**Applicant Bio (250 words)**

My name is Sameera Khalid and I’m a current second year medical student at the Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry (Western University). I have been involved with CFMS from my first year as a medical student — specifically since the day I saw Monty’s presentation on the National Day of Action during his President’s Tour and fell in love with the idea of political advocacy as a medical student. Since then, I have been an active member of the Government Affairs portfolio, as the GAAC Sr. for Western, in addition to my annual participation in the National Day of Action in Ottawa, both as a delegate and a planning committee member. Advocacy is a huge passion of mine and has taken a wide variety of different forms for me over the years. I’ve served as a proud member of my Class Council for the past two years, first as Academic Director where I brought up my classmates’ curriculum-related concerns to Schulich’s academic leadership, and now as Vice President. I like to channel my penchant for meeting new people and having conversations into opportunities for meaningful change for my future patients and colleagues. As a visible woman of colour, meeting like-minded peers who want to challenge and dispel the inequities faced by Canadians has been both a priority and a privilege. It is a privilege I do not take lightly and am excited to expand on through my continued involvement with organizations like the CFMS.

**Platform (max 500 words)**

As your Director of Government Affairs, my role encompasses three main tenets: to Connect, to Support, and to Represent the Advocacy efforts of medical students across Canada. Chairing the GA portfolio requires extensive familiarity with all of its initiatives, which I have managed to gain through my experience as GAAC and as part of the National Day of Action. I’ve had the opportunity to speak to my peers and elicit their concerns regarding their roles within the GA portfolio. Based on my own experience and the feedback I’ve received, I aim to achieve the following during my term as Director of Government Affairs:

1. **Empowering Advocacy Skills**

One of my primary objectives as lead of the GA portfolio will be to empower CFMS members with the skills and knowledge necessary to become effective advocates. Advocacy is a vital aspect of medical education and practice, yet many individuals may lack formal training in this area. To address this gap, I will oversee the development of comprehensive materials and resources aimed at teaching members how to advocate for themselves, their patients, and the broader medical community. These resources will cover a range of topics, including effective communication strategies, policy analysis, grassroots organizing, and coalition building, and will be available in a variety of multimedia formats.

1. **Optimizing Events**

The CFMS organizes several major events each year, including the Medical Day of Action (MeDOA) and the National Day of Action (NDOA). While these events serve as important platforms for student advocacy, there is always room for improvement. I will work to enhance the engagement and participation of our members in these events by soliciting feedback, evaluating past successes and challenges, and implementing innovative strategies to maximize their impact. This may include diversifying event formats, incorporating more interactive elements, and leveraging our social media platforms to reach a broader audience. Through my conversations with peers, I’ve realized that the structure and format of our advocacy events may need to evolve to better meet the needs and preferences of our members. This may involve removing barriers to face-to-face interaction and collaboration during these events, such as hosting these events in Ottawa or other central locations and maximizing travel funding for delegates

1. **Promoting Collaboration**

As Director of GA, I hope to foster a culture of collaboration within the GA portfolio and across other CFMS teams and committees. This will involve regular check-ins with National Officers (NOs) to ensure alignment and coordination on advocacy priorities, as well as full portfolio meetings to facilitate cross-team collaboration and knowledge sharing. By promoting open communication, I aim to leverage the diverse expertise and perspectives within our organization to achieve our advocacy goals more effectively.

All in all, I am excited for the opportunity to possibly serve as your Director of Government Affairs next year and thank you for reading my platform. With your support, I am confident that we can advance our shared goals and aspirations to enact positive change in healthcare policy and practice!