

## **Working Group on Governance and Accountability of the CMAJ**

Outcome of the meeting held on Sunday, November 16, 2014  
Sheraton Gateway Hotel, Toronto

### **Background**

The CMA Board of Directors struck a working group to consider issues regarding governance and accountability of the CMAJ under NewCo. The Group was charged with working together to find a consensus solution and to report back to the CMA Board at the December 2014 meeting.

The Working Group met in Toronto on Sunday, November 16 to address the key issues raised by the Editor-in-Chief (EIC) and the Journal Oversight Committee (JOC). Membership of the Working Group included:

- 3 members representing the CMA Board (voting)
  - Dr. Chris Simpson, Chair
  - Dr. Shelley Ross
  - Dr. William Cunningham
- 2 members representing the JOC (members chosen by the JOC) (voting)
  - Dr. John Wootton
  - Dr. Eldon Smith
- Dr. John Fletcher, Editor in Chief (non-voting)
- Ms. Deborah Scott-Douglas, Acting Vice President, Professional Services and Leadership (non-voting)

### **Working Group Recommendations:**

The Working Group confirmed its commitment to the key tenets of the Pound Report (2006) and its successor report, the CMAJ Governance Review Panel II (2013). In arriving at the recommendations below, particular attention was paid to the recommendations of the Pound Report and Governance Review Panel which support and reinforce the fundamental concept of editorial independence. The recommendations below address the major points raised by the EIC and JOC. If approved by the CMA Board, additional work will be required to flesh out the details and operationalize each recommendation but this work is beyond the scope of the Working Group.

Employment:

- The CMAJ EIC along with the entire editorial team will move to NewCo and will be employees of NewCo

Management, staffing and business issues:

- The EIC will report to and be accountable to the NewCo CEO on all issues relating to management, business and human resources
- The editor-in-chief will be responsible for the editorial budget within the level agreed for each fiscal period based on the annual editorial business plan and in coordination with the overall CMAJ business plan and budget

Content and editorial independence:

- The EIC will report to and be accountable to the CMA Board on all matters pertaining to content and editorial independence

Hiring the EIC:

- An adhoc committee will be struck to lead the search for a new EIC. The search committee will include the NewCo CEO and Chair of the JOC
- The search committee will put forward a candidate for ratification by the CMA Board
- The Appointments and Review Committee (ARC) will have no role in the appointment process
- The employment contract will be between the NewCo CEO and the EIC
- The EIC will be hired for a 5 year term

Dismissal of the EIC:

- The EIC can only be dismissed by a 2/3 majority vote of the CMA Board having first sought the advice of the JOC

JOC appointment and accountability:

- The JOC will be appointed by the CMA Board and directly accountable to the CMA Board

JOC membership:

- Members representing the medical, journalism, scientific, research, international and reviewer categories will continue to be selected by the JOC
- Senior staff role - the NewCo CEO will replace the VP, Professional Services and Leadership
- CMA Board liaison role - The CMA Board will continue to appoint a CMA Board member to act as liaison and facilitate communications between the CMA Board, NewCo and the JOC
- NewCo Board liaison role – An additional member will be added to the JOC representing the NewCo Board. The NewCo Board will appoint a NewCo Board member to act as liaison and facilitate communications between the CMA Board, NewCo and the JOC

NewCo Competency-based board:

- An awareness and understanding of publishing and editorial practices will be represented within the competency profile of NewCo Board members

Attached please find a table which provides a comparative summary of the current state, the original proposal for the CMAJ and NewCo, and the consensus recommendations of the Working Group for ratification by the CMA Board.