f. Re-establish connection and contacts with the University of Toronto for MatchStats, with inclusion of the 2021 analysis with the 2021 CFMS Match Report

### *II. External Committees*

- a. Continue to consolidate the original education external committee meetings within the Education portfolio, an ongoing project between all Board members

### *III. National Annual Survey*

- a. Finalize 2020 report for publication
- b. Have portfolio directors submit questions for NAS 2022
- c. Design strategic plan for best engaging students with the NAS

### *IV. AFMC*

- a. Electives Network
  - i. Continue to advocate for the return of visiting electives
  - ii. Continue to work with AFMC on reduction of elective booking window
- b. Match Committee (ARMC)
  - i. Continue to advocate for implementation of recommendations from prior uCMG position papers and the AFMC's own 2018 Policy Paper
  - ii. Continue to advocate student perspective regarding interview formats & recording as provided by ART and Regional Directors

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- iii. Begin to discuss and advocate against the increasing number of standardized ethics examinations in the match and other barriers to students applying to specialties and programs

## **V. CaRMS**

- a. Continue to advocate for changes as outlined in the Education Strategic Plan 2020-2022

## **VI. Royal College**

- a. Committee on Specialty Education
  - i. As previously outlined by the Education Strategic Plan and former Directors of Education, the CFMS will be advocating for reduced entry routes

## **III. MEETINGS ATTENDED**

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

<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Location</b>
January 21, 2022	AFMC Match Committee	Teleconference
January 22, 2022	National Officers of Education Onboarding Meeting	Teleconference
January 23, 2022	Match Task Force Objectives Meeting	Teleconference
February 5, 2022	National Officers of Research Onboarding Meeting	Teleconference
February 5, 2022	Research Committee Meeting	Teleconference
February 7, 2022	Collaboration Between Physicians and Researchers Seminar Planning Meeting	Teleconference
February 9, 2022	Communications liaison planning for match day meeting	Teleconference
February 10, 2022	Director of Government Affairs, Introduction to being a Portfolio Director & Portfolio Management	Teleconference
February 10, 2022	Transition Meeting with Former Director of Education (2019-2020)	Teleconference
February 13, 2022	Continuation of Portfolio Director Introduction and Management with Director of Government Affairs	Teleconference
February 16, 2022	National Officers of Education Strategic Planning for Education Committee	Teleconference
February 19, 2022	Continuation of Portfolio Management Basics with Director of Government Affairs	Teleconference
February 19, 2022	Meeting with Education Committee	Teleconference
February 20, 2022	Panelist at MacEwan University Science Club	Teleconference
February 26, 2022	Academic Roundtable Meeting	Teleconference
February 27, 2022	CFMS Board Meeting	Teleconference
March 7, 2022	AFMC Portal Steering 2.0 Committee	Teleconference
March 15, 2022	Meeting with QRD for French Match Day Support	Teleconference

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March 23, 2022	Black Health Education Collaborative, Scientific Planning Committee	Teleconference
March 29, 2022	Student Consult for Election – Interest in DoE	Teleconference
March 31, 2022	FMEQ Match Day Partnership	Teleconference

## IV. REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

I have been honored to serve as the Interim Director of Education for the CFMS for the latter part of the 2021-2022 school year. I am incredibly proud to have had the opportunity to represent and advocate for medical students across the country. The Education Portfolio oversees a vast number of projects and advocacy concerns, and it is deeply humbling to have had this opportunity.

Many students are aware of the challenges that have faced the CFMS recently. In particular, the Education Portfolio has seen quite a bit of turnover related to this and ongoing concerns of burnout of past Directors. This portfolio had been well overseen by the lovely team of National Officers but needed guidance and a plan to re-establish its former stability. In this interest, we have extended the term of one of our existing National Officers of Education to assist in the transition of the incoming Director of Education and Education Portfolio.

I am excited for the many new projects that our Committees will be producing. We have transitioned the previous uCMG think tank into our Match Task Force, a home for match resources including our new social media page CFMatcheS and ongoing Match advocacy in partnership with the Government Affairs Portfolio. We will be transitioning the Match Day resources into this task force as well, including our Peer Support Network which we re-established this year, our advice book for unmatched graduates, the second iteration grant we offer in partnership with MD Financial, and the CMA Safe Spaces session that is offered through our Student Affairs Portfolio. In guiding the match resources and portfolio overall, I am inspired by the opportunities for cross-collaboration that this portfolio necessitates.

At Academic Roundtable, where we hear the concerns of our students from their representatives had been previously disbanded. I am excited to have re-established this in partnership with the Western Regional Directors, and to have learned about novel equity, diversity, and inclusion curricular initiatives at our member schools. At every level our Portfolio and organization's aim is to integrate EDI seamlessly.

We are excited to welcome initiatives that will connect our members in a more longitudinal manner than our general meetings, such as our new mentorship program within the Education Committee. This project takes advantage of novel walkable virtual platforms to allow formation of mentorship and friendships between students and residents at all our member schools.

In re-establishing our Education Portfolio, we needed in some cases to re-distribute resources from prior initiatives, most notably the Matchbook. We will instead be producing guides to entering medical school, clerkship, and navigating the match in this virtual era given the recent announcement that there will be no

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visiting electives for the class of 2023. We intend to have the Matchbook return, but on a less frequent than annual basis to continue to bring our membership resources that are most useful and suitable for them. And of course, we continue to advocate for the return of visiting electives as both vital learning and networking experiences.

I could not have done this work without the support of my fellow Regional Directors and the help of our Director of Government Affairs, Montana, in supporting and advising me on how to organize and manage a Portfolio. I also am grateful for (and similarly could not have led this Portfolio without the help of) all the National Officers that work tirelessly to support the Education Portfolio: Margaret, Bonnie, Rob, Julia, and Cindy. I see you and am grateful for all the work that you do.

I would also like to say a thank you to Dr. Rishi Sharma, former Director of Education from 2019-2020 for meeting with me on multiple occasions and helping advise me on the vastness of this Portfolio. Similarly, thank you to our Past President, Dr. Stephanie Smith, in helping me to understand the governance system that Portfolios fall within and helping to define the most prominent priorities when I stepped in in January. I hope that in this short period of time we have achieved the milestones we needed to.

I would also like to thank this year's original and elected Director of Education, Neha Malhotra – Neha, wherever possible I have tried to integrate your vision of this portfolio, and I will always be grateful for how welcome and supported you made me feel. As an unmatched student joining such an incredible group, I had worried that I would be an outcast. You were the first person I mentioned this to, and you set the tone for an incredible year where I have had amazing opportunities to advocate for and represent unmatched Canadian medical graduates both provincially as the Ontario Regional Director (see separate report) and nationally. I hope that this work continues with the incoming Director of Education, as I know how deeply it has resonated with many members of our student body.

**Victoria Turnbull, HBMSc**

MD, Class of 2022, Faculty of Medicine, McMaster University  
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Ontario Regional Director || Directrice Regionale de l'Ontario  
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*I respectfully acknowledge that I live and work on the traditional territories of the Erie, Neutral, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee and Mississaugas.*