

PREFACE

This year (2018) is a significant year and special time for us at our 8th Annual Ophthalmological Society of Jamaica (OSJ) Conference. The OSJ has partnered with the University of Toronto, The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust through the VISION 2020 Links programme and Orbis International for this exceptional two-day conference, where there is something for everyone.

We come together for a common purpose: to improve the quality of care to patients and to keep up with the latest evidence-based medicine. The theme for this conference is **Marriage between Ophthalmology and Medicine with Ophthalmic Potpourri**.

The marriage will include several talks from medical specialists on Diabetes, Cardiovascular Disease, Sickle Cell Disease and Rheumatology which will be linked with an Ophthalmology talk. This will be of great interest to Ophthalmologists, Internal Medicine subspecialists and Family Physicians. The management of many diseases such as diabetes and sickle cell are multidisciplinary. It is therefore very important that doctors keep up to date with other subspecialties. This conference supports this multidisciplinary approach.

We welcome the participation of subspecialists from the University of Toronto, through the organization by Prof Sherif El Defrawy, our University of the West Indies (UWI) external examiner, and Drs Kohly and Margolin. The six subspecialists will be giving TED talks in the field of Cornea, Glaucoma, Oculoplastic, Paediatrics, Retina and Neuro-ophthalmology. Last year, we started the Dr Degazon Lecture, which will be given by Dr Radha Kohly this year and is entitled 'Anti-fragility'.

We have again partnered with the VISION 2020 Links Programme this year to do another Diabetic Retinopathy Screening (DRS) Workshop. There were many positive reviews from last year's DRS programme, and this year will be no different. Diabetic eye disease is a significant cause of visual morbidity in working-age patients. Although we have intravitreal anti-vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) agents, lasers and surgical treatment for diabetic retinopathy, patients present very late to their ophthalmologists. Diabetic retinopathy screening is essential to reduce visual loss from this avoidable cause of blindness. Patient

education, early detection, referral and treatment are essential. Working together, we can achieve this.

We are pleased to have collaborated with the VISION 2020 Links programme to make this a successful conference. Jamaica has an 11.9% prevalence of diabetes (~300 000 people). All patients with Type II Diabetes Mellitus must have an annual dilated eye examination from diagnosis onwards. Can we manage to screen and treat all these patients effectively? The screening burden is great, but the burden to have to treat them and the impact on society of blindness in our young working-age-group patients are even greater. This is where we need your help and why this kind of conference is important.

Diabetic retinopathy, a leading cause of avoidable blindness in the working-age group, deserves attention. The OSJ DRS programme will benefit anyone interested in learning more about screening for diabetic retinopathy. It is such an important area that The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust, a charitable organization set up when Queen Elizabeth achieved 60 years on the throne, has extended funding to the Commonwealth to reduce this cause of avoidable blindness. This trust is presently assisting us to set up Island-wide DRS screening (by use of a digital camera, training of photographers, screeners and graders), some at the primary care level.

Preventative and screening actions are essential in reaching this goal. In the past two years, we were pleased to see the growth of DRS clinics at the University Hospital of the West Indies (UHWI), Diabetes Association of Jamaica and the start of the National Diabetic Retinopathy Screening Clinics.

As we grow from strength to strength, we pause to reflect on our past and show respect and appreciation to the visionaries among us, who were the founders of the OSJ, and commencement of Ophthalmology in Jamaica. This year, we will be honouring Dr Hugh Vaughan, the first OSJ President and founding father.

Over the past seven years, the OSJ has been focussed on ophthalmologists, physicians and DRS. We have in the past included an Ophthalmic Assistants' workshop. We listened to the feedback from the nurses, who have been requesting a workshop for the Ophthalmic nurse.

This very informative OSJ conference has a bonus this year. We are pleased in 2018, with the collaboration of Orbis International, to do a two-day concurrent Symposium for nurses and allied health professionals on infection control. This is a very important topic which although aimed for the nurses is essential for all allied health professionals.

We welcome the speakers and attendees from outside of Jamaica and look forward to seeing you at the two-day conference. We thank the sponsors who have worked with us through the years to make the OSJ conferences so successful. Collaboration is the key to success and, with our partners, we bring you this significant conference which embodies the marriage between Ophthalmology and Medicine with Ophthalmic potpourri.

This year we welcome Aristopharma Ltd as a Gold Sponsor among our sponsors (new and returning) who have always supported us through the years.

Thanks to Poen, who have sponsored the President's dinner where we will honour Dr Hugh Vaughan this year. Thanks to the hardworking OSJ organizers who have done exceptionally well to seamlessly bring together these three conferences under one roof with the Marriage between Ophthalmology and Medicine.

The OSJ will continue to fulfil its aims with its medical conferences, allowing the sharing of knowledge and best practices and allowing us to grow professionally, thereby improving the overall standard of healthcare in Jamaica.

Sincerely,



Dr Lizette Mowatt
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President, OSJ