



# Medical Alumni Association

Supporting our medical students & junior staff

## Winter 2023/ 2024

### **Annual conference and dinner**

We are in the process of organising the programme for our 2024 Annual Conference and Dinner to be held on Saturday 13th April so this is an important date for your diaries!

At our last Steering Committee meeting in November, one of the suggestions for a theme was AI and other new technologies that are revolutionising medicine. We are delighted to have secured Professor Mark Girolami FRSE to be our keynote speaker to set the scene on the potential of machine learning applications to medicine and health care research and practice.

Prof Girolami is a Fellow at Christ's College, Sir Kirby Laing Professor of Civil Engineering in Cambridge and Chief Scientist at the Alan Turing Institute. His research lies at the intersection of the statistical, mathematical and computing sciences. This lecture is timely as the Cambridge medical curriculum is being adapted to ensure current students are informed about the potential of AI and other novel technologies. During our Covid-19 webinar series we heard from several Alumni about their research contributions in testing AI utilisation and we will have contributions from staff and alumni illustrating this. Alumni speakers booked include Dr Andrew Soltan (m. 2012), Dr Ed Turnham (m. 2004) and Mr Piyush Mahapatra (m. 2004) all of whom work on the research and application of AI to healthcare. Details of the programme and registration details will be circulated shortly and posted on our website.

## **Work with CCMS**

We continue to work with the CC Medical Society (CCMS) representing current students and are in advance planning for two events in the New Year with them. The first an afternoon meeting on Sunday 4th February when alumni will be invited to talk about their careers and how they decided to follow that path, to help students begin to think about future choices. Alumni contributing to this include Dr Chris Lane (m. 2002), Dr James Jones (m. 2005), Dr Jeremy Woodward (m. 1984), Dr Ankeet Tanna (m. 2014), Dr Judith Allanson (m. 1980), Dr Rashmi Patel (m. 2002) Dr Abteen Mostofi (m. 2002), Dr Maisam Fazel (m. 1994), Dr Alex MacMillan (m. 2006), Dr Ed Turnham (m. 2004), and Prof Richard Kirk (m. 1973). This will be followed by a drinks reception and dinner in College. Thanks to current CCMS President Jeremy Yuan and past President Ardon Pillay for organising this event.

## **Webinar with Simon Schama**

Another date for your diary is an online talk and discussion with College Alumnus and distinguished historian Prof Sir Simon Schama at 6pm on Wednesday 13th March. He will discuss the inspiration for writing 'Foreign Bodies - pandemics, vaccines and the health of nations'. The book was conceived, researched and written during the Covid-19 pandemic when like many people he was subject to lockdowns in the USA and observed the issues that arose such as the use of hygiene and quarantine controls as well as the abuse of public health government advisers such as Dr Fauci and of course the anti-vaxxers! He looks at some key scientists such as Waldemar Haffkine who helped develop vaccines for cholera and bubonic plague and led a programme of mass vaccination in British India against much resistance. The book is a fascinating read and the recent pandemic shows that many of the challenges remain in the 21st century.

## **Ultrasound technologies session**

The other event, targeted at students in their clinical years, will provide an opportunity at a w/e to hear about and try out some ultrasound technologies under expert clinical supervision. Our Treasurer, Prof Jonathan Gillard, is helping to organise the session alongside colleagues at Addenbrookes Hospital Imaging staff. Dates for this event will be advertised and will take place in the Lent term.

## **Steering Group meeting**

Finally at recent Steering Group meetings we discussed how we can both encourage donations to the College and CCMAA funds as well as utilise existing available funds. We have started cautiously and in addition to supporting these two events we have agreed to donate funds for all new clinical students to buy stethoscopes at the start of their clinical training. We also support a graduation dinner for clinical students completing their full medical course and will look at supporting appropriate student expenses for attending research conferences relevant to their studies. These initiatives are guided by the College Director of Studies Dr Andy Stewart and Secretary Dr Isabel Huang Doran.

I want to encourage all our medical alumni to join us at our Annual Conference. If you are not able to come please keep in contact with me and the new College Development Director, Alexandra Rowlands. Enquiries about gifting to the College can be made to the Development Office on email [alumni@christs.cam.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@christs.cam.ac.uk)

Dr Tony Jewell

President

## **Spring 2023 update**

### **CCMAA Conference**

The Conference held in College on the 15th of April was very successful despite a relatively small attendance due in part to the proximity to the Easter holiday and the current NHS industrial actions. However, the quality of our speakers was high with excellent keynote speeches by one of our Patrons Prof Sir Keith Peters and by Emeritus Prof Chris MacManus (UCL) on the topic of medical education and the impact of the Todd Report, the development of the Cambridge Clinical course and the research into the effectiveness of different approaches to medical education. Lord Todd Chaired the Royal Commission on Medical Education (1968) while Master of Christ's College. After the keynote speeches we had a very useful session on the experience of gaining admission, studying medicine, and moving on to specialist training at Christs from Benjamin Bereford Jones (m 2014), Ardon Pillay (m 2018) and Mithylan Ganashwaran (m 2019).

Following the medical education section of the conference we had my presentation about Dr Szeming Sze, a distinguished medical alumnus and his role in the founding of the WHO and defining 'health'. This was followed by Lucy Gardner, the winner of the Tim Heymann Travel Prize in 2022 who gave a very interesting report about her elective in Tanzania and Malawi. Electives in Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs) is something that the CCMAA strongly encourages.

The post conference dinner was held in the OCR, and I am grateful to Dr Arnold Fertig (m 1968) for providing the 'vote of thanks' after a very enjoyable meal. I hope to get the presentations uploaded on the College Alumni events website to enable those unable to attend to dip into the slideshows.

### **Steering group**

The CCMAA Steering group also met before the conference and agreed to amend the terms of the CCMAA fund to enable us to better support medical students and young doctors in training in line with our mission. The recent conference was an example of the mutual benefit to students and alumni of joining together on specific issues.

At the meeting we reported back on the success of the four Covid webinars we organised and the lecture from Prof Sir David Spiegelhalter last November 2022 which was delivered in College to a mixed audience of students, staff, and alumni. There is an appetite to do further lectures from guest speakers as well as explore visits to places of interest in and around the Cambridge biomedical campus. Please get in contact with me with ideas about speakers and a theme for next year's conference.

Dr Tony Jewell  
President