



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The following report lists the activities of BSEC during the years 2016-18.

Since the election of a new Executive in December 2015, Skype meetings were held during February and May 2016.

BSEC bank account, which is currently being held in Royal Bank of Canada, St. Augustine, T&T needed some regulatory changes; these were undertaken.

On October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016, during a Skype Executive meeting, President Ms. Gillian Mignott expressed her inability to continue in her position, due to her other personal commitments. At this point, I was unanimously elected to be the President until the end of the term of the current Executive.

Professor Donald Simeon took over as the treasurer. Ms. Candace Kendall took over as the Secretary of BSEC from Dr. Sharmella Roopchand-Martin. Dr Vivienne Mitchell-Amata was elected as the regional representative for the Southern region.

Earlier, on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> October 2016, BSEC partnered with the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the St. Lucia Medical and Dental Association. I gave a talk introducing BSEC, as well as a lecture regarding the ethical and economic implications of patient referral. The following day, Dr Derrick Aarons delivered a lecture entitled 'Ethical issues and dilemmas in Pharmacy Practice' and Ms Candace Kendall gave a talk on 'The Role of Healthcare Ethics Committees'.

From June 13 through 16, 2017, BSEC spearheaded the organisation of the "Regional Ethics Teachers Training Workshop" in collaboration with UNESCO and UWI, St. Augustine. This was a four-day workshop delivered by international experts sponsored by the Montevideo Office of the UNESCO Regional Bioethics Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean as well as BSEC experts. UWI provided the venue and lunch/refreshments for participants. The programme was a remarkable success. 23 regional participants attended and got benefited by the intense training on 'teaching' ethics to students. The role of Dra. Susana Vidal, UNESCO, Monte Video, was vital and noteworthy in arranging this workshop.

Dra. Vidal and her office 'Redbiotica UNESCO' has sent a proposal to BSEC with an objective of forming a Bioethics Network dedicated to the Caribbean and our Founding President Dr Aarons is currently interacting with them.

I am extremely glad to report that the UNESCO has appointed our Founding President Dr. Derrick Aarons to serve on the International Bioethics Committee (IBC) for the next 4 years.

Prof Donald Simeon has been appointed as the Chairperson of the Research Sub Committee of the Senior Joint Planning Committee of Ministry of Health, T&T, in addition to his many other roles in the University of the West Indies as well as South West Regional Health Authority, Trinidad

I have been appointed as the Chairperson of the Ethics Committee of the North Central Regional Health Authority, Trinidad, which has the dual mandate of overseeing and approving research as well as Clinical Ethics Consultation. I am also the Chairperson of the 'Professionalism Ethics and Communication in Healthcare' (PECH) Committee in the Faculty of Medical Sciences, with the responsibility of streamlining the ethics curriculum and introducing ethics and professionalism courses during clinical years for medical students.

I delivered the following invited lectures as a representative of BSEC:

1. *Costs, commercialization, community expectations of current medical practice - Confederation of Indian Industry - Coimbatore Chapter, India, Sep 2016*
2. *Cost-containment without comprising quality in healthcare - Sri Ramakrishna Hospital, Coimbatore, India, Sep 2016*
3. *Ethical and economic implications of patient referrals - Annual Conference of the Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners (BAMP), Barbados, May 2017*
4. *Bioethical and legal aspects of medical futility - Trinidad & Tobago Medical Association (TTMA) CME Seminar, Trinidad, August 2017*
5. *End-of-Life Care in ICU -Ethical dilemmas - San Fernando General Hospital, Trinidad, September 2017*
6. *End-of-life issues in critical care for the elderly - Trinidad & Tobago Medical Association (TTMA) National Seminar, Trinidad, November 2017*
7. As a visiting Professor to the School of Medicine, Washington University of Barbados, during January 2018, I delivered lectures as a Basic course in Bioethics and Research:
  - a. *Introduction to bioethics, human dignity, human rights, patient and physician responsibilities*
  - b. *Practical scenarios in clinical ethics-I: confidentiality, informed consent, breaking news*
  - c. *Practical scenarios in clinical ethics-II: end-of-life care, medical futility, withholding / withdrawing care, euthanasia/physician assisted suicide*
  - d. *Professionalism in clinical practice*
  - e. *Clinical research, Research ethics, Research Ethics Committees, unethical behaviors in clinical research*

8. *Ethical aspects of Clinical Research* – Faculty of Science & Technology, UWI, St. Augustine, March 2018
9. *Biomedical Research – General and Ethical considerations* – Madras Urological Society, Chennai, & Tirunelveli Medical College, Tirunelveli, India, May 2018
10. *Health Economics for Clinicians* – Sri Ramachandra Institute of Medical Sciences, Chennai, India, May 2018

The most important functionary of BSEC, our administrative assistant Ms. Kamille Williams was honoured by the organisation; Dr Aarons visited her in Grenada and presented our mementos.

In regards to BSEC, Executive meetings were held via Skype once in at least 3-4 months. The WhatsApp group of the Executive Committee has also been actively sharing news and other information. Ms. Williams has been regularly forwarding global initiatives and educational programmes in Bioethics to our members. Many new members have been added to the Society during these two years.

I have immense hope that our enthusiastic Executive Committee, along with other members, will be taking forward our Society to greater heights.

Again, I thank the BSEC Executive and Past Presidents, for their whole-hearted support. Notwithstanding all the shortcomings, I look forward to our progress and contributions to Bioethics across the Caribbean and the wider world.

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*President – Bioethics Society of the English-speaking Caribbean*