

ANNUAL REPORT 1997/1998

GENERAL

July 1997 began with members reviewing the outcomes of the Federation's biennial Board and general meetings and their associated two day conference which had been held in Vancouver the previous month. During the year membership numbers remained steady at thirty five with several continuing to return after several years' absence. Elections were held for President, Vice-President and for the Atlantic and Pacific regions. Two issues of the **Newsletter** and two other publications appeared.

BIENNIAL MEETING

This event, held in Vancouver in June 1997, attracted thirty seven representatives from twenty five member countries. Members debated **The management of change in nursing & midwifery** in the context of the Commonwealth Nursing & Midwifery Action Plan. Papers were presented by Yvonne Moores (UK, and Chair, Commonwealth Nursing & Midwifery Steering Committee), Nigel Kee, (New Zealand), Marie Muller (South Africa) and Joycelyn Hackshaw (Trinidad & Tobago). From these discussions emerged a resolution for circulation to the wider membership and for the Action Plan's Steering Committee to develop into recommendations for the 12th meeting of Health Ministers in 1998.

The minutes of the Board and general meetings, together with the texts of the papers delivered and reports of regional Board members, were distributed to all member associations and Commonwealth Chief Nursing Officers in September 1997.

ELECTIONS AND BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Peggy Vidot (Seychelles) was re-elected President for a second four year term and Beulah Duke (Trinidad & Tobago) was elected Vice President replacing Sister Francesca Vazhapily. Two new Board members, Judy Uren (Australia) and Karen Chalmers (Canada) succeeded 'Ana Kavaefiafi and Luret Clarkson for the Pacific and Atlantic regions respectively.

FINANCE

The biennial meeting considered the Federation's finances. The Federation is largely dependent on a grant from the Commonwealth Foundation for its core and activity funding; its own income from membership subscriptions remains inadequate for existing levels of activity and incapable of supporting any expansion of the Federation's activities or staffing levels. In the interest of small associations, which have difficulty in meeting their commitments, membership dues would remain at their present levels but, as agreed by the meeting, the President subsequently wrote to member associations asking for additional voluntary contributions from those which could afford to pay. By the end of the year three such contributions had been received.

BOARD MEMBERS' REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

In September 1997 the Commonwealth Secretariat joined the Federation in mounting a workshop for the West African region in Accra, Ghana on **Leadership development in nursing & midwifery: towards quality assurance in the health systems of Ghana and West Africa**. This was attended by nurses from Ghana, Gambia (recently returned to active membership of the Federation) and new Commonwealth member, Cameroon. Also present were nurses from Malawi and Lesotho. CNF President Peggy Vidot and the Secretariat's Janey Parris led the workshop sessions. Subsequently the Ghana Registered Nurses Association repeated this workshop at a series of local venues throughout Ghana to ensure that its aims were made known to the widest possible audience.

In March 1998 the three European member associations of the Federation mounted a successful two day conference, **Moving nursing forward: affirming our right to care**. This was held in Malta and was attended by over 400 nurses and midwives from Britain, Cyprus and Malta. The keynote address **Moving nursing forward: affirming our right to care** was delivered by Kyriaki Stubbings the regional Board member. This event was self funded.

The Vice President, Mrs Duke, represented the Federation at the Caribbean Nurses Organization meeting in Barbados in May 1998 and presented a report on activities.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

The Executive Secretary attended several events at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Edinburgh in October 1997 including the health seminar **Into the 21st century: the Commonwealth women's agenda for reproductive health & safe motherhood**. She also took part in consultation meetings for the forthcoming 1998 Health Ministers Meeting at the Commonwealth Secretariat and the final meeting of the Commonwealth Non Government Organisation for South Africa & Mozambique.

In March she spoke to participants at a London workshop, organised by the Institute of Development Studies and Liverpool University, for nurses from Malawi and Zimbabwe. She also represented the Federation at its European Regional Meeting held in Malta 27-29 March.

In recognition of her services to the Federation she was awarded the MBE in the New Year honours list

PUBLICATIONS

After a delay in the publications programme issues 19 and 20 of the **Newsletter** appeared. Two other titles **Nursing & midwifery associations 1998 directory** and **Strategies for nurse training in rural areas**, papers from the CNF/DENOSA meeting held in Cape Town in 1995, and **Nurse training & midwifery in the Commonwealth Caribbean**, the proceedings of a workshop held in Belize in August 1996, were published and distributed.

VISITORS

Commonwealth nurses visiting the London office included Helen Mussallem (Canada); Naraindutt Gopal (Mauritius); Ena Barlow (Namibia); Bimla Kapoor and Narender Nagpal (India); and Rigeita Nadakuitavuki (Fiji).