



CMDFA By-laws

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1. ABOUT THE BY-LAWS

1.1. Purpose of the CMDFA By-laws

These By-laws are written to assist the various committees, groups and individual members of the Christian Medical and Dental Fellowship of Australia (hereafter referred to as the “Fellowship”) in understanding the everyday work and life of the Fellowship.

1.2. Method of Changing By-laws

The By-laws are a dynamic set of guidelines that can be updated, changed, or added to from time to time, in response to the changing needs of the Fellowship. The By-laws can be changed at Board meetings by the authority of the National Board of CMDFA (hereafter referred to as the “Board”) and will be made available to the members.

1.3. Relationship of By-laws to Constitution

The By-laws do not attempt to repeat all the content dealt with in the Constitution, and the By-laws are, in entirety, subservient to the CMDFA Constitution.

2. CORE ELEMENTS & FOUNDATIONS

2.1. CMDFA Story

Since 1949 the CMDFA has been a focal point for Christians in medicine and dentistry in Australia from all ages and stages. Springing out of the evangelical student movement (InterVarsity Fellowship), the Christian Medical Fellowship of the UK, and the ministry of Dr Howard Guinness, the Christian Medical Fellowships in Australia originally existed as separate State branches, becoming a national body in 1962. The dentists joined in soon after and we became the Christian Medical Dental Fellowship of Australia (CMDFA). A National office was established in 2000 in Sydney to serve the growing needs of the Fellowship.

CMDFA is linked around the world with a global community of around 100 like-minded groups through the International Christian Medical and Dental Association (ICMDA). The ICMDA include the two largest groups: CMF (UK) Christian Medical Fellowship (CMF) & Christian Medical and Dental Associations of the US (CMDA).

2.2. CMDFA Aims and Vision

(Refer to Constitution Rule 2 Objects)

CMDFA vision:

- CREATING COMMUNITY amongst doctors, dentists and students
- ENCOURAGING GROWTH IN CHRIST in the context of the shared vocation of healthcare
- STANDING FOR CHRISTIAN VALUES and providing a forum for developing and integrating Biblical values into daily healthcare practice, articulating and standing up for Christian medical ethics
- FOSTERING MEDICAL AND DENTAL MISSION & WITNESS in Australia and overseas
- CONNECTING & MENTORING - The supportive friendships, role modelling and mentoring that is so vitally present in the Fellowship is a critical part of why many members join, and remain members their whole lives
- RESOURCING & EQUIPPING doctors, dentists and students through transformational events and quality publications
- BEING A CHRISTIAN VOICE - Our desire is that more and more Christian doctors and dentists choose to identify with the CMDFA by becoming members, adding their voice, their experiences and their willingness to be visible Christians in healthcare, for the honour of Christ's Name.

2.3. Motto

Transformed by Christ, Transforming Healthcare

2.4. Basis of Belief Statement

(Found in CMDFA Constitution Rule 3)

Members are asked to affirm this statement upon joining and at membership renewal:

We believe in the revelation of the one true God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit), and the gospel of redemption and regeneration through the incarnation, the death, and the bodily resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We believe in the indwelling of the Holy Spirit until Christ returns finally to fulfil all things in Himself as it is given to us in the Bible, which is the divinely appointed authority for faith and life.

2.5. Membership Declaration

(Found in CMDFA Constitution Rule 7.b.iii)

Members are asked to affirm this declaration upon joining:

In joining the Christian and Medical and Dental Fellowship of Australia Inc. I declare my faith in God the Father, and in God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ who is my Saviour. I desire to be ruled by God the Holy Spirit speaking through the Bible, the divinely appointed authority in matters of faith and life.

3. NATIONAL BODY

3.1. National Chair

3.1.1 It is the duty of the National Chair to ensure that the Board operates in a manner that is conducive to the achievement of the aims of the fellowship.

3.1.2 The Chair will preside over meetings and ensure the Board is attending to its key responsibilities through:

- Managing Board composition through recruitment, induction and succession planning
- Communicating the vision and aims of the fellowship
- Promoting the development of a positive Board culture
- Maintain a good working relationship with the Chief Operations Officer.

3.2. National Secretary

3.2.1 It is the duty of the National Secretary to keep minutes of:

- All appointments of office-bearers and members of the Board
- The names of members of the Board present at a Board meeting or at a General meeting
- All proceedings at Board meetings and General meetings

3.2.2 The National Secretary will ensure that Minutes of proceedings of Board and General meetings shall be presented for acceptance by the Board or the members (as the case may be) at the next succeeding meeting and the final version of the minutes be securely filed for future reference.

3.2.3 It is also the duty of the National Secretary to carry out the following responsibilities of the Fellowship (as the case may be, this list not necessarily being exhaustive):

- To ensure appropriate and timely notification and circulation of Board papers in advance of Board meetings

- To ensure appropriate and timely circulation of any notices to the membership regarding meetings, resolutions and nominations in accordance with the Constitution
- To keep a record of Board appointments and elections, and Board positions becoming vacant
- To carry out such other duties as may be required by the Board from time to time
- Be able to advise the board on matters of process in relation to the Constitution and By-laws

3.3. National Treasurer

It is the duty of the National Treasurer to ensure that in any financial year:

- All monies received by the National Office, Branches, Chapters or other bodies within the Fellowship are recorded and accounted for in a transparent manner
- Ensure correct books and accounts are kept showing the financial affairs of the Fellowship, including full details of all receipts for monies received and payments authorised
- All payments made by the National Office are authorised by either the National Treasurer, the Chief Operating Officer or a delegate appointed by the Board
- The Fellowship's full year accounts are independently audited
- A quarterly National Treasurer's Report be presented to the Board
- An annual National Treasurer's Report be presented at the Annual General Meeting
- All branches, committees and groups are aware of CMDFA's general procedures for managing financial transactions, namely:
 - Monies received are, wherever possible, to be received (for example conference or workshop fees), be accepted or processed by the National Office, so as to centralise administration and account keeping;
 - Payments made are, wherever possible, to be made through or by the National Office, so as to centralise administration and account keeping;
 - The National Treasurer (or delegate) is to be notified of any payments or expenditure commitments with an annual total of more than \$5,000, as soon as able before the event or before any formal commitment is made with an external service provider;
 - Quarterly statements of any accounts held for CMDFA activities are forwarded to the National Office to enable Business Activity Statements to be prepared.

3.4. Luke's Journal

Luke's Journal is the journal of CMDFA.

- The number of editions each year will be determined by the Editors of the Journal in consultation with the Board.
- One (or more) members of the Board will attend meetings relating to the Journal and report back to the Board on any issues regarding the Journal.
- The appointment of editors for Luke's Journal is to be ratified by the CMDFA Board.

4. STATE BRANCHES AND REGIONAL GROUPS

The Board has the authority to undertake organisational restructuring of existing branches, committees and groups; or the formation of new branches, committees and groups, if this is considered in the best interests of the Fellowship.

CMDFA's historical structure has been based on the existence of active State Branches to provide a connecting point within each state for members, but in the absence of an active State Branch the Board will work with members to promote meaningful connection and engagement with the Fellowship. Within each state, there may also be regional branches or groups catering for the needs of members in regional, rural and remote areas, as the members initiate.

4.1 State and Regional Branch Committee Vision and Purpose

State and Regional Branches provide leadership of the Fellowship at state or regional level and are led by a committee. The committee will plan and organise events, conferences, facilitate communication and networking, monitor membership, support student leaders and activities, foster missionary support, encourage regional groups, liaise with Board and staff on matters of interest. Regional branches should determine whether they exist as a sub-branch of a State branch or whether they relate directly to the Board.

4.2 Composition of State and Regional Branch Committee

4.2.1 The composition and process of appointment of a State or Regional Branch committee is not fixed, however the committee must be:

- comprised of members of CMDFA;
- willing to accept responsibility as the State or Regional Branch;
- recognised by the Board as a valid State or Regional Branch;
- able to appoint one or two persons as Chair or co-Chairs.

- 4.2.2 Consideration should be given to including representatives from among recent graduates, students, dentistry, and regional/rural areas.
- 4.2.3 Committees are encouraged to offer open nominations for committee positions and conduct all committee procedures in accordance with accepted governance practices that ensure fair and transparent handling of appointments and decision-making. Any State or Regional Branch operating outside of accepted norms may be sanctioned or disavowed by the Board.
- 4.2.4 Formation of a new (or reactivated) State or Regional Branch committee must be approved by the Board.
- 4.2.5 Leaders and committee members should undertake timely succession planning.

4.3 Meetings of State and Regional Branches

State and Regional Branches are free to determine their own frequency and structure of meetings. If no meetings have been held by the branch in a 12-month period, the Board or national staff may initiate remedial intervention and discussion with relevant stakeholders with the aim of causing Branch renewal, improved functioning or temporary cessation.

Minutes or written summaries of State and Regional Branch meetings should ideally be shared with the Board to promote collaboration and mutual understanding.

5. RECENT GRADUATES AND STUDENTS MINISTRIES

CMDFA operates dedicated activities for both recent graduates and students, recognising the specific challenges faced by these groups. The Board generally includes non-voting representatives of each of these groups (e.g., Recent Graduates Worker, Student Worker, National Student Representative).

5.1. Recent Graduates Worker(s)

The Board is able to appoint paid or unpaid workers dedicated to ministries for recent graduates. In general the role includes the following responsibilities:

- Encouraging recent graduates around the country regarding living a radically obedient Christian life at home, at church, at university, at work, and in missional living both in Australia and overseas
- Encouraging recent graduates with their involvement in CMDFA
- Functioning as a representative of recent graduates to the Board, and vice versa with good communication in both directions
- Encouraging the creation and distribution of resource material relevant to recent graduates but also useful for other members of CMDFA
- Organising the annual Workers Retreat

- Coordinating the regional intern boot camps
- Facilitating the development of hospital fellowship networks
- Succession planning for their role and for other recent graduate ministries

5.2. Student Worker(s)

The Board is able to appoint paid or unpaid workers dedicated to ministries for dental and medical students. The Student Worker(s) will work closely with the National Student Representative as they undertake the following responsibilities:

- Encouraging students on campuses and in the hospitals regarding living a radically obedient Christian life at home, at church, at university, at work, and in missional living both in Australia and overseas
- Encouraging students with their involvement in CMDFA
- Functioning as a representative of students to the Board, and vice versa with good communication in both directions
- Encouraging the creation and distribution of resource material relevant to students but also useful for other members of CMDFA
- Overseeing the organisation of the annual VISION weekend and IMPACT Conference
- Facilitating the development of student fellowship networks
- Succession planning for their role and for other student ministries

5.3. National Student Representative and State Student Representatives

The National Student Representative will be a medical or dental student member. They will work closely with the Student Worker and will attend Board meetings in a non-voting capacity. They will liaise with student members in each state to identify a State Student Representative for each state and territory. The National Student Representative should also be a member of their State or Regional Branch.

The State Student Representatives will liaise with the National Student Representative and campus leaders to ensure good communication of CMDFA initiatives in both directions. They will liaise with student members in each university to identify campus leaders. The State Student Representative will also be a member of their home State or Regional Branch.

The National and State Student Representatives should aim to attend National Student Events each year. They may also be invited to attend development workshops run by the Board (e.g., Equip & Connect).

5.4. Campus Leaders of student Christian groups

These are not formal CMDFA roles, and often are not formal campus leadership roles, but CMDFA recognises the importance of connecting with students who influence others before they disperse from university campuses and seeks to identify the new campus leaders who might be suitable to invite to VISION weekend, and thus initiate relationship with the CMDFA.

5.5. National Student and Recent Graduate Events:

5.5.1. VISION weekend

This is an entry point for many student leaders and is a training weekend to equip medical and dental students for campus ministry, as well as make friendships amongst Christian peers, introduce the vision for the CMDFA and articulate the value to them of being part of the movement. The Student Worker should oversee the planning for VISION, working with the National Student Representative and any additional event Convenors including keeping any planning manuals up to date.

VISION is heavily subsidised to keep the cost to students very low as this is felt to be foundational to the ongoing health and growth of the movement. Funds come from participants, CMDFA National Budget, State and Regional Branches, and donations.

5.3.1 IMPACT Conference

This is the national conference of CMDFA for medical and dental students and recent graduates and their graduate mentors. IMPACT was birthed in 2000 and is an annual event built around strong Biblical teaching, articulation of vision, worship, prayer, discussion, mentoring and fellowship.

IMPACT is a student- and recent graduate-led conference, coordinated by an organising committee assembled largely from the hosting location. The National Office performs the major administrative functions in support of the organising committee. The Student Worker should oversee the planning for IMPACT, working with the National Student Representative and any additional event Convenors including keeping any planning manuals up to date.

5.3.2 Workers' Retreat

The Workers' Retreat is aimed at recent graduates, both hospital-based and practice-based. The focus is spiritual refreshment, relevant discussion, rest and renewal, friendship. The Recent Graduates Worker should oversee the planning for this event, working with any additional event Convenors and local recent graduates including keeping any planning manuals up to date.

5.3.3 Intern Boot Camps

Intern Boot Camps are run to assist incoming interns with adjusting to full time work in the public hospital system. They are held in several locations across the country in January just before the incoming interns commence work. Each local boot camp is run slightly differently depending on the local needs and numbers. Most locations will hold a half-day or full-day workshop to cover both practical aspects of surviving internship, and maintaining spiritual vitality despite the many challenges. The Recent Graduates Worker is responsible for coordinating with local recent graduates to ensure these boot camps are offered in as many locations across the country as possible. They will update the Intern Boot Camp manual periodically.

6. CMDFA SPEAKER CHOICE GUIDELINES

6.1. Speaker Choice Guidelines

Organisers of CMDFA events need to take great care to choose wisely who will be invited to speak at a CMDFA function. The damage from choosing speakers unwisely can be very significant, to the hearers and to the reputation of CMDFA.

“Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, watching over them— not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve.” (1 Peter 5:2)

1. **The preferred path is to choose speakers from among our CMDFA members:** people whom you know personally as godly examples in their lives and practice who are committed to “Following Christ, integrating faith”. Our members form a group of wise, godly and experienced resource people we can trust to understand the purpose of CMDFA events, particularly mentoring and modelling faith in healthcare practice.

2. **The speaker must be known personally by at least one (preferably two or three) of the organisers** who can vouch for them as an evangelical believer and regular church attendee. If an organizer or adviser or Board member expresses a concern, and the potential speaker is not well known, then err on the side of caution and do not move forward with that person.

3. **It is important that organisers ensure every speaker is informed and understands the CMDFA Core Mission and Values, and that they agree to personally endorse it.** Speakers can be asked to sign that they agree with our Basis of Belief and Membership Declaration.

7. **SOCIAL MEDIA**

7.1. Social Media Policy

The use of social media platforms to promote CMDFA events, resources and/or connectivity between members is governed by CMDFA's Social Media Policy. This is available upon request from the Board and National Office.