

The Commonwealth Association for the Ageing



Coming together to 'Care about our Future'

As we enter the new year, we proudly announce that our 10th Anniversary celebrations at the Global Ageing Network's biennial conference, on 7th and 8th September 2023 was a huge success.

The conference which was held at Glasgow in Scotland was attended by about **30 CommonAge delegates** from across the Commonwealth. They were joined by over 650 of their colleagues from nearly 50 countries.

[Read more about the conference.](#)

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A LETTER FROM OUR CHAIR EMERITUS

Dear Readers,

As 2024 gets underway we bring to a satisfying close the first decade of the journey of CommonAge. What an amazing adventure it has been! From the time of the first idea for the organisation to today, those of us who brought it into being in 2013 have been on a fantastic journey of learning, growing our network, finding friends, partners and allies around the Commonwealth. We have gained an understanding of the challenges of ageism, marginalisation and exclusion experienced by so many older people, not just across the Commonwealth, but across the globe. On the other side of the coin we have seen incredible examples of outstanding work by many, including young people, who commit themselves to supporting older people to live well in intergenerational communities, where their rights, dignity and support needs are respected.

The achievements of our first decade have been made through fantastic teamwork and I would like to take this opportunity to record my thanks to all who have served on the board, have volunteered their time, and have helped us with fundraising. I would especially like to thank our founding directors and members who shared and supported the vision in the early days and have ensured that now, as we look to our second decade, we can do so with confidence that the foundations of CommonAge are sound.

It is time now to look ahead and, as we do so, I am delighted to be passing the chairmanship of the organisation to my dear friend and colleague Mansur Dalal. Mansur was unanimously elected to the chair at our last board meeting in November. I wish him and all board directors the very best as they steer CommonAge into its second decade, with exciting and challenging ambitions for the future. I feel honoured to have been invited to stay involved as Chair (Emeritus). In that ambassadorial capacity I shall continue to support the organisation as much as I can for as long as possible. There is much to be done as we continue the work to ensure that older people are valued, respected and supported to live out their lives in the best ways possible. The adventure and the journey continues and we encourage more people and organisations to join us and to support the cause. There is much to be done and this is no time to retire!

With all best wishes.

Andrew Larpent
Chair (Emeritus)

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR



Dear Friends and colleagues,

It's a privilege, an honour and very humbling to be elected to lead CommonAge and to be counted as an equal amongst our distinguished, diversified, global board of volunteer directors, all devoting time and effort to further the ethos and cause of CommonAge.

This devotion is possible only because we commonly have empathy as our guiding star, and an abiding passion for elder care coupled with a burning desire to establish an All age friendly and healthy Commonwealth.

I look forward to working closely with you all on our shared journey of service to Elders across the Commonwealth and beyond

Regards,

Mansur Dalal

Chairman

TOWER OF LONDON DINNER



On 14th November 2023 a special dinner was held at the Tower of London to celebrate CommonAge's first decade and to thank some of the organisations and individuals that have gone out of their way to support the organisation through its formative years. We were pleased to be able to invite many of the UK care sector leaders, colleagues from other Commonwealth Organisations, the Commonwealth Foundation, the Commonwealth Secretariat, and our friends from UK Research and Innovation - Innovate UK. We extend our warm thanks to our key supporter David Stevens of Standards Wise International for generously sponsoring the event.

CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE ACROSS THE COMMONWEALTH



As part of our 10th Anniversary celebrations, to express our appreciation for the support extended by UKRI's [Healthy Ageing Challenge](#), as well as Standard Wise International and other [partners](#), we offered a bursary to seven delegates from developing Commonwealth countries to enable them to attend the GAN Conference.



We were delighted to host an informal dinner for our partners, delegates and other people connected with CommonAge who attended the conference.

At this celebratory event, we presented the winners of our inaugural Care of Excellence Awards with their certificates and also acknowledged our partners and former **CEO Klaus Zimmermann** for his significant contribution and commitment to CommonAge over the past 10 years.



OUR 2023 BURSARY

Our 2023 bursary, supported by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) bursary scheme enabled leaders in ageing services from developing countries of the Commonwealth to join us in Glasgow at the Global Ageing Conference, 6-8 September 2023.



Dr. Pascale Dinan
Mauritius



Miss Magen Mutepfa
Botswana



Miss Sandra Latibeaudiere
Jamaica



Mr Elie Mugabowishema
Rwanda

Unfortunately, two recipients, Mr Henry Katongole, Uganda and Mr David Abbas, -Ghana unexpectedly were unable to attend the event.



Mrs Lynda Smith
South Africa

[READ MORE](#)

C.A.R.E Awards

CommonAge Recognises Excellence Awards

We were delighted to announce the winners of our very first **C.A.R.E Awards**. Launched earlier this year, our [C.A.R.E](#) (CommonAge Recognising Excellence) awards programme celebrates and recognises the amazing work carried out by our members across the Commonwealth.

The Awards put the spotlight on the many worthy individuals and organisations that improve the lives of older people across the Commonwealth. With a focus on healthy ageing, care facilities and provision, communities, innovation, and leadership, the winners of our inaugural awards are:

FACILITY CATEGORY

Outstanding Care and Support Service for elders

Demonstrates best and sustainable practices for healthy and active ageing.

TAFTA – The Association For The Aged, South Africa.

Femada Shamam

[READ MORE](#)



COMMUNITY CATEGORY

Most innovative programme

Demonstrates positive impact on the lives of older persons living in the community.

Coalition Of Societies For The Rights Of Older Persons In Nigeria (COSROPIN)

Eze Ajoku Darlington

[READ MORE](#)



INDIVIDUAL CATEGORY

Emerging leader of the year 2023

Recognising a multi-disciplined and influential leader who has impacted the lives of older persons.

Dr Vinod Shah, MD Janaseva Foundation, India.

[READ MORE](#)



SUPPORTING YOUNG LEADERS

CommonAge at the 10th Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting

CommonAge Ambassador Rianna Patterson and her colleague from Dominica, Shaiel Duverney, represented CommonAge as 'Observer participant' at the 10th Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting held from 11th-15th September 2023.

The Meeting brought together government ministers, senior government officials, education stakeholders and young leaders from across the Commonwealth to agree on policies and initiatives aimed at supporting and empowering young people across 56 member states.

High-level representatives from over 46 countries and 6 UK overseas territories, including 35 government ministers, attended the meeting at the Commonwealth Secretariat's headquarters, at Marlborough House. The meeting, which was held under the theme: 'Aiming Higher: Delivering More for Young People in the Commonwealth', was chaired by the Government of Pakistan.

[**READ MORE**](#)

CommonAge Ambassadors share their experience of The Duke of Edinburgh's Commonwealth Study Conference (CSC)



[**READ MORE**](#)



Rianna Patterson will be heading up our Youth Chapter, due to be launched later this year.



In the Commonwealth Year of the Youth, we were delighted to support two of our young Ambassadors, Rianna Patterson, from Dominica and Sarah Lamba, from Tanzania, with a travel bursary to attend The Duke of Edinburgh's Commonwealth Study Conference (CSC), from 3rd-18th June, in Canada.

The conference brought together 300 of the world's most promising emerging leaders from business, government, labour, and the community sector.

Challenging, exhilarating, friendly and life changing are just some of the words they used to describe their experience.

SUPPORTING BRUNEI DARUSSALAM ON HEALTHY AGEING

CommonAge – The Commonwealth Association for the Ageing joins forces with Standards Wise International in supporting Brunei Darussalam on Healthy Ageing.

A Conversation: Commonwealth Health, Ageing & Longevity, a follow-up from the Commonwealth Health Ministers Meeting held in Geneva, in May 2023.

The event was attended by ministers and senior officials from five ministries:

(1) Health; (2) Culture, Youth, and Sports (with the portfolio of older persons, youth, and social welfare); (3) Home Affairs; (4) Education; (5) Finance and Economy.

The objective and outcome of this conversation was that the government of Brunei Darussalam and CACH would direct more emphasis on ageing and healthy ageing – for older people (diagnosis, management and support) and young people (early intervention). There is no one-size-fits-all solution, and it is important that such social change is compatible with the country's culture, and best suited to the needs of the population. CommonAge works with and beyond the 56 countries of the Commonwealth, when invited by civil society organisations and governments.



Image:

- Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia, Dr Haji Md Isham bin Haji Jaafar, Minister of Health, Brunei Darussalam, Chair, Commonwealth Advisory Committee on Health (CACH), joined by:
- Yang Mulia Pengiran Dr Haji Mohd Khalifah bin Pengiran Ismail, Director General Medical & Health Services (Chair of CACH in November)
- Yang Mulia Dr Ang Swee Hui, Deputy Permanent Secretary (Professional)
- Yang Mulia Tuan Haji Maswadi Bin Mohsin, Permanent Secretary (Policy & Management)
- Mr Andrew Larpent OBE, the Chair of CommonAge
- Mrs Jacqueline WM Wong, Director of CommonAge



Mr Andrew Larpent OBE, the Chair of CommonAge says: *It is a genuine pleasure to be able to visit Brunei Darussalam for these important meetings. We greatly appreciate the hospitality and interest shown by government and other key stakeholders in our conversations.*

[**READ MORE**](#)

Our Story

From an idea to a reality, this is our story.

The Chairman of CommonAge, Andrew Larpent, was fortunate to be offered a place on Commonwealth Study Conferences Leaders (CSC Leaders) programme. Andrew's involvement took him first to London in March 2013 for a week of discussion on the challenges and opportunities facing communities from Commonwealth countries living in the UK.

It was during this programme that the initial concept of CommonAge was developed and tested. It was overwhelmingly supported as one of the leading initiatives to be taken forward after the study conference.

On 22nd July 2013, a workshop hosted by Compass Group, was held in Melbourne to discuss the formation of CommonAge.

CommonAge was officially launched in Melbourne, Australia in November 2013. The then **Commonwealth Secretary General, Kamalesh Sharma** warmly welcomed the CommonAge initiative, which fills the gap within the 53 Commonwealth countries to:

'Advance the interests of older people throughout the Commonwealth by building capability and capacity in health and aged care services'.



The Commonwealth

We are deeply grateful for the generous support of the [organisations](#) and [founding members](#) who assisted CommonAge in those early days. Without their services and assistance, CommonAge wouldn't exist.

The CommonAge group of professional CEOs and supporters across the Commonwealth are committed to building the Global Ageing Network and reaching out to developing countries.

While we believe we have much to offer to countries where services for the ageing are in the early stage of development, we also believe we have much to learn from developing countries where traditional respect for the wisdom and dignity of older people remains a prominent cultural attribute.

We welcome you to join us and help grow the network.



Welcoming Directors to our Board

In 2022 we bid a fond farewell to **Samantha Bowen** and our founding director and **CEO Klaus Zimmermann**. Klaus has been on the journey since the idea was first discussed in April 2013 and has steered our activity ensuring financial, regulatory and governance compliance for our charity. Klaus will continue to support as a board alumni and Director Emeritus.



All former board members have been invited to continue their long-term interest in CommonAge by accepting membership of our Board Alumni group with the lifelong membership status of Fellows of CommonAge. They are much valued members of our great international 'family'.

To refresh and strengthen the board from 1st January 2023 we welcomed four new directors to the board:

- [John Collyns \(NZ\)](#)
- [Linda Justin \(Aus\)](#)
- [Antony Pivato \(Aus\)](#)
- [Nadra Ahmed CBE DL \(UK\)](#)

We also take this opportunity to recognise and thank the wonderful team of **Annie Waddington-Feather and Jill Seaman** for their brilliant work and technological support given over the past 10 years on our communication on social media platforms and the website.

Our Board of Volunteers from across the Commonwealth



Andrew Larpent
Founding Member
& Chairman Emeritus ,
United Kingdom



Mansur Dalal
Chairman

Founder & Chairman,
Association of Senior Living
(ASLI) **India**



Femada Shamam
Vice Chair

CEO, The Association For
The Ageing (TAFTA), Durban,
South Africa



Jacqueline WM Wong
Vice Chair

Honorary Advisor, demensia
Brunei



Antony Pivato
Honorary Treasurer

Consultant,
Australia



Ken Bluestone
Director

Influencing and Policy Lead,
Age International,
United Kingdom



Dan Levitt
Director

CEO, Kin Village,
Canada



Andrew Kavala
Director

CEO, Malawi Network of Older
Persons' Organizations,
Malawi



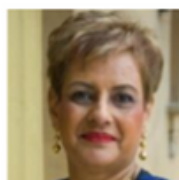
John Collins
Director

Executive Director,
Retirement Villages
Association (NZ) Inc.
New Zealand



Linda Justin
Director

Lecturer,
Australia



Nadra Ahmed CBE DL,
Director

Co-Chair of the National
Care Association (NCA),
United Kingdom

Bringing the generations together through music for International Day of Older Persons

A fundraising concert for Spark of Life and Motor Neurone Disease

To celebrate International Day of Older Persons, in partnership with fellow Commonwealth accredited organisation, The Commonwealth Resounds, we have brought the generations together across the Commonwealth for a unique online concert in aid of two charities, **Dementia Foundation** for Spark of Life and for **Research into ALS** (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis), a form of Motor Neurone Disease (MND).

Musicians from Australia, Canada, Malaysia, Malta and Uganda have generously contributed their time, effort, and talent to help support our appeal.

Introduced by Jane Seymour OBE, Global Ambassador for Dementia Foundation for Spark of Life and headlined by internationally renowned Heerraa Ravindran, an award-winning singer-songwriter from Malaysia.

Join us in celebrating our elders and the generations coming together.

Introduced by Jane Seymour
OBE

Global Ambassador for
Dementia Foundation for
Spark of Life



Headlined by internationally
renowned Heerraa Ravindran

Award-winning singer-
songwriter from Malaysia.



[Find out more and watch the concert here](#)

AMBASSADORS' UPDATES



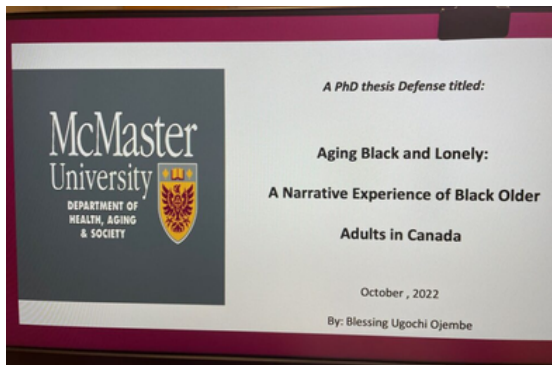
James (SJ) Kinuthia, founder and owner of Sj Remedial Homes For the Elderly Kenya has opened the first private care home in Kenya.

He also participated in the webinar Facilitating Best Practice Through the Spark of Life Model of Care, hosted by the Global Ageing Network.

[Read More](#)

Anderson Simfukwe, our Ambassador, in Zambia was part of the symposium that launched of Alzheimers Disease and Related Dementias in Zambia - ADDIZ is a great step forward for dementia care and support in Zambia.

[Read More](#)

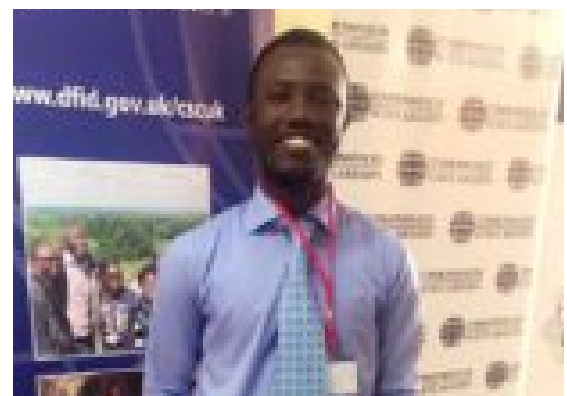


Dr Blessing Ugochi Echeme-Ojembe

Following the completion of her PhD at McMaster University, Ontario, Canada, we are thrilled to learn our Ambassador Blessing Ugochi Echeme-Ojembe, is now Dr. Blessing Ugochi Echeme-Ojembe. [Read more](#)

We are deeply saddened to hear the passing of our Ambassador, in Ghana, **Maxwell Larweh**.

When we awarded Maxwell our 2017 bursary he was a Senior Physiotherapist at Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital, and was passionate about the health and welfare of the older patients he treated. We are delighted to hear that Warwick Medical School has awarded him a posthumous degree.



DEMENTIA IN THE COMMONWEALTH

CommonAge research project

A key strategic objective of CommonAge is the promotion of health and wellbeing among the population of the 56 countries of the Commonwealth.

We have been demonstrating, through evidence, issues relating to ageing, and our first research report, [Ageing in the Commonwealth](#), was published in 2018.

As a follow-on project, we are currently researching and intend to publish a report on Dementia in the Commonwealth later this year.

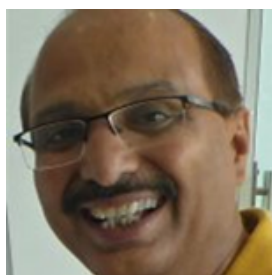
This report would be our contribution to the 75th year milestone. The opportunity and the dynamics of global health awareness, and increasing international focus on dementia, combine to make 2024 an ideal year for us to present such a report designed to attract Commonwealth wide international attention.

Our objective in this project is to highlight to the governments of the Commonwealth and its institutions the challenges represented by the rapid growth in the numbers of young and old, who are, or who will be, living with dementia across the Commonwealth. Also, to demonstrate the current state of awareness and strategic planning for addressing the challenges and gaps in policy, services, knowledge, education, infrastructure, capacity resources, public, and voluntary sector support.

Supporting leaders in dementia care across the Commonwealth

We are deeply committed to bringing Commonwealth sector leaders together, supporting them and enabling them to share knowledge and best practice.

In 2022, we were delighted dementia advocate, [Datin Jacqueline WM Wong, Honorary Advisor, demensia Brunei](#) joined our Board of Directors, and through our networks, many of our Ambassadors in developing Commonwealth countries are being supported and learning innovative new practices to support those living with dementia.



Our Ambassador [Sailesh Mishra](#), is a Social Entrepreneur and is known in India for his social justice work for the welfare of Senior Citizens and people with dementia.

He has received several awards and has participated in numerous international summits, including speaking at our [inaugural Commonwealth Elders' Forum in 2017](#). Sailesh's work in the field of Dementia and Elder Right Advocacy has brought him accolades, respect and support from many renowned organisations around the world.

In 2008, he founded [Silver Innings](#), an organisation dedicated to working towards creating an Elder and Dementia Friendly World where Ageing becomes a positive and rewarding experience.

As part of the organisation's dementia-care programme, local children are encouraged to visit residents in their community and in Silver Innings care homes.



Read more about the work some of our other Ambassadors' are doing in the field of dementia [here](#).

GLOBAL NEWS

The United Nations Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing: Global Perspectives

The United Nations Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) offers a bold new agenda for handling the issue of ageing in the 21st-century. It focuses on three priority areas: older persons and development; advancing health and well-being into old age; and ensuring enabling and supportive environments.

We submitted to two chapters on the progress or otherwise of Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific nations, and also in the Asia regions.

[READ MORE](#)



New UN awareness day: International Day of Care and Support, 29th October

Mindful of the need to invest in the care economy and to create robust, resilient and gender-responsive, disability-inclusive and age-sensitive care and support systems with full respect for human rights with a view to recognizing, reducing, valuing and redistributing unpaid care and domestic work and support, the General Assembly [decided](#) to proclaim 29 October as International Day of Care and Support.

[READ MORE](#)

The sixth From Plan to Impact report by Alzheimer's Disease International

This report monitors the progress of the World Health Organization (WHO)'s Global action plan on public health response to dementia from 2017–2025.

It examines the drivers behind risk reduction and provides an accessible overview of both modifiable and non-modifiable risk factors as well as the benefits of lifelong risk. It includes articles from South Africa, Kenya, Pakistan, Singapore, Japan, Uruguay, Colombia, and the United Kingdom.

[DOWNLOAD THE REPORT](#)

Universal Health Coverage for All Ages: An Agenda for Action by Age International

This report draws on evidence and experience from its work with older people around the world to make the case for stronger health systems that truly include older people.

[DOWNLOAD THE REPORT](#)



WHO evidence and gap map

To help reduce social isolation and loneliness across all ages, the WHO has released a new evidence and gap map on in-person interventions.

[VIEW THE MAP](#)

Commonwealth Heads Of Government Meeting (CHOGM), 2024

Hosted by different member countries on a rotating basis, leaders of [Commonwealth countries](#) meet every two years for CHOGM. In 2022, we sent a [delegation](#) to Rwanda, and we are currently planning our participation in [CHOGM 2024](#). Held in Samoa, the theme for CHOGM 2024 is 'One Resilient Common Future: Transforming our Common Wealth'.

[FIND OUT MORE ABOUT CHOGM](#)



Image : The Prime Minister of Samoa, Hon. Fiamē Naomi Mata'afa, and the Commonwealth Secretary-General, the Rt Hon Patricia Scotland KC, have announced that the next Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) will be held in Apia, Samoa, beginning on 21 October 2024.

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

We have partnered with, and are a member of, a number of international organisations who share the same goals and aims.

Patrons & Sponsors



**STANDARDS WISE
INTERNATIONAL**

Supporting Excellence in Senior Living
and Human Services



Delivered by
Innovate UK and ESRC



Memorandum of Understanding



International Institute on Ageing
United Nations - Malta

We are also affiliated with and members of the following organisations



The Commonwealth



a contribution to the
**Decade
of healthy
ageing**



NSINDAGIZA
Organization



THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE
FOR THE RIGHTS OF OLDER PEOPLE

CONTACT US

Email Reneta Dsouza, Executive Assistant at secretariat@commage.org
or Connect with us on social media



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Join us!

We are a charity and our voluntary Board of Directors is committed to making changes to older people's lives across the Commonwealth.

Help us deliver the ideal of an "All Age Friendly" Commonwealth that values the dignity of older people, respects their wisdom and experience, and that leaves no one behind in the journey towards a sustainable, peaceful future.

Donate, Partner, become a Member!

You can [donate](#) to us via

- Credit card: Visa, Mastercard and American Express
- Apple Pay
- Google Pay
- PayPal

Get in Touch! We'd love to share your stories and help us to grow the conversations about our mission and vision, and to celebrate the great achievements of organisations and older people themselves.

Thank you for your continued support.
Team CommonAge.

Visit our website www.commage.org for more information about our work and for regular updates.