



# Medical Alumni Association

Supporting our medical students & junior staff

## Autumn 2024

### Upcoming Event- Saturday 27 October

The CCMAA continue to work closely with the College Medical Society. This term, we are delighted to support an online event about working and training opportunities abroad:

At 5pm on Sunday 27th October, Christ's Medical Alumni currently practicing in the USA and Canada will discuss their experiences and offer advice to current Christ's medical students and recent graduates who may be considering working overseas. We are delighted to welcome the following speakers:

**Dr Vin Shen Ban (Neurosurgery) - Stanford/Florida [m. 2006]**

**Dr Carolynn Dude (Ob/Gyn) - Atlanta [m. 2003]**

**Dr David Beaver (Rural Medicine) - Canada [m. 1978]**

**Dr Praful Ravi (Medical Oncology) - Boston [m. 2006]**

**Dr Thet Su Win (Dermatology - MOHS Surgery) - Boston [m. 2003]**

This will be a hybrid webinar and we warmly welcome students and local alumni to attend in person in the Yusuf Hamied Court Seminar Rooms, where the webinar will be displayed. We would be delighted to have UK-based alumni attend either in person or online to offer their own perspectives.

The event will be followed by a dinner in Christ's Hall for students and alumni. To join us, please contact the College catering office ([mealbookings@christs.cam.ac.uk](mailto:mealbookings@christs.cam.ac.uk)) and notify them that you wish to join table reserved for the Medical Society group."

## 2025 CCMAA Conference

In a departure from our usual Spring meeting, we are pleased to announce the date of our next conference and reunion dinner will be **27th September 2025**.

September is a lovely time of year in College and we hope many of you will join us. Building on recent conferences on Medical Education and AI, proposed themes for the 2025 Conference are public health, health service and biomedical/clinical research. We are always interested in hearing from alumni about possible speakers and topics so please get in touch with your suggestions.

## CCMAA Steering Committee

The CCMAA Steering Committee will meet on 23rd October and we are open for new alumni to join us. We meet once a year online, and once in person on the morning of the Annual Conference.

The issues the committee consider include plans for the annual conferences but also other events such as the joint webinars, special invited lectures in College and more informal events with medical students and alumni. The planned study day for medical students to learn about practical skills in ultrasonography is an example.

The CCMAA funds medical students purchasing stethoscopes at the start of clinical training and a dinner for those at the end of clinical training at Christ's. We also want to encourage donations to the College charitable funds and specifically CCMAA to allow us to continue supporting current students. Please let me know if interested in joining the Steering Committee.

Dr Tony Jewell

President

Email: [tonyjewell8@gmail.com](mailto:tonyjewell8@gmail.com)

## Summer 2024 update

**The first two terms in 2024 have been action packed for the CCMAA and our student colleagues in the College Medical Society (CCMS).**

### **Conference on Career Choices**

Following the November 2023 Steering Group meeting we took forward some of the suggestions from committee members. For example, in February 2024 we organised a day conference on career choices alongside the CCMS, with alumni speakers giving brief resumes of their training decisions and current work. There were a wide range of careers in the spotlight from general practice, through to acute medicine, clinical research, surgery (including orthopaedics), psychiatry, neurorehabilitation and public health. We were pleased to welcome the Master of the College, Lord Simon McDonald, who joined us for some time, and he was pleased to observe the interaction between alumni and current students. Thanks particularly to Ardon Pillay (MBPhD student) and Jeremy Yuan (CCMS President) who organised the event, and of course the alumni who contributed. In view of the success of this event we plan to do another session with the CCMS looking at overseas opportunities for clinical research and specialty training during the Michaelmas term.

### **Webinar: Foreign Bodies: Pandemics, Vaccines and the Health of Nations**

In March we organised a webinar with alumnus Professor Sir Simon Schama who was speaking about his latest book **Foreign Bodies: Pandemics, Vaccines and the Health of Nations**. With Simon being a noted art historian and expert on European history, many of us were surprised to see him writing about science and health! He was well able to demonstrate his grasp of the history of pandemics, the role of science and individuals such as Waldemar Haffkine, who developed and mass-produced cholera and plague vaccines in British India. Simon became interested in pandemics during Covid-19 and observed the benefit of the novel vaccines, as well as the anti-vaxxer campaigns and vilification of eminent scientists such as Dr Anthony Fauci. All such reactions were replicated in his historical analyses of plague and cholera in the 19th and 20th centuries!

We had a very good attendance of about 120 participants and attracted historians and other academics in College and the alumni diaspora! We were grateful to Professor David Reynolds (Fellow in History) who thanked Simon and referred to a noted medical historian contemporary of Simon's at Christ's College - Professor Roy Porter. Porter's book *The Greatest Benefit to Mankind: A Medical History of Humanity* (1997) is described as the standard work on the subject and he, the greatest medical historian of his time. Sadly, Porter died prematurely in 2002 at the age of 55 and was unable to support Simon in his work.

### **Annual conference**

In April we hosted our annual conference on the topic of '*The benefits and potential risks of AI to health*'. We were delighted to have Professor Mark Girolami, Fellow of the College and Chief Scientist at the Turing Institute, as keynote speaker and he spoke about 'Scoping AI and opportunities for public health and healthcare'. He was ably supported by Drs Andrew Soltan (m. 2012), Ed Turnham (m. 2004), Piyush Mahapatra (m. 2004) and Marcella Montagnese (Junior Research Fellow in Biological and Medical Sciences) who talked about the application of AI to NHS innovation, clinical care and scientific research. Dr Rashmi Patel (m. 2002) chaired the final session on teasing out the benefits and risks with the help of speakers and attendees. Everyone seemed to think that the afternoon conference was a wonderful opportunity to reflect on AI and how it is being applied in many settings.

As has become our tradition at the conferences we also heard from the 2023 Tim Heymann Travel Prize winner Rayo Akande who, as a 5th year medical student, did an elective at Harvard School of Public Health on '*The UK and US healthcare systems: successes, challenges and pathways to excellence*'. The talk was well received, and we were delighted that Amanda Rowlatt, Tim's widow, attended and was able to present the Prize certificate. We are pleased to report that the financial award to the prize winner will be raised to £500 in the in future.

Looking forward we will be planning other joint events with the CCMS, providing opportunities for informal meetings with alumni and medical students, and planning next year's Conference.

We continue to support the purchase of stethoscopes for new clinical students at Christ's, symbolic of the transition to clinical training, and to also support the graduation dinner on completing their 6-year course. We hope to put on a practical ultrasound training session for 2nd year students and explore other opportunities to engage alumni with the College and support current students. We are grateful for the support of our Patrons and the College's Development Office who support us in organising events and communications. As ever, if medical alumni wish to be more engaged in steering our work, please contact the development office ([alumni@christs.cam.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@christs.cam.ac.uk)) or me directly.

Dr Tony Jewell  
President