



**MENNONITE
MEDICAL
ASSOCIATION**

**MENNONITE
NURSES
ASSOCIATION**



A PROPOSAL TO CONSIDER!

(For the members of Mennonite Nurses and Mennonite Medical Associations)

Introduction:

To meet the needs of a new century, the Mennonite Nurses Association and the Mennonite Medical Association are looking at changes in their organizations. During their combined convention in 2008, both groups concluded that in order to serve a new generation of practitioners, significant changes were needed.

Areas of concern included the challenges and opportunities of technology, increasingly complex moral issues, and the ever-present need for a faith community of one's professional peers.

Formal action was taken to appoint a Study Team to review the history, goals, and current state of both organizations, and to imagine new ways in which their needs, and perhaps those of other healthcare professionals, could be met.

The Study Team proposed and presented at our recent combined 2009 Convention, the creation of a new organization of Anabaptist healthcare providers, including both physicians and nurses but also a wide variety of additional caregivers. The rationale for such an organization is described below, along with the steps to be followed in its formation.

As Executive Committees we are recommending the proposal as presented at the Convention. Your prayers in the process are GREATLY APPRECIATED!

Mamie Mellinger, RN, MSN, President of MNA,
Joanne Brenneman Speigle, MD, President of MMA

Rationale:

The formation of a new organization provides opportunities not possible through changes in the existing ones, or even through their merger. These opportunities could include:

- Increased financial strength and efficiency, through the affiliation of significantly more caregivers with shared values and common concerns.
- Increased diversity and breadth, through the inclusion of many more disciplines besides nursing and medicine.
- Increased relevance within the Church; through expanded local, national and international activities.

Mission Statement: (Name to be decided – “Mennonite Healthcare Fellowship” is current choice)

Mennonite Healthcare Fellowship is an interdisciplinary community of Anabaptist healthcare providers that promotes justice in health care through education, advocacy, and service at home and abroad. The organization provides opportunities for dialogue on biomedical issues, based on shared faith values, and seeks to nurture the integration of faith and practice.

Goals:

1. Fellowship and networking, in the tradition of the MNA and MMA.
2. Education and resourcing, through meetings, seminars and articles.
3. Service opportunities for students and established practitioners.
4. Advocacy, including promotion of healthcare access for all, to both denominational bodies and government agencies.

Potential Members:

Individual providers who are part of a clearly defined healthcare discipline with professional standards and licensure requirements, (for example; pharmacists, chaplains and many others) and are also part of the Anabaptist community or supportive of its values. Health care profession students and retired persons would be a valuable part of the organization.

Anticipated Structure and Activities:

1. Simple structure and leadership (Officers, Executive Committee and staff, possibly including regional, local, or congregational representatives).
2. Regular communication; (a website, journal, e-journal, blogs etc.)
3. Opportunities for fellowship and dialogue on ethical issues (annual meeting, regional meetings, local meetings, cyber communities etc.).
4. Advocacy for the equitable delivery of healthcare; (presentations at church meetings, position statements and other similar actions)
5. Service opportunities at home and abroad, for students as well as established practitioners; (including the continuation and possible expansion of the Student Elective Term).

Next steps:

1. Affirm the proposal to form a new organization of health care providers. (currently being voted on by MMA and MNA members – responses due by August 31, 2009.
2. Formation of an Implementation Team to work on the specific details of a new organization (such as name, organization structure, membership and finances).
3. Volunteers for involvement on the Implementation Team or to nominate/recommend others to do so.