



NEWS LETTER

August 2006

Dear Colleagues,

I bring you greetings on behalf of the Council of Medical Association of Jamaica (MAJ).

The MAJ continues to play a critical role in advancing the welfare of all our colleagues and ensuring that the health and well being of all our patients is assured, and zealously guarded by a cadre of well trained and highly motivated citizens.

We continue to promote professionalism and are quite pleased with the successful hosting of our annual symposium. The theme "Medicine Across The Ages: Challenges, Advances and Updates" was an ideal representation of the challenges that all physicians face in addressing the needs of our patients along life's continuum.

The scientific papers were elegantly presented and well received by all the delegates, and the overall consensus was that this was truly an intellectual feast, which left us academically sated. We anticipate that the symposium planned for next year will realize this level of excellence.

ADVOCACY

We continue to play an active role in advocacy as outlined below:

1. The Child Care & Protection Act.

A "conspiracy of silence" stigma has tarnished our noble profession for many years as we grapple with the dual conflict of the right of the child versus the right of the parent, and in many instances, doctors have been reluctant to furnish medical evidence of child abuse to the courts in order to maintain doctor/patient confidentiality.

All healthcare providers should and must play a critical role in combating this scourge.

We therefore appeal to all doctors to inform themselves of the Child Care & Protection Act and encourage them to take careful note of the section which requires all health care providers to disclose any child abuse, which is brought to their attention, to the legal authorities so that urgent intervention strategies can be put implemented.

2. Blue Cross of Jamaica Ltd.- Provider Access System (PAS)

We are pleased to inform you that the impasse between Blue Cross of Jamaica Ltd. and the panel of Blue Cross Medical Doctors have been resolved after almost a decade of intransigency. The details of the agreement are stated below:

- Blue Cross will absorb the cost of the transaction fee.
- Advanced Integrated System (AIS) has given Blue Cross a discount on the transaction fee from 1.75% to 1.5% up to a cap of US\$3.00.
- The services that can be swiped for are Family Physicians and Specialists. AIS has significantly reduced the cost of the fees related to equipment.
- The effective date was June 1, 2006.
- Please contact Mrs. Violet Wright at (927-9821) to clarify any concerns you might have re this agreement.



3. The Cuban Eye Care Programme

The MAJ was invited by the Ministry of Health to be part of a delegation which visited Cuba from June 15 – 18, 2006 to assess the Cuban Eye Care Facilities and to make recommendations for establishment of appropriate safeguards to minimize any adverse outcomes.

The visit to Cuba was, in my opinion, quite successful and the Ministry of Health is now actively implementing the recommendations made.

OUTREACH PROGRAMMES

We have expanded our outreach programmes and the MAJ is now an important stakeholder in Rescue, St. Andrew Care Center, Missionaries for the Poor; Special Olympics; Mamby Baptist Church, and The Women's Centre of Jamaica Foundation.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The MAJ, in association with Sanofi-Aventis, has developed a comprehensive state-of-the-art Diabetes Management Guideline, which will be provided free of cost to all doctors by the end of August.

BENEFITS

American Home Insurance Company has prepared a comprehensive personal accidents and disabilities insurance package for doctors. The premiums are extremely attractive. For further information please contact the MAJ Secretariat.

MAJ TRAVEL CLUB

Reservations for the educational tour to Alaska, August 25 to Sept 8 is now closed. Twelve colleagues will be going on the tour. The tour leader is Dr Neville Graham. For further information on future MAJ Travel Club tours please contact the MAJ Secretariat.

CONDOLENCES

We would like to express our deep condolence to the family of Dr Lucien Cooper who died tragically

last month; and to Dr. Horace Betton, whose wife passed on recently.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations are in order for:

- I. Dr. Derek Aarons, President of the newly formed Caribbean Bioethics Society.
- II. Dr. Evan O. Nepaul on the 10th anniversary of the Royale Medical Centre
- III. Blue Cross of Jamaica Ltd. for the publication of a second edition of the Jamaica Generic Drug formulary.
- IV. Prof the Hon Errol Morrison, OJ, on receipt of the Queen Elizabeth II Medal for his outstanding contribution to public health and for his contribution to the University of the West Indies. *This, it is believed, must be the highest accolade ever given to a medical practitioner working in Jamaica*

UPCOMING MAJ EVENTS

MAJIF Annual Open Meeting

Date: Saturday, August 26, 2006

Venue: Mona Visitor's Lodge, UWI

Time: 6:30pm

MAJ Council Meeting

Date: Sunday, September 3, 2006

Venue: MAJ HQ

Time: 10:00am.

Annual General Meeting

Date: Sunday, September 24, 2006

Venue: Knutsford Court Hotel

Time: 10:00am

We look forward to seeing you all there. You will have the opportunity to indulge in a robust debate about issues critical to your welfare and the health and wellbeing of all your patients.

MAJIF Risk Management Seminar

Date: Sunday, October 22, 2006

Venue: Knutsford Court Hotel

Time: 10:00am

Topic: Risk Management In Medicine

Dr Alverston Bailey
President