



Presidential Report 2018

Joggie Hattingh, President: SAAHIP



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Colleagues and friends

Towards the end of the year and the end of a term of office, it is always time to reflect on what was achieved and then most importantly, to decide on the way forward.

SAAHIP has in recent years grown in membership and we are catching up with the sector that has historically had the biggest membership (SAACP) in this regard. I firmly believe that the reason for our growth is the value that we add to our members' professional life. SAAHIP has

been visible and vocal in our communication with National Department of Health (NDoH) and with National Workforce. We are communicating our actions to our members and our branches are all involved with the presentation of Continuing Professional Development and intern orientation.

The fact that we appointed an Executive Director for SAAHIP in this year is no mean feat. Already Boitumelo Ntsoane has made remarkable contributions to our cause and has shown herself to be a huge asset to the profession. We look forward to working with her in the future.

SAAHIP has received recognition for inputs given at national level and we have been in discussions with NDoH as well as National Workforce. SAAHIP was also designated as a nominated member to the Ministerial Stakeholders Meeting on Medicines Availability, and will in future represent PSSA as well.

At the recently established National Health Insurance (NHI) Stakeholders Consultative Forum Meeting, we established common ground for our profession to meet the challenges of NHI and Universal Health Access in a proactive manner, and as a unified profession.

As I have said in the past – it is critically important that all pharmacists present a unified front and that when we talk to government or other professions, we carry over the same message.

With that said, I have to stress the fact that **now is the time** that you are given the opportunity to help determine the future of your profession, by participating in the consultative process that will result from the NHI Stakeholders Forum. If we stand back and hope somebody else will do it on our behalf, we may well be completely side-lined to the periphery of service delivery with other professions taking up the slack that we left.

A lot of hard work needs to go into preparation for universal access to health care, including the Ideal Clinic, National Core Standards and acceptable staffing establishment for pharmaceutical service delivery. To reach the latter we must map the full extent of the sphere

of involvement and responsibility of pharmacists throughout the service-delivery platform and **this is where we need the help of every member!**

SAAHIP Exco held five meetings during the 2017/18 term of office, with an additional strategic planning meeting in May. I was able to attend six Branch AGMs this year (Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal Inland and KwaZulu-Natal Coastal) whilst the vice president, Refiloe Mogale, attended the Northern Gauteng AGM. I linked to the Southern Gauteng AGM via a video-call, whilst the Northern Cape/Free State and North West branches will have their AGM during the first quarter of 2018.

At the 2017 SAAHIP AGM, the Presidential Committee was tasked to enter into negotiations with the unions who represent our members working in the Public Sector, to ensure that our voice is heard in negotiations. This was no easy task, as changes in the mandate of unions only make it possible for unions to represent their members and unions no longer affiliated with professional organisations. Through continued and concerted effort we managed to have a very fruitful and positive meeting with the Public Servants Association of South Africa (PSA) in late November. We will continue engaging with PSA in this regard.

I want to extend my thanks to the branches who have worked extremely hard this year and I am really excited to see the new energy in some branches. The SAAHIP Exco WhatsApp group buzzed with activity during Pharmacy Month and the enthusiasm at the AGMs I attended was contagious. I wish to commend the branch committees for the manner in which they attend to the matters of branches.

As with everything in life there is a time to come and a time to leave. When the new President of SAAHIP is elected at the next AGM, please give her/him the same level of support and acceptance that I received. We have to give each other the freedom to work according to our own agenda and we need to accept that there is not only one right way to accomplish what we need to. The new president will have my full support and I will hang around in the wings should guidance be requested from me.

The past two SAAHIP Conferences focused on Our Journey / Lift-off and what a journey the past three years has been for SAAHIP and for me!

It has been an honour to serve the profession and however much I have put into the profession I have to admit that I received endlessly more in return.

Lastly, I wish to extend a warm word of thanks to all members who served with me during my three years of tenure. It has been a privilege for me to work with you and I want to assure you that your efforts have made a lasting impact on our profession.