

# Benefit Exchange

*A newsletter of Medical Physics for World Benefit*

October 2016



## Inside This Issue

- 1 New Name for MPWB
- 2 MPWB J.R. Cunningham Fund
- 3 Membership process
- 4 Upcoming Activities

---

*... we went through a consultative process ...*

*... After further deliberation the Board decided Medical Physics for World Benefit best represented what our organization is about ...*

---

## New Name for MPWB

As most of you will know from a previous e-mail message, MPWB had received letters from the lawyers of Médecins Sans Frontières/Doctors Without Borders (MSF) Canada and US demanding us to “*cease and desist all current (and refrain from all future) use of the name MEDICAL PHYSICISTS WITHOUT BORDERS and any other name confusingly similar to ‘Doctors Without Borders’.*” To avoid any legal action and focus our energy on our mission and goals, the board has agreed to change the name of the organization. Since our web link ([www.mpwb.org](http://www.mpwb.org)) has become well established and has been referred to in a number of publications, we decided to maintain the acronym “MPWB”. While we had come up with multiple names maintaining the same acronym, the one that had risen to the forefront from the Board’s perspective was “Medical Physics Working Beyond”. However, to ensure that we had the best possible name, we went through a consultative process by sending an e-mail to our mailing list to get comments, feedback and other possible suggestions. There were 53 responses, 40 of which were positive about the suggested name, and 3 negative. In addition, there were 10 responses suggesting other names, 5 of which were *Medical Physics for World Benefit*. After further deliberation the Board decided **Medical Physics for World Benefit** best represented what our organization is about and has chosen this as our new name. Applications have gone out to the official government agencies in both in Canada and the US requesting the name change. We expect this to be formalized within the next month or two.

## MPWB J.R. Cunningham Fund

As a result of a significant donation from John R. (Jack) Cunningham, the Board of MPWB has initiated the MPWB J.R. Cunningham Fund. Jack Cunningham has been a world leader in the early development of computerized treatment planning programs. In addition, during his career at the Princess Margaret Hospital/University of Toronto, he worked as an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) advisor in Medical Physics and

---

*The MPWB J.R. Cunningham fund will be used for projects in low-to-middle income environments largely for treatment planning.*

---

---

*The intent of formalizing our membership is to generate a data base of individuals ...*

---

## MPWB J.R. Cunningham Fund

*continued*

Radiation Protection to the government of Ceylon (Sri Lanka) in 1964-65. Thus, he also has experience with working in low income environments. Furthermore, one of his earliest computer applications in the early 1960s was another project under the auspices of the IAEA which was the development of atlases of isodose charts that could be used for manual treatment planning. The MPWB J.R. Cunningham fund will be used for projects in low-to-middle income environments largely for treatment planning. As part of the membership fee payment process, members will be given an option to donate to this fund.

## MPWB Membership Process

As a result of government formalities and a change of name of our organization, it is taking some time to institute our formal membership process. The intent of formalizing our membership is to generate a data base of individuals who are eager to participate in the vision and mission of MPWB. It will also provide a mechanism for matching projects with individuals who are appropriately prepared for specific activities. The membership application will include a fairly comprehensive questionnaire addressing things like expertise, experience, language capabilities, previous international work, time availability, etc. A mild membership fee (\$50.) will ensure that the applicants are serious about becoming members. We hope that in our next *Benefit Exchange* we will be able to provide the details of our membership process. Stay tuned ...

## Summary of MPWB Activities

The following summarizes some of the recent and near future activities of MPWB:

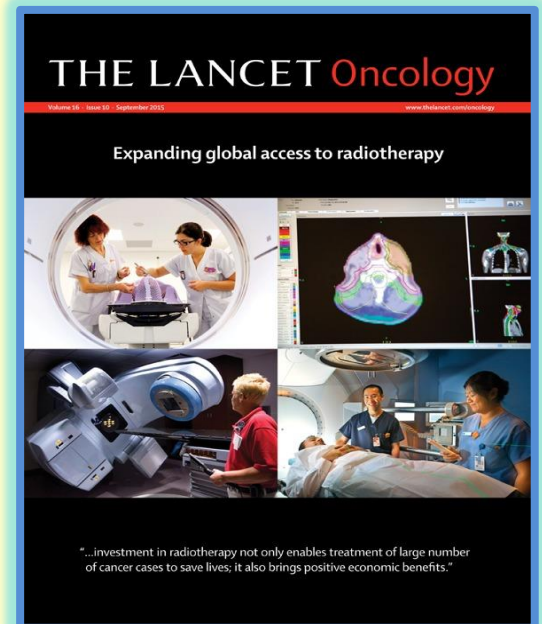
1. The Board continues to hold web-based meetings approximately every two weeks.
2. An information meeting was held at the COMP annual meeting in St. Johns Newfoundland and Labrador. There were about 55 people in attendance.
3. A similar information meeting was held at the AAPM annual meeting in Washington, D.C. In spite of the conflicting free lunch meetings and the non-ideal location of the meeting, 30 people were in attendance. There was good and positive

## Summary of MPWB Activities

... continued

discussion at both the COMP and AAPM meetings.

4. MPWB is incorporated in Canada. An application for registration as a charitable organization in Canada has been submitted to Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). Changes have been resubmitted as a result of feedback from the CRA as well as our change of name. We expect to hear about the outcome within the next couple months.
5. Application for incorporation and registration as a charitable organization is in progress for the US.
6. MPWB has developed a contract with AMCES (Association Management, Consulting and Evaluation Services) to provide the management services for MPWB. AMCES is the same organization that does the management services for the Canadian Organization of Medical Physicists (COMP).
7. We have been in close communication with the National University of Science and Technology in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe regarding supporting a Master's degree program in Medical Physics. As part of that process we connected with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) so that our activities would be complimentary. We also applied for a grant from Academics Without Borders Canada. While the grant was highly rated, another physician group was successful in receiving the award. The winning proposal was a submission by faculty members of the University of Ottawa and the Northern Ontario School of Medicine to provide research training and family medicine curriculum to medical residency training in Guyana.
8. The Board is in the process of developing a strategic plan around fund raising.
9. The Board is also developing an evaluation process to determine which project requests get priority in terms of MPWB's involvement.



Reprinted with permission from Elsevier  
(The Lancet Oncology, 2015, Vol 16, cover)

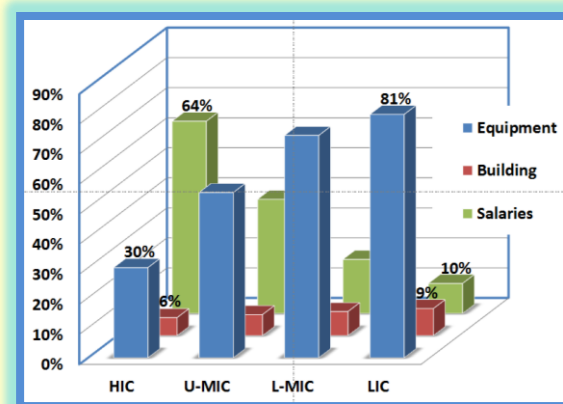
**The Lancet Oncology Commission on Expanding Global Access to Radiotherapy was published in September 2015. Projected requirements to provide equal access to radiation therapy in low-to-middle income countries for 2035 include:**

- 6,000 new radiation therapy departments
- 13,000 linear accelerators
- 6,000 CT-simulators
- 30,000 Radiation Oncologists
- 22,000 Medical Physicists
- 78,000 Radiation Therapists

## Summary of MPWB Activities

... continued

10. MPWB is in discussion with University of Toronto about the possibility of supporting an MSc project in Medical Physics in Ethiopia. Ethiopia is planning on five new cancer centers over the next few years.
11. Our Vice-President, Yakov Pipman, participated in the Harvard Catalyst Summit on 29-30 April 2016, where he presented on behalf of MPWB.
12. Yakov will also be participating in a workshop at CERN in Geneva, Switzerland which is jointly organized with International Cancer Experts Corps (ICEC) addressing modular, lower cost and robust radiation therapy technologies and other needs for low-income contexts.
13. We have had various communications with the IAEA:
  - (a) Re: Zimbabwe project
  - (b) Re: Linac commissioning project in Jamaica
  - (c) Re: Invitation to be a cooperating partner for the second International Conference on Advances in Radiation Oncology (ICARO-2) to be held at the IAEA in Vienna during the last week of June in 2017.
  - (d) For the International Day of Medical Physics (IDMP), the IAEA has asked us, as a non-profit organization, to deliver our key messages for the day. We are submitting a video for them to use in their celebrations. The video will be available on their website subsequent to the IDMP.
14. Other projects under discussion:
  - (a) Communications about support for linac commissioning in Ghana
  - (b) Communication with Rotarians in Alberta who wish to donate cobalt unit to Uganda



*The Lancet Oncology Commission on Expanding Global Access to Radiotherapy report included a cost analysis. In high income countries (HIC) the relative components of operating costs in high income countries versus low income countries (LIC) are:*

	HIC	LIC
<b>Equipment</b>	30%	82%
<b>Building</b>	6%	9%
<b>Salaries</b>	64%	10%

## Feedback

We look forward to any feedback, suggestions, or ideas that you may have. Our e-mail address is [medphyswb@gmail.com](mailto:medphyswb@gmail.com). It can also be found on our website: [www.mpwb.org](http://www.mpwb.org).

## Upcoming Activities

We hope that the next *Benefit Exchange* will describe the details of the membership process ... so that we can establish a core membership to MPWB who will participate in the various activities described above.

