The Cameron Fund
The GPs' own charity

Member Newsletter – Summer 2024

News from the Chair

It was a pleasure to meet colleagues at the LMC Secretaries Conference in March, which I attended with the Fund's CEO, Jill Rowlinson.

We were also very grateful to have a stand at the LMC Conference in May and for our Vice-Chair, Rob Barnett, to be given the opportunity to address conference with an update on the Fund's activities.

As part of this update we announced some changes to the Fund's support package, which we have reluctantly had to introduce. Last year we faced a deficit of £143,107 due to the record number of grants, loans and Money Advice awarded. Although we were able to meet the demand by drawing on our reserves, this is not sustainable in the long-term.

To ensure that the Fund can continue to help GPs in hardship for many years to come, trustees carried out a detailed review of our expenditure and agreed:

- To access support from the Cameron Fund applicants must have been practising GPs in the NHS or UK armed forces for a minimum of 12 months
- Support to GP Registrars in financial hardship will be by way of interest-free loans for exam fees. This will be for a maximum of two attempts at each exam
- If the Cameron Fund is approached to support undergraduate children of GPs in financial hardship, we will signpost all applicants to the Society for the Assistance of Medical Families (SAMF) who support this group with Student Allowances
- Our grant support for beneficiaries will normally last for up to two years.

We will keep these changes under review and monitor their impact on applicants. Exceptional circumstances will be considered. The Fund remains committed to looking after the wellbeing of applicants and we will ensure that those who are no longer eligible for our assistance are signposted to alternative sources of funding where possible.

How you can support us

During the LMC Conference dinner we raised £5,371.32 in donations and we would like to thank all those who donated for their generosity and support.

A big thank you also to everyone who continues to support the Cameron Fund on a regular basis. Your donations make a huge difference to our work.

If you would like to make a simple, one-off donation why not scan the QR code on the right-hand side? Or, to find out about other ways you can donate, please visit **our website**.

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Introducing our new trustees

Following our AGM in May, we were delighted to welcome new trustees, Dr Bob Morley and Dr Caroline Rickard to Council. You can read more about Bob and Caroline below.

Sadly, the AGM also meant saying goodbye to Dr Richard Brown, Dr Gary Calver and Dr Durai Raj Jawahar and we would like to thank all three for their support and dedication to the Fund. You have made such a difference to so many beneficiaries over the years and we will miss you!

Gary had been a Trustee for 17 years and was our Chair for the last 6 years. Richard was a Trustee for 12 years, for some of which he was Vice Chair. Durai Raj served as our Deputy Treasurer until recently.

Dr Bob Morley
Bob qualified from the University of Birmingham in 1983 and was a GP partner in the city from 1988 to 2013. He was Birmingham LMC executive secretary from 2004 to 2020, taking up the role full time on retirement from clinical practice in 2013.

Bob was a member of GPC for 15 years and its Subcommittee Chair/Policy Lead for Contracts and Regulation from 2013-2019. He was also a director of GPDF for nine years and spent four years on BMA Council and its Oversight and Finance Committee.

Now that he is fully retired Bob is relishing the opportunity to continue to support GPs and their families as a trustee of the Cameron Fund. He will be jointly representing Shropshire, Staffordshire, West Midlands, Leicestershire, Hereford & Worcester, Warwickshire and Northamptonshire.

Dr Caroline Rickard
Caroline qualified as a GP 14 years ago and works in Kent as a GP and as Medical Secretary for Kent LMC. It is during the last 7 years in this role that Caroline has supported many GPs in difficulty. Realising how needed the Cameron Fund is, Caroline is delighted to have been appointed as Trustee for Kent and East Sussex and is looking forward to working with colleagues to ensure the fund remains a resource for GP colleagues in the future.

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New website and membership section

Have you seen our new website?!

We hope that visitors will find the new site easy to navigate and information about how to apply for assistance clear and well signposted. If you have a GP colleague who is in need and wants to find out more about the Fund, please do share this link with them: **www.cameronfund.org.uk**.

As you know, our members play a vital role in supporting the Cameron Fund by spreading the word about our work and we are grateful for all that you do. There is section on the new website explaining why membership is important and how to join. If you have a colleague who might be interested, please share this link with them: **www.cameronfund.org.uk/get-involved**. There is a membership form at the bottom of the page that can be completed online to make the joining process much easier!

Making a difference …

To end this newsletter, we would like to share a message from one of our beneficiaries received earlier this year.

Dr W M is a salaried GP referred to us by Practitioner Health following issues with addiction exacerbated by work pressures. Dr W M attended rehab and remained sober but GMC and NHSE conditions meant that her sessions and earning capacity were limited. The Fund supported her with Money Advice on accessing benefits and budgeting and a monthly grant for essential household expenditure until the restrictions were lifted and she was well enough to increase her sessions.

"I'm writing to express my deepest thanks for the support you have offered me this year. It has made an enormous difference to me and to the lives of my children in recent months. The additional support for Christmas was most unexpected and I was moved to tears as it has enabled me to feel somewhat relaxed about Christmas rather than anxious about the additional expenses. Once again thank you all."

You can help to make a difference to GPs like Dr W M by telling colleagues about the Cameron Fund so that they know we are here to help GPs in financial distress.

If you are taking part in or organising a fundraising event this year, please do consider nominating the Fund as your chosen charity. We have a JustGiving page available at **https://www.justgiving.com/cameron-fund** or we can set up a fundraising page through our CAF account. Please contact the office for more information.

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