CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Sandra Boyne, M.Phil.

It was a privilege to serve as Chair of the 32nd Faculty of Medical Sciences (FMS) Annual Research Conference, held on November 12, 2026, under the theme "Health Resilience in a Changing World: Evidence, Innovation and Practice."

The Annual Research Conference remains an important platform for showcasing the breadth and quality of research undertaken by members of the Faculty of Medical Sciences and our wider academic and clinical communities. The publication of selected abstracts in this supplement represents an important opportunity to share research findings, stimulate scholarly discussion, and contribute to the growing body of evidence that informs health policy, clinical practice, and public health interventions in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean.

This year's theme is particularly relevant in the current global research climate. Health systems worldwide are being challenged by climate change, emerging and re-emerging health threats, evolving disease patterns, and increasing demands for more effective, equitable, and sustainable healthcare. At the same time, advances in technology, including artificial intelligence, are creating new possibilities for research, diagnosis, and healthcare delivery. Building health resilience requires us not only to generate high-quality evidence and embrace innovation, but also to translate research findings into meaningful improvements in health outcomes. The work presented at this conference reflects the importance of addressing these challenges through multidisciplinary collaboration, relevant research, and the practical application of scientific knowledge.

I extend my sincere appreciation to all members of the Faculty of Medical Sciences who contributed to and participated in the conference. I particularly wish to recognize our medical students, whose involvement demonstrates a commendable interest in research and a willingness to develop the skills necessary for evidence-based practice and future research leadership. Opportunities to present and discuss research findings are invaluable in strengthening critical thinking, scientific communication, and the ability to evaluate and apply evidence. I encourage our students and early-career researchers to continue nurturing their curiosity and to remain actively engaged in research.

My heartfelt thanks go to the members of the Organizing Committee. Their dedication, hard work, and attention to detail were instrumental in pulling together the many moving parts of this conference. The time and effort invested in coordinating the scientific programme, reviewing abstracts, securing sponsorship, and managing the many logistical requirements are deeply appreciated. I also acknowledge the presenters, reviewers, session chairs, plenary speakers, sponsors, and all others whose contributions helped to make the conference a success.

Finally, I congratulate the researchers whose abstracts have been selected for inclusion in this supplement. It is my fervent wish that this publication serves not only as recognition of their scholarly contributions, but also as encouragement to continue pursuing research that addresses our most pressing health challenges.

As we look to the future, let us remain committed to advancing research, fostering innovation, strengthening collaboration, and translating evidence into practice in pursuit of a more resilient and healthier Caribbean.