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Statement for candidacy to continue on CAA

I am Head of Paediatric Neurology and Neurophysiology at Red Cross Children's Hospital, the largest children's hospital in sub-Saharan Africa. This tertiary hospital is the academic paediatric training platform for the University of Cape Town and runs a nationally accredited sub-speciality training program in paediatric neurology. My department handles a wide spectrum of neurological diseases common to children from resource-poor countries and functions as the sub-Saharan referral centre for neuromuscular disease and complex epilepsy. My areas of research interest include epilepsy in childhood, neurophysiology, neuromuscular disorders, demyelinating diseases, neurocutaneous disorders, neuroinfectious diseases (including HIV and tuberculosis), and issues around access to child neurology health services and paediatric neurology training in Africa. I have over 65 peer-reviewed publications and completed my MD thesis on peripheral neuropathies in children.

I also lead an outreach training programme for paediatricians and child health specialists, the African Paediatric Fellowship Program, which is based at the University of Cape Town. The programme identifies and trains paediatricians from African countries who return to their home centres with sub-speciality accreditation, including child neurology and neuro-disability. This rapidly expanding group of alumni will form a vibrant network of accredited child health specialists across Africa.

I have tried to be influential in organization of child neurology in Africa through my membership on the executive boards of the Paediatric Neurology & Development Association of Southern Africa (PANDA-SA); and the African Child Neurology Association (ACNA); and as an office-bearer (Education Chair 2011-2013) of the Commission on African Affairs of the International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE). My work for these associations has focused on development of child neurology education and training initiatives for resource-poor countries. I am also an active organizer and advocate for child neurology in the global health context, as current Secretary of the ICNA (2010-2014); and as a chair of the Commission on Paediatrics of the ILAE (2013-2016). I am Chair of the Task Force for establishment of infantile seizure guidelines of the ILAE Commission on Paediatrics and was co-Chair of the ILAE Guidelines Task Force (2011-2013).

I am married to Dr Mark Hatherill, an expert in Tuberculosis Vaccinology, and tolerance. We successfully reached the top of Kilimanjaro without confrontation, in 2011. We have 2 beautiful daughters aged 7 and 13, one will become an actress and the other changes her career plan ever week. The family have one dog, an Australian Shepherd Dog with ADHD.

Statement of Intent

To achieve the following as part of the CAA

- Develop educational programs and training initiatives for resource-poor countries

- Expanding the CAA membership, through supporting the successful application of more chapters in Africa.
- Fostering active collaboration between the CAA and other neurology societies and associations

Develop educational programs and training initiatives for resource-poor countries:

During the term 2011-2013 I was Education officer for the CAA. During this time I assisted in the organisation of the 1st African Epilepsy Congress (June 2012, Nairobi) and also presented on various topics at this successful congress. I have also assisted in the organisation of the 2nd African Epilepsy Congress, due to be held in Cape Town in May 2014. I established the template for the Visiting Expert Program with collaborators in the North American division, and assisted in the identification of recipients for the program awards. I have kept contact with these recipients and have been able to include a number of them in further projects beneficial to Africa. I also formulated the template for the training centre development award. One which was given to the development of the first basic EEG and epilepsy management for children course, and the other towards an on-line resource to enhance neurophysiology skills. Both are courses much needed and relevant to Africa.

Educational templates are already being devised in collaboration with the ICNA. These templates provide an on-line resource on ICNApedia and through the ILAE web-site for approaches to common clinical problems that are also relevant to resource-poor countries. Targeted education and training support activities should continue. For example, in February 2012, I co-organised a focus group meeting in Uganda on Children with Epilepsy. Key representatives from many African countries were invited to take part. This meeting was the beginning of an African neurology network which will adapt and modify international guidelines for the African context; identify teaching and training needs; and lobby for epilepsy care in resource-poor countries. This meeting was and will be followed by further meetings on cerebral palsy and epilepsy (2013), and autism and epilepsy in Africa (2014). During the previous term as Education officer for the CAA various training initiatives were facilitated including short-term attachments, and visiting scholars. I hope to be able to continue these exciting projects by remaining on the CAA.