



# CANADIAN FEDERATION OF MEDICAL STUDENTS

Media Engagement Committee

**DEADLINE October 22, 2016**

## **Terms of Reference**

Created August 2013 by Thomas McLaughlin and Miriam Lerner

### *Background*

It is a central mandate of The Canadian Federation of Medical Students to represent medical students at national and international organizations, as well as to the federal government; in fact, “Representation” is encapsulated as one of the CFMS’s three pillars. This pillar is largely informed by position statements on a given topic. Position statements can be created by CFMS executives, other representatives, or any medical student, which if passed at an Annual or Spring General Meeting becomes the official position of the organization. As a result, there is a robust library of position statements which inform official CFMS policy.

Nevertheless, there is currently no mandated group whose job is to engage with relevant stakeholders after a position statement is approved. A position statement can easily be approved and then never be advertised to the media, to medical education stakeholders, or to governments. Although the VP Communications and relevant executives will utilize position statements to inform engagement with stakeholders, this is at present a reactive rather than proactive process.

### *Need for regular media engagement*

An effective mechanism to regularly engage the media is currently lacking in the By-Laws of the CFMS. Currently, this need is met on an ad hoc basis by the VP Communications. Important issues come up from time to time and are responded to in the media, but the CFMS generally reacts to issues in the media rather than creating dialogue proactively. Many comparable national organizations have an annual engagement strategy which includes planning how best to engage throughout the year on priority issues.

Coming up with a media engagement strategy on a regular basis is a worthwhile investment for the CFMS. However, an overarching organizational strategy would require coordination between various parts of the CFMS (e.g. education, global health, government affairs). A “Media Engagement Committee” would be an ideal way to facilitate the necessary dialogue and planning. Members would become familiar with CFMS policies and plan a strategy to engage the media on a yearly basis. This committee would also have the means

and talent to utilize creative engagement strategies such as scorecards, pamphlets, and graphically-pleasing publications.

### *Proposal*

1. Effective September 2013, it is proposed that there be the creation of a CFMS Media Engagement Committee that is responsible for planning an annual media engagement strategy.
  - 1.1. The Media Engagement Committee would meet at least bi-monthly (every two months) via teleconference, with funding coming out of the VP Communications budget line-item.
  - 1.2. The Media Engagement Committee would be tasked to complete by Spring General Meeting 2014 a set of recommendations as to the optimal terms of reference for itself.
  - 1.3. The Media Engagement Committee will plan to regularly create scorecards, pamphlets, and other publications related to existing position statements.
  - 1.4. The Media Engagement Committee would not change the process whereby CFMS executives make contact with members of the media – ie: the VP Communications would still be the main person to take media requests, and to find the relevant CFMS executive to take interviews.

### *Composition*

2. The CFMS Media Engagement Committee will be headed by the Vice President Communications.
  - 2.1. The VP Communications will be responsible for overseeing the selection/election of new appointees (in coordination with the VP Government Affairs), and reporting back to the Executive on any news related to this committee.
3. Further, the composition of the Media Engagement Committee will be such that there is at least one PAC chair, and at least one Global Health Advocate (GHA). The remaining membership will be drawn from the general membership through an open call for nominations. Additionally, the CFMS President, VP Government Affairs, National Officer of Human Rights and Peace, and VP Education will sit on this committee in advisory roles.

## *Oversight*

9. The Media Engagement Committee will be led by the Vice President Communications, who will regularly report on the activities of the committee at regularly-schedule CFMS executive meetings.

Overall, this proposed Media Engagement Committee will allow for CFMS policy goals to be supported by a robust media strategy. It will aim to provide a purposeful and rigourous mechanism to engage members of the media.

## ***Application Procedure***

Term: One year

Application Deadline: **October 22, 2016**

**Contact for further information:** VP Communications, Emily Hodgson  
([vpcommunications@cfms.org](mailto:vpcommunications@cfms.org))