PSSA: Border and Eastern Districts 2016 Regional Conference

Simbongile Pambuka
The Manderson Hotel and Conference Centre – (10 – 11 September 2016)

The PSSA Border and Eastern Districts Branch held a successful regional conference in Stutterheim this year. The passion for our profession of our delegates was ignited and recreated with the very inspirational list of amazing speakers. It was a weekend not to be missed and I doubt if such an incredible programme for the Eastern Cape will ever be repeated.

They say “umntu ngumntu ngabantu”, i.e. a person is a person with other people, and that is what the weekend was about. We are often caught up at many times in our busy worlds without pauses and reflection, hence such weekends or events encourage refreshing, re-energising, restoring, renewing, recreating, remembering and reviving our passion for our profession.
• A special thank you to Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU), Rhodes University (RU), South African Pharmacy Council (SAPC), the Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa (PSSA), the Independent Community Pharmacy Association (ICPA) and South African Association of Community Pharmacists (SAACP) for supporting our programme

• Also a BIG thank you to our platinum sponsors Cipla and Adcock Ingram, and bronze sponsors Sandoz, Pharma Dynamics, SunPharma, Pfizer, without these sponsorships the conference would not have been possible

• A very special thank you to all the speakers and PSSA national office, especially Nitsa for all her invaluable assistance in emailing event information to members

Let us continue protecting and promoting our profession with passion and participation to impact our patients positively. God bless you all!!

“Source of vision is inspiration, source of inspiration is passion, source of passion is purpose, source of purpose is divine intervention” – Dr Myles Munroe
PSSA concerned that ongoing student protests weaken pharmaceutical services

The following is a media release that was sent out by the PSSA in October 2016.

“Let our pharmacy students meet their commitment to the country,” is the impassioned plea of Prof Sarel Malan, president of the Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa (PSSA).

The PSSA is concerned about the ripple effect that ongoing student protests and disruption on university campuses will have on both healthcare professionals and the communities they serve.

Pharmacy graduates are among the group of healthcare professionals that have been identified as scarce skills by the Departments of Labour, Higher Education and Health. After graduating with a four year Bachelor’s degree, young pharmacists are required by law to complete a year’s internship followed by a year of community service. The intention of the community service area is to place healthcare professionals in rural and other areas where the healthcare services lack the necessary professionals.

According to Malan, 848 final year pharmacy students have not yet been able to complete their studies. If they are unable to so by the end of the year, and if examinations are further postponed, they may not be able to begin their internships. “This will affect the quality of pharmaceutical services at both public and private sector facilities because pharmacist interns are an integral part of the healthcare team,” says Malan.

“If pharmacy students are unable to complete their fourth year before January, it is not only going to put both their internships and their community service years at risk, it will result in health risks for patients”, continues Malan. This is particularly important because the National Department of Health must follow a strict timetable in the community service placements – if a healthcare professional fails to take up an allocated post in January, it may not be possible to fill the post at all.

The PSSA sincerely hopes that continued protests will not jeopardise the health of patients by compromising the future of pharmacy students.