



**The Secretary-General**

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## **Annual Report of the Secretary-General**

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### **“Father FIMM” (An Allegory)**

I would like to start the report of the Secretary-General by specifically acknowledging that many members of FIMM have become more than good friends and mentors, they have become my second professional family. From these “brothers and sisters” in manual /musculoskeletal medicine (M/M), others in my osteopathic family benefited from “new” ideas long taught by the school of Lewit and Janda; from the schools within FIMM emphasizing orthopaedic medicine, we appreciated research contributions concerning prolotherapy in strengthening certain structural failings and added to our understanding of the value of capsular patterns in differential diagnosis.

In further discussing our FIMM family, I would like to carry on with President von Heymann’s analogy of the patient by offering an allegory. Specifically, I feel the need today, with my official report, to remind us of the privileges and responsibilities of the patient-physician relationship we have with one of our family members.

I was introduced to “Father FIMM” thirty years ago when I was a medical student in Kirksville Missouri. My professor, Paul Kimberly, was one of three osteopathic physicians in the USA invited to lecture on manual medicine techniques at the Fédération Internationale de Médecine Manuelle.

He told my class that those in the USA wishing to be part of a global family of physicians who integrated manual medicine in their practices could join the North American Association of Manual Medicine (NAAMM). I knew in that moment that I wished to grow up to be a part of Father FIMM’s family.

When I graduated and later became a specialist in the field of neuromusculoskeletal medicine, I specifically joined the FIMM family through NAAMM. Like Dr. Kimberly, I valued the mission that Father FIMM voiced to the world and later yet, in 1998, Father FIMM formally adopted my M/M specialty organization, the AAO, and embraced its additional 1300 members and their school of M/M. M/M representation in North America now lies with two National Societies, one from USA and one from Canada, and can claim quadruple the number of physicians in the “family” from that part of the world.

But what about the physician-patient issue which I mentioned that we needed to consider? As a former FIMM vice-president and now Secretary-General, I feel humbled that Father FIMM shared with me both his hopes and fears, his indiscretions and his healthy decisions. I am acutely aware as well from his patient chart that; in the past, several M/M physicians had helped improve acquired dysfunctions in his structure. You, in this room, are all physicians and as physicians attending the

patient, Father FIMM, you have all observed the logical consequences of his actions -- including good times and bad; growth and regression. As in Wolfgang's analogy of all physicians' patients, we must together recognize and accept that health waxes and wanes and that at this period in his existence, "Father FIMM" is feeling tired, frail, and a bit bewildered by changes in the environment. Without the spare monies that he counted upon from his family members, he has stopped "exercising" and in the past two years his educational and policy systems have essentially "shut down."

Father FIMM is entering a mid-life crisis and right now needs good care from everyone in his Family! How do we honour our physician-patient obligations to him? How do we go about setting rational treatment goals so that he can return to the health and vitality that we know to still exist within?

If you look around now in this General Assembly, you will see the inner strength of Father FIMM; his component parts are openly laid out in front of you. Take time to look again at those sitting next to you. Minutes ago, we received the reports on the function of each "organ"-ization, effectively conducting a comprehensive diagnostic screening survey of FIMM's body. Your duty is to now consider how it works as a unit. Each physician here is a good diagnostician and cannot but recognize that certain parts of Father FIMM's body, mind, and spirit are dysfunctional; these parts -- and the patient as a whole -- could use our help; perhaps even our immediate intervention.

This said, I hope that none of you feel that "Father FIMM" (at a bit over 50 years of age) is "over the hill", obsolete, or in line for euthanasia. President von Heymann recommends conservative care and I concur with this course of action. Exercise is good for the body and its parts; a need to redistribute its energies to produce some-

thing of value is obvious. I feel strongly that the patient's new emphasis on Health Policy shall give Father FIMM a new lease on life and that his children and grandchildren will benefit from the combined wisdom and expertise of FIMM's experience and endeavours.

Long-term health however cannot result from simple good will or a temporary bandage. As manual medicine physicians, we all acknowledge that a structure determines its function (*et vice versa*); as experts in structural therapeutics, we recognize that we may have to work with Father FIMM to change his long-term internal structure and balance in order to continue to function optimally.

Each of your organizations has strengths (particularly in the people who share this family's values and passion for MM) but each also has needs. This body -- like any other -- works best when the needs of one part are communicated systemically and the total body's resources are mobilized quickly to address those needs. Father FIMM needs strategies to increase communication and increased participation. As Secretary-General, I wish to assist in this part of Father FIMM's rehabilitation program. This year I will attempt to contact you -- and encourage you to contact me -- to share your activities and your needs. I will be helping the Health Policy director alert you to "environmental" problems and call for your help and experience to address the stressors that are affecting us individually or collectively.

Please care for Father FIMM; take care of his body and tonight in the dinner learn more about its various parts.

I sincerely thank my professor for introducing me to Father FIMM and for FIMM adopting me and my first family. I hope that each of you will also introduce him proudly to others and share his message with your students and colleagues. I earnestly hope that you love Father FIMM as I

do and see his value. Honour him ... and help him to seek health; it is both your personal privilege and your professional responsibility.

Respectfully submitted,

Professor Michael L. Kuchera  
Secretary-General, FIMM