

Sixtieth Anniversary of The University of the West Indies

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The University of The West Indies was founded 60 years ago with thirty-three students in the then Faculty of Medicine at the Mona Campus, Jamaica. This issue of the Journal is dedicated to the Diamond Jubilee of the Faculty and the University. In this issue are articles detailing the evolution of undergraduate medical training at the Mona Campus (1) where there has been a more integrated curriculum, introduction of co-curricular activities and student interviews in the admission process, and the introduction of the GPA system. The paper by Fraser (2) traced the development and extension of the Faculties of Medical Sciences to the Eastern Caribbean and the effective way in which these Faculties have served the Caribbean region. While there have been changes over the 60 years, the essential message of the art of medicine as practised by the founding fathers must not change. Chancellor Alleyne (3), in the first Professor Eric Cruickshank distinguished lecture established by the Department of Medicine, Mona, reminded all of this art as practised by Cruickshank. Alleyne (3) concluded that the greatness of Cruickshank lay in a legacy that operated not only through things physical but through the transmission of the essentials of the art of medicine.

In this issue of the Journal, there is a reprint of the original article by Cruickshank on *A Neuropathic Syndrome of Uncertain origin: Review of 100 cases* (4).

The articles by McCaw-Binns (5) and Ashley and McCaw-Binns (6) speak to the excellent research done in Maternal Health and the integration of research into policies and programmes in the Jamaican and international health landscape. These works highlight the reduction in maternal and perinatal mortality and the control of infectious diseases from collaborative research done by The University of the West Indies, Mona, and the Ministry of Health, Jamaica.

The signal work of Samms-Vaughan on childhood cognition, educational attainment and behaviour and childhood exposure to violence were pivotal in policies and pro-

grammes of the Early Childhood Commission by the Government of Jamaica (7).

The research by Eldemire-Shearer emphasized the work of The University of the West Indies through the Department of Community Health and Psychiatry in ageing research and policy that impact programmes locally and internationally (8). As the population ages, there are social, economic and health issues to be attended to as discussed by Eldemire-Shearer in Jamaica and Rawlins in Trinidad and Tobago (8, 9). The assessment of healthy life expectancy then becomes important and brings to fore quality of life issues as discussed by Bourne (10).

This is all against the back drop of the atrocious health conditions that existed during the period of slavery in the Caribbean as detailed in the paper by Handler (11). The Caribbean has indeed move forward in healthcare delivery.

But there can be no complacency for there is the epidemic of HIV/AIDS that demand a comprehensive response and Figueroa *et al* (12) have written on the comprehensive HIV Control programme in Jamaica that has slowed the epidemic and strengthened structural response to epidemic diseases.

The paper by Eldemire-Shearer and Roberts (13) examined the development of postgraduate training in The University of the West Indies from historical and health manpower perspective. The majority of DM graduates are practising in the Caribbean region. The paper by Vaughan and Samms-Vaughan (14) on the Medical Class of 1982a gives information on special training, migration and associated factors for this group of graduates. Campbell *et al* (15) in their paper summarized some of the factors that should be considered and some shortcomings of Health and Human Resources planning (HHR) in the Eastern Caribbean. A framework for HHR planning was developed and applied to Barbados.

The chronic non-communicable diseases have emerged as leading causes of disability in the Caribbean and pose challenges for the future. There is every confidence that appropriate research and strategic planning will also effectively deal with these. The Jamaican life style study has already impacted on policy decisions. The Caribbean governments have increased their focus on the chronic non-communicable diseases with emphasis on life style modification and prevention.

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