

Commonwealth Civil Society Policy Forum 2024

Actionable Solutions to Building Resilience in Healthcare Systems within the Commonwealth, with an emphasis on Small and Vulnerable States

The Commonwealth Health Professions and Partners Alliance (CHPA) host a policy forum each year in conjunction with the Commonwealth Health Ministers' meeting.

Registration is essential. Following registration you will receive a confirmation email with instructions on how to access the Forum. To register go to <https://rb.gy/hbisv1>



Objectives

1. To raise awareness of the impact of climate change and natural disasters on health, and of current health workforce challenges across the Commonwealth, particularly in small and vulnerable states.
2. To create dialogue within Civil Society around these challenges, share best practices, and agree on potential ways to address priorities by leveraging the Commonwealth network.
3. To develop actionable recommendations to address these issues for presentation at the 2024 Commonwealth Health Ministers Meeting, to build resilience in healthcare systems throughout the Commonwealth.

Further information will be available on the CHPA website: <http://www.chpa.co>



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Programme

Thursday 7 March 2024, 11:00–13:00 GMT

Virtual Meeting

WELCOME

11:00	Welcome Remarks Professor Vajira Dissanayake Chair of the Commonwealth Health Professions and Partners Alliance
11:05	Address Rt Hon Baroness Scotland KC, Secretary General of the Commonwealth
11:15	Address Dr Anne Gallagher AO, Director-General of Commonwealth Foundation

SPEAKER'S SESSIONS

11:25	Impact of Climate Change on Health in Small and Vulnerable States Sir Collin Tukuitonga, Public Health Medicine Specialist, New Zealand
11:45	Strengthening Health Emergency Capabilities Dr Nirmal Kandel, Head of Evidence and Analytics for Health Security, WHO
12:05	Putting Education at the Heart of Ethical Recruitment: A Case Study from St Vincent and the Grenadines and Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust Mrs Michelle Thompson, Global NHS Senior Workforce Lead Ms Laura Fileccia, Practice Education Lead, Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

PANEL DISCUSSION

12:25	Chair Ms Victoria Rutter, CEO Commonwealth Pharmacists Association Panelists Dr Nirmal Kandel, Head, Evidence and Analytics for Health Security, WHO Mrs Michelle Thompson, Global NHS Senior Workforce Lead Dr Colin Abel, Chief Surgeon, Bustamante Hospital for Children, Jamaica Ms Annie Kurian, Social Work Practitioner, Sri Lanka Mr William Mpute, President, Pharmaceutical Society of Malawi
12:50	Recommendations and survey results Mr David Jones, COSW Main Representative to Commonwealth Institutions Final remarks Professor Vajira Dissanayake, Chair of the Commonwealth Health Professions and Partners Alliance

Speaker Profiles

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PROFESSOR VAJIRA DISSANAYAKE

Professor Vajira Dissanayake MBBS PhD is the current Chairperson of the Commonwealth Health Professions and Partners Alliance (since 2021). He is Chair and Senior Professor in the Department of Anatomy, Genetics, and Biomedical Informatics and the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka. Professor Dissanayake has held many leadership positions in the field of medicine. He was the President of the Sri Lanka Medical Association in 2012; President of the Commonwealth Medical Association from 2016 to 2019; founder Chairperson, Commonwealth Centre for Digital Health (since 2018); and current President of the Sri Lanka Medical Council. He has served multiple terms as a member of the Commonwealth Advisory Committee for Health since 2016.



THE RT HON BARONESS PATRICIA SCOTLAND KC

The Rt Hon Baroness Patricia Scotland KC took office as the 6th Secretary General of the Commonwealth on 1 April 2016. She was the first woman to be elected to the position and has placed special emphasis on mobilising the 56 nations of the Commonwealth to tackle climate change – including its disproportionate impact on women – and, through women’s enterprise, to build the resilience of smaller or more vulnerable countries. Eliminating domestic violence and violence against women and girls is another area of focus. Patricia Scotland completed her LL.B (Hons) at London University and became the first black woman and the youngest woman to be appointed a Queen’s Counsel (QC) in 1991. She was the first black woman to be appointed Deputy High Court Judge, Recorder and Master of Middle Temple. Patricia joined the House of Lords in 1997 as Baroness Scotland of Asthal going on to serve as a minister in the Foreign Office, Home Office and Lord Chancellor’s Department. She was appointed Attorney General for England, Wales and Northern Ireland in 2007, the first woman to hold the post since it was created in 1315. In this position, she undertook major reform of the criminal justice system including introduction of the Domestic Violence Crime and Victims Act. Patricia founded the Eliminate Domestic Violence Global Foundation in 2011.



DR ANNE GALLAGHER AO

Dr Anne Gallagher AO is the Director General of the Commonwealth Foundation and is the Commonwealth’s ambassador for civil society working closely with Member States to advance people’s participation in all aspects of public dialogue. A lawyer, practitioner, teacher, and scholar, Anne’s long international career has involved specialisation in a wide range of areas including human rights and the administration of criminal justice. Anne served for 12 years at the United Nations, including as special adviser to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. Anne also worked with the Association of South-East Asian Nations to strengthen legislative and criminal justice responses to human trafficking and related exploitation.



SIR COLLIN TUKUITONGA KNZM

Sir Collin Tukuitonga KNZM was born in Niue, a small island nation in the South Pacific Ocean. Sir Collin is a New Zealand doctor, public health academic, public policy expert, and advocate for reducing health inequalities of Maori and Pasifika people. Sir Collin was appointed a Knight Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit, for services to Pacific and public health, in 2022. Sir Collin is currently Associate Dean Pacific, Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, University of Auckland; Director for the University of Auckland Research Centre for Pacific and Global Health; and Associate Professor of Public Health. Collin has extensive experience in New Zealand, the Pacific and internationally and has held several highly influential offices including as a Commissioner for the World Health Organisation and Director General of the Pacific Community.



MS MICHELLE THOMPSON

Michelle Thompson is the Global Senior Workforce Lead in the Global Health Unit at NHS England. Prior to this role, she led the Global Learners Programme which developed partnerships with overseas Governments to support the ethical migration of nurses and midwives. Michelle is responsible for developing strategic programmes between the NHS and overseas healthcare partners which support global education and workforce development opportunities. Before joining the Global team, Michelle worked in acute NHS hospitals across the North of England.



DR DAVID N JONES

Dr David N Jones qualified as a social worker in 1974 and has extensive international, national and local government, NGO and private sector experience. He was President of the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) 2006-2010 and Global Coordinator of The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development (2010-2020). He is a Board Member of the Commonwealth Organisation for Social Work (COSW), and its main representative to Commonwealth institutions. He is a member of the British Association of Social Work Council and is a Trustee of Children and Families Across Borders (ISS-UK). He has published and spoken extensively on social work practice and management in the UK and overseas.



MS VICTORIA RUTTER

Ms Victoria Rutter was appointed as the first Executive Director of the Commonwealth Pharmacists Association in 2016. Drawing on an extensive portfolio of pharmacy practice spanning many sectors and countries, she has significantly increased the charity's footprint and workstreams, including pioneering the highly commended Commonwealth Partnerships for Antimicrobial Stewardship programme.



DR NIRMAL KANDEL

Dr Nirmal Kandel is Head of Evidence and Analytics for the Health Security Unit, World Health Organization Geneva (WHO). Dr Kandel manages data analytics, outcome and impact measures; preparedness economics; emergency benchmarks; operational research of health security; and health systems for health security. He has extensive experience in public health and emergencies, having worked in WHO offices in Nepal, India, Indonesia, and Switzerland on health security and pandemic preparedness; disease surveillance; implementing international health regulations (IHR); and health systems. He was the technical lead in developing IHR benchmarks and various IHR assessment and planning tools for WHO. He is a medical practitioner with Master's degrees in Anthropology, Public Health, and Business Administration, and has published articles on health security, health systems and IHR.



MS LAURA FILECCIA

Laura Fileccia is Practice Education Lead, Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust. She commenced her healthcare career as a Therapeutic Radiographer in 2001 and has worked across the UK in numerous posts. She joined Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust (LTHT) in 2005 and worked throughout the radiotherapy department, progressing to advanced practitioner radiographer in breast radiotherapy. In 2017 Laura began a Clinical Leadership Fellowship with Health Education England and LTHT, working on education packages and leadership. In 2018, Laura joined LTHT Corporate Nursing Team as senior project officer. Within this role, Laura improved access to multi-professional education and led the globally recruited nurses Objective Structured Clinical Exam (OSCE) education support programme with over 700 nurses successfully passing their OSCEs and joining LTHT as registered nurses. Laura is now the Lead for the LTHT Professional Development Team and collaborating with NHS England and the Ministry of Health in St Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) by welcoming two SVG nurses to LTHT, to improve education and training and healthcare delivery through shared knowledge and experiences.



DR COLIN ABEL

Dr Colin Abel is Chief Surgeon, Bustamante Hospital for Children, Jamaica and Associate Lecturer in the Department of Surgery, University of the West Indies, Mona. Dr Abel is a consultant paediatric surgeon and urologist with qualifications from the University of the West Indies Mona and fellowships from esteemed surgical colleges including the Royal College of Surgeons Edinburgh and the American College of Surgeons. Dr Abel is actively involved in various medical associations, serving in leadership roles such as Treasurer for the Medical Association of Jamaica and Vice President of the Commonwealth Medical Association.



MS ANNIE KURIAN

Ms Annie Kurian is a social work practitioner in Sri Lanka. She qualified as a social worker in the Philippines in the 1980s and has worked in several Asian countries and one African country. She has been employed by several global and local agencies, including the World Bank and United Nations Development Programme and is currently working as a consultant at the National Institute of Social Development, Colombo, Sri Lanka. She published two research papers on the tsunami disaster in Sri Lanka and more recently her research interest has been in the status of older women and the current social challenges in the region including workforce pressures and the climate emergency.



MR WILLIAM MPUTE

Mr William Mpute is a pharmacist with over six years of experience. He is currently a consultant pharmacist at Pharmaprime pharmacies in Salima and Blantyre, Malawi, focusing on staff capacity building as well as President of the Pharmaceutical Society of Malawi. Mr Mpute has worked in different fields in the pharmaceutical sector including community pharmacy, hospital pharmacy and in clinical trials. He is a passionate advocate for antimicrobial stewardship; rational use of medicine; and medicine safety and quality as well as health equity and health system strengthening. Mr Mpute has been involved in several public awareness campaigns. He LMIS country lead for the Commonwealth Pharmacists Association Anti-Microbial Stewardship 2.0 program (CwPAMS 2.0) and a CPA ALF-A fellow.