

**Report to Executive of SOGC Council
Friday, November 14, 2008
Ottawa, Ontario**

**Re: SIGMA/CMS
Special Interest Group on Menopause and Aging/Canadian Menopause Society**

History

The concept of SIGMA was first raised over ten years ago following the publication of the first Menopause Consensus document in 1994. There was a concerted effort for two years to develop this as a multi-disciplinary group within the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC). For various reasons, this did not come to fruition. However, the idea was nurtured over the years and reactivated in January 2008.

Launch

SIGMA/CMS was launched in May 2008 at the 12th World Congress on Menopause sponsored by the International Menopause Society (IMS). At that meeting, the founding members began the work of establishing this multi-disciplinary group. Also, meetings were held with Board members from both the IMS and North American Menopause Society (NAMS). The founding members belong to both societies. Meetings have also been held with Dr. Andre Lalonde, Executive Director of SOGC. Whereas initially there were rumoured concerns of competition and duplication of activities, now there is a clear understanding that SIGMA/CMS will work in partnership with SOGC. However, SIGMA/CMS is modelled much more closely on the North American Menopause Society, which is distinguished by its multi-disciplinary approach. SIGMA/CMS will not duplicate the excellent menopause efforts of SOGC and NAMS.

Mission

SIGMA/Canadian Menopause Society is dedicated to advancing the health of women at and beyond the menopausal transition.

The Society will achieve this goal through a multi-disciplinary network of Canadian health care professionals dedicated to the care of perimenopausal, menopausal, and aging women.

The network will support research, education, knowledge translation, and public education oriented to the interests of this group of women.

SIGMA/CMS – Relationship with IMS

The founding members met with the President, Secretariat, and Board members of the International Menopause Society (IMS) at the International Menopause Congress in Madrid, Spain (May 19–23, 2008). We discussed our Canadian vision and our intent on being very active on the Canadian front; and we expressed our keen interest in working in partnership with the North American Menopause Society, as well as SOGC. At this point, we were and still are all members of IMS and applied to be a part of the Council of Affiliated Menopause Societies (CAMS) within IMS. We were the 45th country to be in this group, with Brazil just joining as No. 46. With this association, we anticipate an excellent level of international communication and collaboration. We had a most cordial and collegial experience in Madrid.

SIGMA/CMS – Relationship with NAMS

A meeting was held with members of the NAMS Board at the Madrid meeting and at the annual NAMS meeting in Orlando on Sept. 25, 2008. We look to NAMS for guidance and support, as we do to SOGC.

We plan that:

- Accreditation of menopause counsellors and practitioners would officially be via NAMS.
- Guidelines, Position Statements, First To Know, Menopause E Consults, Webinars, and other educational efforts will be distributed with permission of NAMS to all members of SIGMA/CMS.
- Members of SIGMA/CMS will be encouraged to also be members of NAMS.

We have been asked to participate at the next annual NAMS meeting in San Diego (Sept. 2009), presenting our venue at a concurrent session. This will be the first Canadian session presented at an annual meeting and is structured to be concurrent with the Mexican Menopause Society (who also have struck an association with NAMS this year).

SIGMA/CMS – Relationship with SOGC

Two meetings have been held with Dr. Andre Lalonde: one at the ACM in Calgary, June 2008; and a second in Ottawa, July 2008, with Dr. Chui Kin Yuen, Dr. Vyta Senikas, and Dr. Elaine Jolly. At this meeting, we discussed the following:

- 1) SIGMA/CMS will be a multi-disciplinary society consisting of gynaecologists, family doctors, bone metabolic specialists, cardiologists, oncologists, geriatricians, nurses, and pharmacists. The network will support research, education, knowledge translation, and public education.

- 2) Hopefully, Osteoporosis will be our first inroad.
- 3) We were invited to give a half-day Post Graduate course at the ACM in Halifax in 2009.
- 4) We had understood that a special SIGMA speaker could possibly address the meeting in a plenary session.
- 5) We were encouraged to focus on the development of Menopause Research in Canada.
- 6) We discussed the possibility of a SIGMA Menopause Corner in the JOGC journal (to be further discussed with Dr. Rowe).
- 7) We were offered the possibility to use the translation service of SOGC for bilingual documents.
- 8) We discussed our associations with IMS and NAMS.

SIGMA/CMS anticipates no competition. In fact, we would anticipate the reverse: we hope to bring to IMS and NAMS Canadian representation and expertise. We appreciate that SOGC has had a positive relationship with NAMS for some time and would like to foster this.

We hope to identify common interests where our two organizations, SOGC and SIGMA/CMS, can move forward collaboratively for the benefit of Canadian women. We recognize that each organization is sovereign, guided by its board and accountable to its members.

Areas of collaboration and potential activities:

- 1) Physician Education
 - Annual meeting activities
 - Other CHE
 - Identification of speakers and opinion leaders
 - Reports/updates from international and North American meetings
 - Close cooperation with Family Medicine/CHE activities at regional and national levels
- 2) Publications
- 3) Research
 - Collaborative research in areas such as standards of care, health outcomes, literature reviews, meta-analysis, and position statements
- 4) Membership
 - Possible co-membership agreements and co-promotion of memberships

- 5) Lay Education
 - Co-sponsorship of public fora
 - Media statements
 - Collaboration in public information/education

- 6) Other Societies – Facilitate communication with societies such as:
 - Osteoporosis Canada
 - Heart and Stroke
 - Canadian Diabetes Association
 - Cancer Society
 - Canadian Association of Retired Persons

At present our official office is in Vancouver. We are just beginning our membership drive.

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| First Tier | Officers of the Executive Committee |
| Second Tier | Regional Representation <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Menopause Practitioners including Family Doctors– Osteoporosis Specialists– Nurses– Pharmacists |
| Third Tier | General Membership and other Specialties |

We are looking forward to a collegial and fruitful collaboration with SOGC.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine E. Jolly, MD, OC, FRCS(C), President

Founding Members: SIGMA/CMS

Chui Kin Yen, MD, FRCS(C), FACOG, MBA, Executive Director
David Kendler, MD, FRCP(C), ABIM, Associate Executive Director
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