March is the best month of the year! (Except of course for February which is my birthday month!) March brings autumn, the most stable season of the year, with balmy evenings spent with friends and a glass of ice-cold Sauvignon Blanc. It is also CONFERENCE month, which adds to the magic of March.

Every time the bus turns into Champagne Sports Resort, the natural beauty of the resort makes my jaw drop. It is such a blessing to attend a conference in such beautiful surroundings, and to have the opportunity to be replenished and go back to our respective facilities feeling brighter.

On Thursday afternoon the Annual General Meeting and Conference was opened by Refiloe Mogale, SAAHIP President. Apart from dignitaries the following special guests were welcomed to conference:

First Timers – 34 in total
Observer from Tanzania – Emmanuel Muya
Observer from Swaziland – Donovan Dube

In future we might meet more colleagues from sub-Saharan countries when they attend and present their projects at SAAHIP Conference. We belong to a universal profession after all.

I would also like to mention Susan Buekes. Susan attended conference as a member of the KZN Inland delegation. Susan has been a member of SAAHIP since 1975. She gave a presentation highlighting her professional journey since qualifying as a pharmacist on 31 January 1962. Susan, you are a very courageous and adventurous soul!

**Academic session**

The podium and poster presentations covered a wide spectrum of subjects. On Saturday we ended the academic session on a high note when we were entertained by the 7 Pearl presentations.

One of the Pearl presenters was Precious Ncayiyana, who works at 1 Military Hospital.

I sincerely hope that in future more colleagues from the military will join us.

Congratulations to the 2018 Western Cape Government Health Intern Research Winner, Kyna Izally (UWC), and the winners of the SAPSF Clinical Skills Competition, Qiniso Zikhali and Ntandoyakhe Nxumalo. We hope that these were the first of many podium presentations you will present at the SAAHIP Conference.

I would like to congratulate all the presenters. Your contribution to conference is very valuable. You learn so much and take home ideas to address the same or similar challenges at your own facility.

**The winning presentations were:**

Mediclinic Best Scenario Presentation: Nicole Hoffman (Western Cape)
Life Healthcare Best Podium Presentation: Naeema Moosa (Eastern Cape)
Life Healthcare Best Poster Presentation: Yasmine Khan (Eastern Cape)
Adcock-Ingram Pearl Award: Kaajal Chetty (KZN Coastal)

As there was only one academic presentation the prize for this category was not awarded this year.

**Your leaders**

During the AGM the following members were elected to serve on the 2019/2020 Executive Committee:

President: Refiloe Mogale
Vice President: Shawn Zeelie
Treasurer: Bhavrith Jaganath
Secretary: Kristien Schutte

Joggie Hattingh retains the position of Immediate Past President.
Exhibitors

The conference would not have been possible without the exhibitors. A huge thank you to each and every member of trade that came all the way to Champagne Sports Resort to spend the 3 days with us:

- Fresenius-Kabi Equity Pharmaceuticals
- Novartis
- Sandoz Adcock-Ingram
- Roche
- Sanlam
- Sonke/Sun Pharma
- UPD
- Bayer Allergan
- Sanofi
- PPS Mylan
- Boehringer
- DSV Pharmadynamics
- Novo-Nordisk
- Cipla Medpharm
- Dr Reddy
- National Dept of Health
- SA Pharmacy Council

Each year delegates vote for the winning exhibitions in three different categories and an overall winner is determined. The 2019 winners were:
- Most Hospitable: Adcock-Ingram
- Best Appearance: Adcock-Ingram
- Most Informative: Fresenius-Kabi
- Overall Winner: Adcock-Ingram

Workshop

I am not sure which was first: Ideal Clinic or National Core Standards. Now the Department of Health is working on an Ideal Hospital model. Change is necessary as we move toward Universal Healthcare Coverage, Healthcare 2030 and National Health Insurance. Andy Gray facilitated the workshop on the Ideal Hospital and kept the members of the panel on their toes:

- Nirupa Misra Pharmacy Manager, King Dinuzulu Hospital Complex
- Shoni Mulibana Regional Pharmaceutical Service Manager, Right to Care
- Vusi Dlamini Head of Pharmaceutical Services, KwaZulu-Natal
- Kristien Schutte Pharmacy Manager, Netcare Cuyler Hospital
- Caroline Ngoepe National Department of Health
- Bennett Asia National Department of Health

The Ideal Hospital Model uses a National Department of Health audit. The Office of Health Standards Compliance (OHSC), which is an independent accreditation body, will still use the regulations published in terms of the National Health Act when auditing your facility.

For those who wish to familiarise themselves with the Ideal Hospital model the necessary documents can be accessed at the following link addresses:

https://www.idealhealthfacility.org.za/docs/hospital/v1/Ideal%20Hospital%20Framework%20(Hospital%20Tool%20v1.8)%20(10%20October%202018).xlsx

FIP conference 2021

Unfortunately, we will not host the 2021 FIP Conference in Cape Town. We have submitted a bid for the 2022 FIP Conference. This means that in 2020 we will have to travel to Seville, Spain, and in 2021 to Brisbane, Australia. If you get the opportunity to attend a FIP Conference, please do not hesitate. It is a most enriching experience!

Visit the FIP website for more information: www.fip.org

Focus area reports

During the AGM the branches reported back on their focus areas:
- President, Vice-President and Director: Relationship with Policy Makers and Employers
- Western Cape and Mpumalanga: Planning for Pharmacy 2030
- Northern Gauteng and Eastern Cape: Membership, Marketing and Branding
- KZN Coastal and Inland: Policies and Legislation
- Limpopo and Southern Gauteng: Compliance with Health Systems Standards

The focus area reports are available on the SAAHIP website: www.saahip.org.za

The SAAHIP website has been upgraded and updated to make it a user-friendly portal through which members can access SAAHIP documents and contact the SAAHIP office and members of the Executive Committee.

Social

During the course of the conference, councillors were given the opportunity to attend a Sushi Class and a Gin Tasting Session sponsored by Adcock-Ingram. Those fortunate enough to be nominated to attend either of these events thoroughly enjoyed the experience.
The evening function on Thursday night was hosted by Fresenius-Kabi. The *Birds of a Feather* theme stimulated the councillors’ right brain and they went to a lot of trouble to dress feathery. Western Cape Branch was awarded the prize for *Best Dressed*. Their penguin waggle was beaten by North West, who won the prize for *Best Entrance*.

The function on Friday evening was hosted by Equity Pharmaceuticals. The theme, *Sexy 21*, refers to Equity being the importers of a great number of Section 21 medicines. The councillors could have stepped out of a fashion magazine with all the bling-bling on display.

The Gala Dinner and Prize Giving Ceremony was a formal event with lots of neon added to brighten up the evening. A thunder storm caused the electricity to trip, so the neon and glow-in-the-dark accessories were put to good use.
Rewards

Fierce competition exists between branches for the Spirit and Membership awards. The Western Cape Branch received the Spirit Award and Eastern Cape Branch the Membership Award.

Operation Smile

Operation Smile has been the SAAHIP Social Responsibility Project since 2011 when Braam Malherbe addressed the Conference audience. At the time his objective was to run the Great Wall of China to raise money for Operation Smile. Since then SAAHIP has donated R234 300.00 – at least 42 SMILES. This year the branches pledged R51 300, which will make 9 patients’ smiles brighter.

The way forward

Mpumalanga Branch will be the branch responsible for organising the 2020 and 2021 conferences. The Conference Convenor, Obey Madzingo, announced that the conference will move to a new venue for the next two years. The venue that has been identified is Legend Safari and Golf Resort, Mokopane, Limpopo, 250km north of OR Tambo International Airport. We wish Obey and his organising committee all the best! We are looking forward to the 2020 Conference at the new venue.

May you all have a Brighter Year and implement the lessons learned at 2019 SAAHIP Conference.