

# Federation of Medical Women of Canada

## Women, Peace and Security (FMWC WPS) Steering Committee

### Minutes, WPS Meeting September 30, 2020

Start of the Meeting: 1800 hrs

End of the Meeting: 1915 hrs

#### In attendance:

Dr. N. Azad (Chair), Ms. C. DeBiasio, Ms. B. Sivajohan, Dr. K. Breeck, Dr. E. Guilbert, Dr. S. Ross.,  
Dr. A. Niec (notetaker)

Previous Minutes of July 22, 2020: accepted by Dr. Niec; seconded by Dr. Ross

#### Discussion Items:

##### 1. Re: Abortion Sheet

Dr. Azad reported on the feedback received to date regarding the Abortion Fact Sheet. Action Canada stated that they “like the clarity and simplicity of the Fact Sheet”; otherwise MWIA was sent the sheet additionally although not noted in the last communication report from them. Dr. Azad questioned whether this sheet would be of interest to the WHO. Dr. Ross stated that they would not necessarily take interest as they like to generate and post reports from their organization.

A discussion occurred regarding the FACT sheet and who it belongs to. Dr. Guilbert suggested that FMWC own the Fact sheet and thus the Logo be placed on it and that it be available on our website and highlighted on this advocacy site.

**ACTION:** *Dr. Azad will follow-up with FMWC office regarding the logo and posting of the Fact sheet.*

Further discussion focused on other groups where the FACT sheet could be distributed (World Medical Association, WMA was raised). WMA was identified as a “conservative” organization that separated from the CMA secondary to differences in stances with respect to ethical issues (ie. MAID). CMAJ was sent the Fact sheet however, in order to increase its value to the journal developing it into an academic article was determined a likely way of getting the it published and thus distributed more widely.

**Action:** *Dr. Guilbert will look at the possibility of developing a manuscript for the Fact sheet.*

The committee was so grateful to Dr. Guilbert for translating the sheet into French in addition to all her work (and that of her colleague Veronique) in the development of the Fact sheet.

## 2. Special Interest Committee with MWIA

MWIA endorsement of the WPS committee occurred on November 11.

An annual work plan needs to be developed; we need to determine what other countries are members; it should not take long to put out a call for committees. The MWIA newsletter does not acknowledge the WPS endorsement. Dr. Ross clarified that the next newsletter from MWIA will come out in December. Alternatively a notice can be sent out to the regional vice presidents.

**Action:** *Dr. Ross will follow up with her contacts at MWIA in order to address best next steps. MWIA would need to send a call to countries for membership. Additionally the MWIA quarterly newsletter was noted not having been available to our membership recently and understanding its distribution is needed.*

## 3. Status of Women Meeting 2021 UN

Dr. Mini Murthy will have information regarding this upcoming topic. In 2021 meetings will be virtual – elimination of violence; women’s empowerment and the link to sustainable development; Date noted, March 15 – 26, 2021.

## 4. UN Department of Communication

The request of establishing FMWC as part of the UN was sent to the executive. The executive questioned the need for this given that the MWIA is already signed on in this position and we could therefore benefit from this relationship. Dr. Ross explained that there is no cost to signing on to this UN committee and this relationship increases the profile of our organization.

**Action:** *The Chair to bring this back to the new executive for discussion.*

## 5. Re: Webinar

The webinar for the honorable Ambassador Jacqueline O’NEILL was postponed from its originally scheduled date. The plan would be to reschedule this later in November (last two weeks after Remembrance Day) with consideration of the importance of this month with the anniversary of the signing of the Beijing Resolution. We have an opportunity to run two webinars – the above and also one with Dr. Dustin Costescu (Obs/Gyn) who was to speak at the IBM in February on medical abortion but needed to reschedule. Discussion focused on who to invite and how widespread to extend the invitation (CWIM?MWIA? AMWA?). Consideration of a step-wise process of invitation where members would have first priority over a specific time frame and then open to others was determined as best.

To note, Ambassador O'Neill indicated her preference for a Q and A forum where questions might be produced and available in advance. Objectives of this webinar might be to elevate knowledge of the Resolution and a focus on COVID. Her mandate is to influence Canadian government departments to promote the Resolution Framework and make sure there is collaboration between government departments.

**Action:** *Dr. Breeck to connect with her colleagues in order to get available dates for the Ambassador in order to begin to advertise this event. Consideration of taping the event in order that it be available on our advocacy site.*

#### 6. ABM Saturday October 3, 2020

The Report of our activities was submitted (thank you Dr. Azad and Breeck).

#### 7. WPS Network

The Network is very active. Now has an official NGO status. The number of emails they circulate is significant. The National Action Plans are off schedule (one year behind). Given there was a designated review schedule that was now late, there is a change in the focus and a review will be done half way through the 5 year plan.

#### 8. Review of the Chair Term and Mandate

Dr. Azad informed that her term was at the end; Dr. Andrews suggested a co-chair model; Dr. Azad would like to focus her attention to the MWIA committee WPS.

**Action:** *Can we put this on the agenda for the first meeting after the AGM*

#### 9. Rape kit Availability

Our student representatives, both researched how to access Rape Kits (and thus centres where these are available). There is a map of availability run through the government of Canada. Found a site <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/benefits-military/conflict-misconduct/operation-honour/sexual-misconduct-response-centre/resources-search-tool.html> This site outlines where rape kits are available. The students hope to write up a piece for the next FMWC newsletter. Additionally discussion about other site to report the findings included with the CMAJ. CMAJ has a site where one can deliver quick facts that physicians need to know when they face a woman who had been raped. This could be another way to link the site and share the findings.

**Action:** *the students will connect with Dr. Breeck and Guilbert (who can translate the information into French) about development of a fact sheet and also will write an article for the FMWC newsletter.*

#### 10. Advocacy on Climate Change

COVID first stress test on climate change; how does this impact women and how is the health care system ready to address these changes. Dr. Azad suggested a website : Green New Deal as a resource for information.