Combined conference

This is it. After months of planning and running around, the Pharmacy 2011 conference is here.

It’s been an exciting journey. We have never had a conference where the Pharmaceutical Society and the Pharmacy Council have been partners. We have never had a Commonwealth Pharmacists Association conference in South Africa. And now we have a joint conference hosted by the three bodies.

The programme is so much more exciting than the usual PSSA conference programme: two hours for the AGM, and the rest of the time devoted to topics that affect daily practice. We have national and international experts who are ready to share their expertise and experience, and we have the opportunity to shape the future of pharmacy in this country. If we act on the information that we will acquire, and the discussions and decisions that follow the presentations, surely we will prove that pharmacy is versatile, aware and responsive. We can create the future we deserve.

Draft CPD regulations

At last! For how long have you heard me speaking about CPD? And the fact that Pharmacy Council was going to introduce mandatory monitoring of CPD for pharmacists?

To me, it feels as though it has dominated my life for a 100 years, but actually I’ve only been involved for seven. That still feels like an inordinately long time!

One of the first things I had to try very hard to understand about the way statutory Councils work, was the fact that everything takes longer than anyone wants it to. When preparing documents, every single word is challenged. Meetings are not as frequent as one would like, but it’s logical. Every Council member has a full-time commitment to a day job, so there are only four Council meetings a year. Not only that, but the Registrar’s office needs to carry out all the necessary research and consultation required for every activity. This is obviously completed between Council meetings, and everything needs to be discussed at Committee level before it is presented to the full Council. And that’s only the beginning. In the case of draft regulations, the next step is to send it to the Minister of Health and the Department of Health, and then to the government printers.

So you will understand how happy I was when I saw the Minister’s signature on the draft regulations!

The next step? Please read the draft regulations. Your comments can be sent to the PSSA national office for incorporation into the PSSA submission, or you may send your comments directly to the Department of Health.

CPD implementation

I’m tired of speaking about CPD. It is time to just get on with it, and do it. For most of us, that means recording our activities. We’re all engaged in CPD, and all we need to do is to record what we do, and how it affects our lives. Sounds simple, doesn’t it?

And if one more pharmacist asks me about CPD points…

We must be doing something right

The strategic planning exercise also feels as though it’s gone on forever. This issue shares some of the PSSA thoughts and experiences with you. I do hope that it shows you that we take our responsibilities to you seriously.

The PSSA would not exist if it did not meet its members’ needs. And we must be doing something right. Every month the SAPJ welcomes new members. Since 2004, there has been a significant increase in membership, which continues to grow steadily. Thank you for becoming part of our family.

Book clubs

When we were discussing implementation of the strategic plan, someone said that strategic planning for a book club is not needed. At first I agreed, but I’ve changed my mind. I really need to plan my reading. There are far too many interesting books, and if I don’t make a conscious and conscientious effort to have a reading plan, I’m going to miss out. I’d hate that to happen.

SAPJ deadlines

Mea culpa. I am at fault. I apologise. The PSSA national office has received a number of calls from pharmacists, asking why they had not received the last journal. I’m afraid that this year has been so hectic, and taking into account the conference planning and the public holidays, it was impossible to stick to the March and April deadlines. I’m so sorry about that, but I’m glad you were concerned about not receiving it. We’re back on track, and hopefully the rest of the year will run smoothly.

Some of the people in the office were saying that they’ve always wondered whether you read the journal or not, so that it was good to learn that members noticed when their journal arrived late.

I’ve never doubted that you read the journal. After all, I write to you every month. Now it’s your turn to write to me!

Lorraine Osman