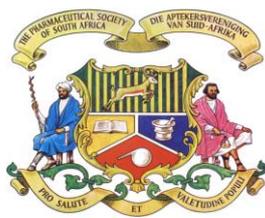


**Aptekersvereniging van  
Suid-Afrika  
– Nasionale Kantoor –**

Vir die gesondheid en welsyn van die  
mense



**Pharmaceutical Society of  
South Africa  
– National Office –**

For the health and welfare of the  
people

## **Report on the Internship Placement Survey conducted by the Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa – December 2017**

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## List of Abbreviations

BPharm	Bachelor of Pharmacy
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CV	Curriculum Vitae
HWSETA	Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority
JSE	Johannesburg Stock Exchange
PSSA	Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa
SAPC	South African Pharmacy Council
SDF	Skills Development Fund

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### Appreciation:

The PSSA wishes to express its deepest appreciation to every pharmacy student and pharmacist who dedicated time and effort to complete these surveys.

## **Introduction**

In South Africa, as part of the pre-registration training of pharmacists, new graduates must complete a one year internship after their four year BPharm degree. This internship can be conducted at either a community pharmacy, hospital pharmacy, pharmaceutical manufacturer (industry) or at an academic institution (university). There are however several requirements from the statutory body. The facility at which the internship is completed must be registered with the South African Pharmacy Council (SAPC) for the purpose of training interns and there must be a pharmacist registered with the SAPC as a tutor to facilitate the training of an intern. The tutor must also ensure that the intern fulfils all the internship requirements as set out by the SAPC, such as attending workshops presented by SAPC, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) entries, pre-registration examinations, progress reports and a full 365 days of registration as an intern. Only after satisfactory completion of the internship year, may the graduate apply to the SAPC to be registered as a community service pharmacist and be allowed to practise as a pharmacist in a public sector site.

The Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa (PSSA) was overwhelmed towards the end of 2017 with requests from final year pharmacy students who have not been successful in securing an internship position for 2018. Those affected represented a substantial proportion - roughly 25-30% - of the annual pharmacy graduate output in South Africa. The situation was unprecedented, as the annual output of pharmacy students had not increased by the same ratio, when compared with previous years. Due to this situation, the PSSA decided to conduct two surveys on internship placements and to collect data from both the unemployed final year pharmacy students who were unable to secure an internship position (Appendix 1) and pharmacy managers or responsible pharmacists who are in the position to employ pharmacy staff (Appendix 2). This report contains the data collected from both groups as well as recommendations to relevant role players in order to avoid a similar situation in future.

## **Methodology**

### ***Target and study populations***

The target population in the first survey was all final year pharmacy students without confirmed internship positions by December 2017 and whose details were recorded in a list compiled by the PSSA and other stakeholders. The survey was distributed by email only to those selected students and not the entire graduate cohort for 2017. Of the 252 names on the list, one student's email address was not available and eight emails came back undelivered. A total of 96 students (39.5% of those polled) responded to the survey and thus formed the study sample.

The second survey was aimed at pharmacy managers or responsible pharmacists who were in a position to appoint pharmacy personnel. The survey was sent out to PSSA members in newsletter number 35 of 2017. Although initially sent only to PSSA members, the link to the survey instrument was further distributed on social media by a particular stakeholder. The stakeholder was requested to remove the post from social media. Although this had the potential to increase the total study population, it did make calculation of the size of the study population and the response rate difficult. A total of 143 pharmacy managers or responsible pharmacists completed the survey.

### ***Developing and testing the surveys***

In order to increase face and content validity, the survey instruments were drafted and sent to PSSA staff members to check the clarity and distinctness of the questions, determine the amount of time needed to complete the questionnaire, identify any bias that may be created by the questions, and elicit recommendations for improvement. The final instruments were then prepared by the Professional Development and Support department.

### ***Data collection***

Student participants were invited via email to participate in the survey whereas pharmacy managers or responsible pharmacists were invited in an PSSA newsletter. The communication provided the respective links to the SurveyMonkey sites. Both surveys opened on Thursday 14 December 2017 and closed on Wednesday 20 December 2017. Participation in both surveys was voluntary and no payment, reward or consideration was offered.

The surveys were estimated to take 9 minutes for final year students and 4 minutes for pharmacy managers or responsible pharmacists to complete, respectively. All data collected were anonymous and no personal data were requested. Participants were assured that all data collected would be handled confidentially and only by the Professional Development and Support department of the PSSA.

### ***Data analysis***

The quantitative data were analysed by SurveyMonkey, using descriptive statistics such as frequency (n) and percentage (%). Pharmacy students were allowed for questions 4, 5 and 6 (Appendix 1) to select more than one choice from the list of options provided. For questions 6 to 14 in the survey for pharmacy managers or responsible pharmacists (Appendix 2), the frequency (n) and percentage (%) of each level was indicated for each factor.

The qualitative data from the surveys were analysed by the PSSA. Themes were formed into specific categories after reading, identifying and summarising concepts.

## **Results and discussion**

### ***Survey for final year pharmacy students unable to secure an internship position***

#### ***Demographic data***

Pharmacy students from eight of the nine pharmacy schools in South Africa participated in the survey. Tshwane University of Technology and Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University had previously presented the BPharm degree as a joint venture. This joint venture concluded three year ago and each institution will have their own graduates in 2018. The 2017 graduates were thus the last cohort to graduate from the joint venture between the two universities. The majority of the students who participated in the survey were from the University of the Western Cape (n=26, 27.7%), Rhodes University (n=19, 20.2%), Nelson Mandela University (n=13, 13.8%) or Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University/Tshwane University of Technology (n=13, 13.8%), as indicated in Figure 1. Fewer students were from North-West University (n=7, 7.4%), University of Limpopo

(n=7, 7.4%), University of KwaZulu Natal (n=5, 5.3%) or University of the Witwatersrand (n=4, 4.3%). Two participants did not answer this question.

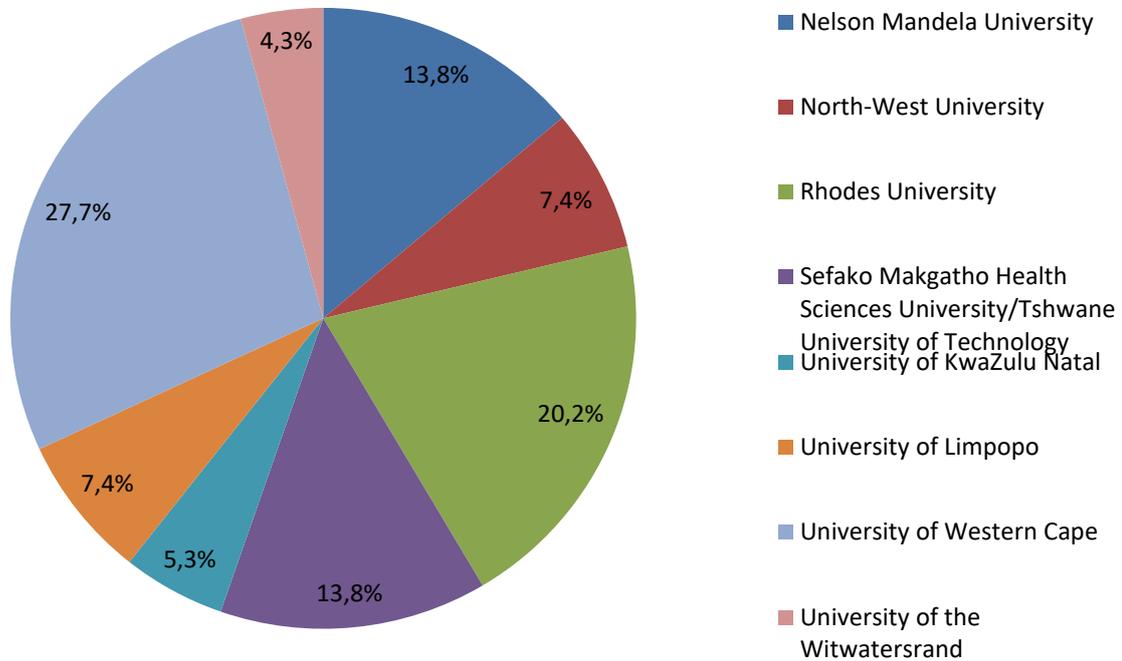


Figure 1: Universities where participating pharmacy students without internship employment in December 2017, graduated from.

The majority of the students who participated in the survey were from the Eastern Cape Province (n=20, 21.3%). Western Cape Province had the second largest number of participants (n=16, 17.0%), followed by Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo provinces (with 14 students each). Data from all nine provinces are included in Figure 2. Two students did not answer this question.

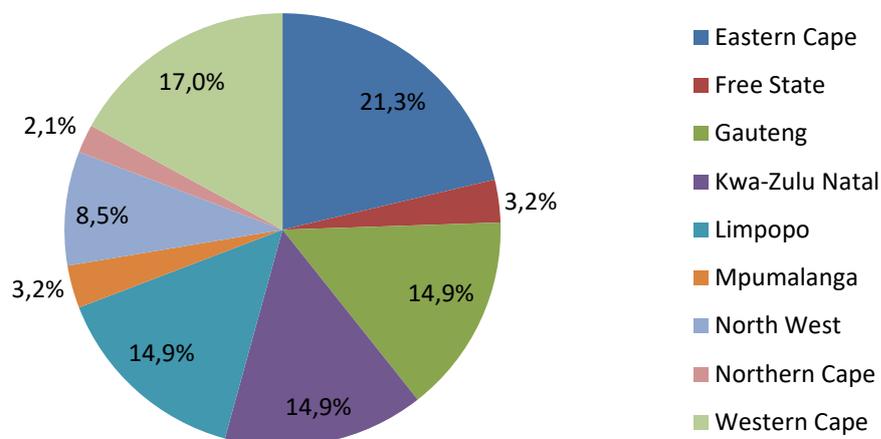


Figure 2: Indication of where the students without internship employment in December 2017, lived.

More than 82% of the pharmacy students who participated in this survey were South African citizens (n=78). One participant did not answer this question.

*Internship applications submitted in 2017*

The students, who were by the beginning of December 2017 not yet employed for internship, were asked in which provinces they applied for internship positions. They were allowed to select more than one option, if applicable. The 95 students who answered this question indicated that they had submitted a total of 321 applications in all nine provinces. This equates to an average of almost 3.5 applications per student. Most of the unemployed interns applied in Gauteng (n=65, 20.3%), KwaZulu-Natal (n=56, 17.5%), the Western Cape (n=47, 14.6%) or Mpumalanga (n=47, 14.6%). Applications were also made to Eastern Cape (n=44, 13.7%) and Limpopo (n=38, 11.8%). Significantly fewer applications were submitted to North West (n=13, 4.1%), Free State (n=7, 2.2%) and Northern Cape (n=4; 1.2%). One student did not answer this question.

Students indicated that the reason for their choice of province was firstly informed by this being the same province in which they lived, secondly because it was the province in which they studied, or it was where their parents/family lived, or thirdly, where they perceived there to be opportunities for employment. Less than 2% of the respondents indicated that their choice was based on the province being more urbanised than the province in which they currently resided. Three students did not answer this question.

Pharmacy schools exist in only the Eastern Cape, Western Cape, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and North West provinces. Currently there are no pharmacy schools in the Free State, Mpumalanga and Northern Cape provinces. Figure 3 highlights that in both the Eastern and Western Cape provinces the majority of graduates from their pharmacy schools normally reside in a different province. Nonetheless, fewer applications were received for internship positions in these provinces than would be expected from the number of graduates from their universities or the number usually resident in those provinces. However, in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga, more applications for internship positions were received than the number of pharmacy students who normally resided in those provinces or graduated from universities located in those provinces (if applicable).

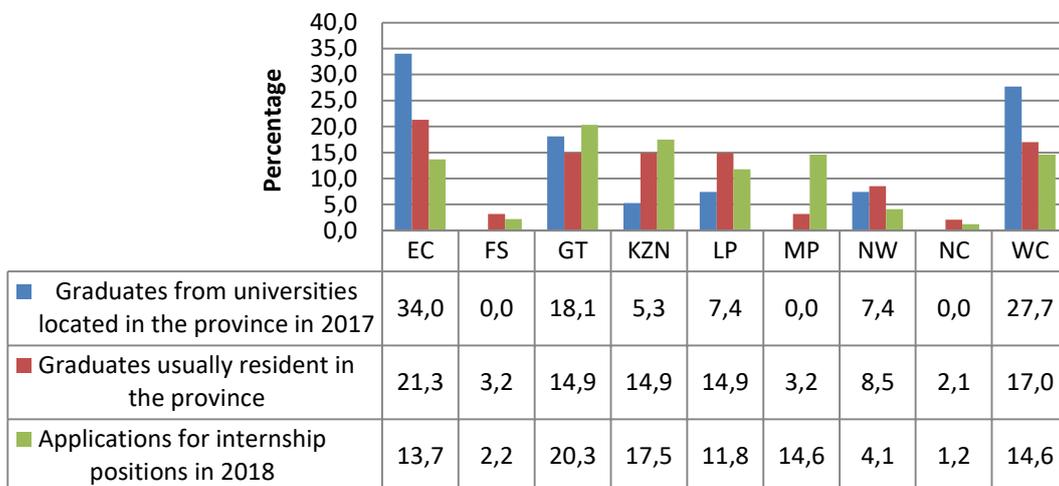


Figure 3: Relationship between provinces where pharmacy students graduated from, lived and applied for internship positions.

It was important to find out in which practice sectors of the profession students applied for internship positions. The 95 students who answered this question submitted a total of 291 applications in seven different practice sectors. On average, every student submitted an application to three different practice sectors. Figure 4 shows that the majority of students submitted applications for internship to the public institutional pharmacy sector (n=85; 29.2%) followed by the private institutional sector (n=61; 21.0%). This was followed by corporate community pharmacies (n=51; 17.5%) and the pharmaceutical industry (n=50; 17.2%). Fewer applications were submitted to independent community pharmacies (n=27; 9.3%). Very few students submitted applications for internships in academia (n=10; 3.4%) or wholesale and distribution (n=7; 2.4%). For the purpose of this survey, corporate pharmacies were defined as the four companies listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE), namely Clicks, Dis-Chem, MediRite and Pick n Pay pharmacies. All other community pharmacies were included under independent community pharmacies. One student did not answer this question.

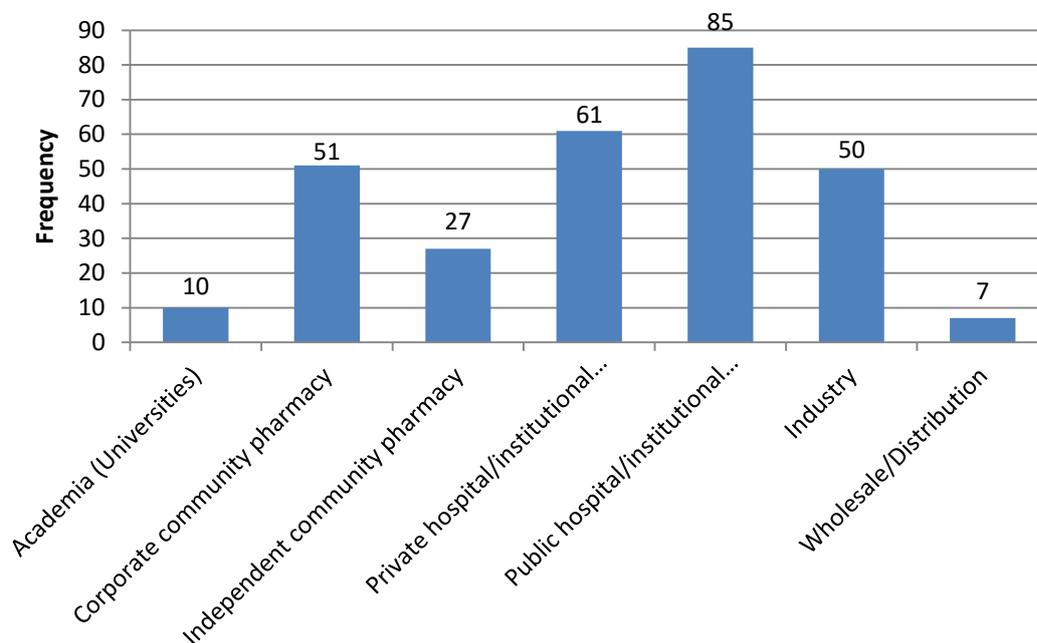


Figure 4: Distribution of students' applications for internships in different sectors of pharmacy.

More than 87% of students (n=83) indicated that they were willing to work in rural settings. For those students (n=12, 12.6%) who indicated that they are not willing to work in rural and remote areas, the reasons provided were financial constraints associated with not living with their families; inability to care for parents, partners or children; safety; being engaged or married; or religious considerations (inaccessible place of worship).

#### *Relationship with pharmacy where 400 hours of work during pre-graduate training was conducted*

It was nearly an equal split between yes (n=46, 49.5%) and no (n=47, 50.5%) when students were asked if they had applied for internship in the same pharmacy(ies) where they did their 400 hours of work during the undergraduate training. Three students did not answer this question.

The main reasons provided for not applying at the same pharmacy where students did their 400 hours were that they wanted to work in a different environment during their internship, that the

particular pharmacy in which they did experiential training was not registered to provide an internship but could take in pharmacy students, that the internship positions were reserved for bursary holders, or that budgetary constraints at the pharmacy limited internship positions. Some students performed their 400 hours outside of South Africa and wanted to complete their internship in South Africa. Although a few students were still waiting for feedback on their internship applications, there were also others who were not informed as to why their applications were unsuccessful. Four students did not answer this question.

When asked to think of possible reasons why their applications were unsuccessful, the responses can be divided into two groups. Some students identified internal reasons for not being successful, such as that they had applied too late or not at enough places, a possible poor interview performance, lower than average academic records, conducting their undergraduate training at pharmacies that are not registered for internship, lack of work experience and not being able to start on 1 January with their internship due to outstanding supplementary examinations in January 2018. External reasons identified for unsuccessful applications were that students applied for internship positions in provinces other than where they resided and that these positions were kept for students originating from the specific province, being non-South African residents, or budgetary constraints in government institutions. Three students did not answer this question.

#### *Remuneration expectations*

In the survey, three questions regarding remuneration expectations were posed to the pharmacy students. Firstly, students were asked what monthly salary (after tax and other deductions) they expected during their internship year. In order to make it easier for students to answer, this was defined as the nett amount that would be paid into the intern's bank account, as deductions were expected to vary from employer to employer. Answers varied between R10 000 and R26 000 per month, with one exception of R35 000 indicated by one student. For further analysis this answer was not included in the calculations as it would skew the data. For this question, the mode was R20 000 (most recorded answer), the median was R18 000 (centre of dataset) and the mean (average) nett salary expectation was R18 129.77. One student did not answer this question.

As motivation for the abovementioned indication of nett salary, 78% of students (n=71) considered themselves as worth the amount indicated and that their employment would represent value for money for the employer and a return on their investment. Fourteen students (15.4%) acknowledged that they are not yet worth the amount expected, but would achieve this status during their internship year. Only two students (2.2%) doubted whether they were worth the expectation mentioned, whereas four students (4.4%) felt that they were not worth the employer's investment. In retrospect, a possible follow-up question requesting students to list the factors which they considered would make them worth the amount indicated could have provided added insight. Five students did not answer this question.

When asked what the absolute minimum monthly nett salary was that they were willing to accept during the internship, answers varied between R5 000 and R26 000 per month, with a mode of R15 000, a median of also R15 000 and a mean of R15 591.84. Only one student did not answer this question. The difference between the expected monthly nett salaries for internship and the minimum monthly nett salary pharmacy students are willing to work for during the internship is indicated in Figure 5.

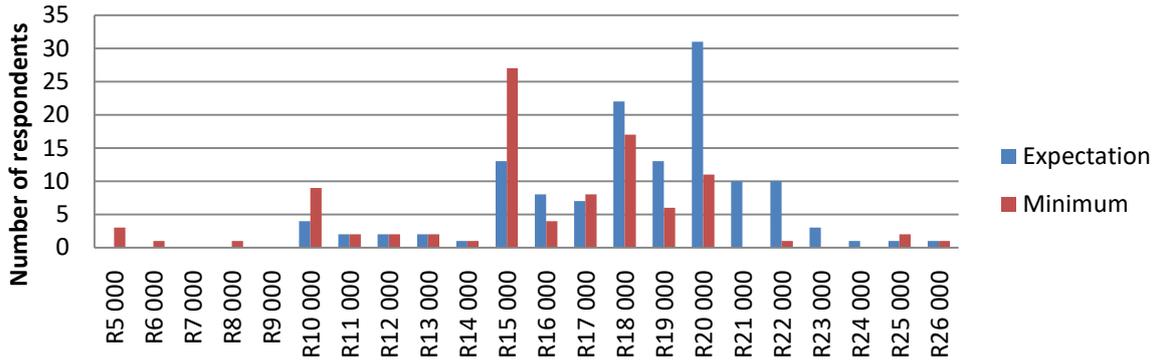


Figure 5: Difference between expected monthly nett salary and minimum monthly nett salary willing to work for.

### *Suggested solutions from pharmacy students*

In conclusion, students were asked what needs to be done to solve this perceived national lack of internship positions. Although the majority of the comments were in line with the reasons already mentioned earlier in the report, three new suggestions emerged. Firstly, students suggested a decrease in internship remuneration, as they realised that some pharmacies cannot afford internship salaries and therefore will rather appoint a pharmacist’s assistant. These students also motivated that if, for example, the public sector reduced the remuneration per intern but kept the same budget for interns, it would be able to employ more interns in understaffed government institutions. The substantially lower remuneration for academic interns was also mentioned as a great demotivation for applying for post-graduate studies at universities, although there are positions available. Secondly, students identified difficulty in accessing advertisements for internship positions from different institutions and pharmacies. And thirdly, the possibility of an increased ratio between interns and tutors were suggested (e.g. 2 interns to 1 tutor), thus enabling smaller pharmacies with maybe only one pharmacist to take on more interns.

### **Survey for pharmacy managers or responsible pharmacists**

#### *Demographic data*

The majority of the pharmacist participants who answered this question (n=142) worked at independent community pharmacies (n=73; 51.4%) followed by corporate community pharmacies (n=19; 13.4%), private institutional pharmacies (n=14; 9.9%), public institutional pharmacies (n=13; 9.1%) and industry (n=12; 8.5%), as indicated in Figure 6. A few pharmacist participants were from universities (n=3; 2.1%), wholesale or distribution (n=3; 2.1%) or other (n=5; 3.5%). Participants specified “other” workplaces as managed care, non-government organisation, research pharmacy, clinical trial centre and medicines information. These workplaces referred to the participant’s permanent place of work and did not include after hour locum positions. One participant did not answer this question.

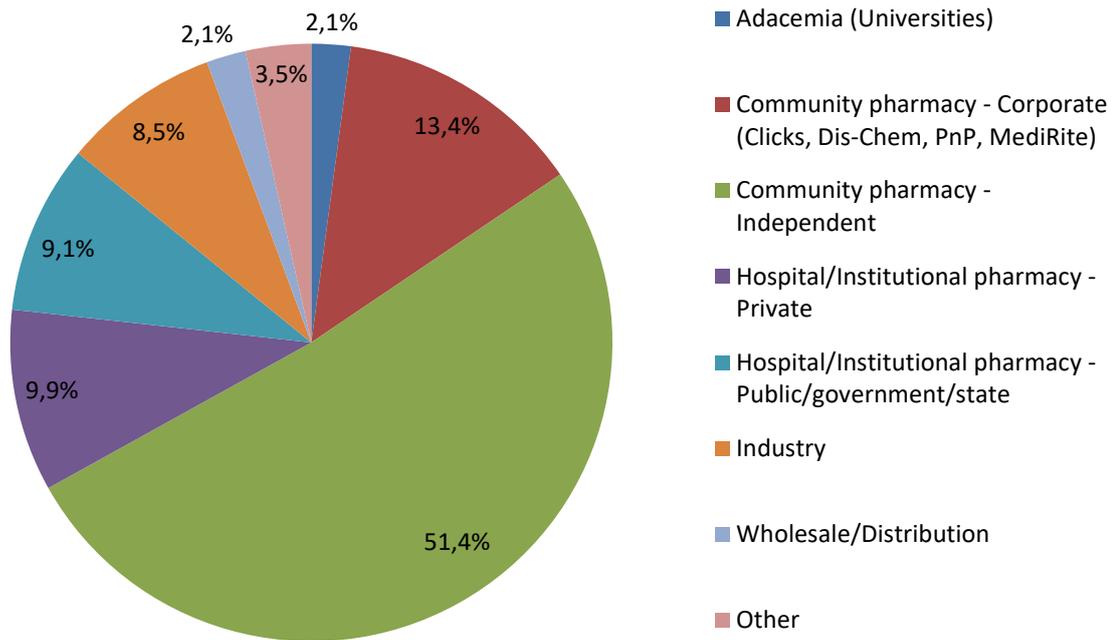


Figure 6: Sectors of pharmacy where pharmacist participants work.

Participants were mostly from Gauteng (n=42; 29.6%) and Western Cape (n=37; 26.1%). Figure 7 shows that all other provinces were also represented namely KwaZulu-Natal (n=17; 12.0%), Mpumalanga (n=13; 9.1%), Eastern Cape (n=12; 8.5%), North West (n=7; 4.9%), Northern Cape (n=6; 4.2%), Limpopo (n=5; 3.5%) and Free State (n=3; 2.1%). One participant did not answer this question.

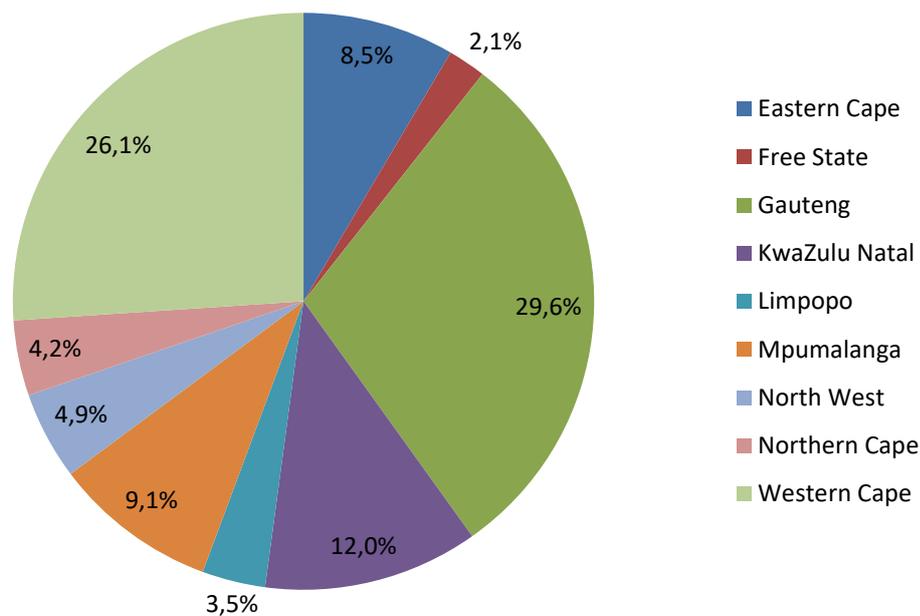


Figure 7: Province distribution of pharmacist participants.

Of these reported workplaces, the majority were in urban areas (n=80; 56.3%), with fewer in semi-urban (n=38; 26.8%) and rural areas (n=24; 16.9%). One participant did not answer this question.

#### *Previous and current training of interns*

Almost half of the participants (n=70; 49.3%) had not previously supervised an intern, including during 2017. For the rest of the participants, who had previously supervised at least one intern, they had done so for less than three years (n=29; 20.4%), between 4 and 7 years (n=13; 9.2%) or more than 8 years (n=30; 21.1%). One participant did not answer this question.

Of the 142 participants who answered this question, only 15.5% (n=22) were currently registered to train interns and had undertaken to supervise an intern in 2018. For the remaining 84.5% of participants, some were registered to supervise interns but had not accepted an intern in 2018 (n=20), were registered to supervise interns but do not want an intern in 2018 (n=28), had never been registered as a tutor before (n=21), did not plan to register as a tutor (n=20) or were registered before but when registration expired did not renew registration (n=31). In other words, based on this survey, 48 possible internship positions could be filled almost immediately as participants were registered to train an intern. However, of these, more than half (n=28; 58.3%) had already decided not to accept an intern in 2018. Another 72 potential internship positions could be created if participants register as a tutor with the SAPC. However, whether they would be in a position to accept an intern could not be confirmed.

#### *Factors influencing the decision to employ a pharmacy intern*

Participants were asked to rate the level of influence of each predetermined factor on the decision to employ a pharmacist intern in their workplace on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 was no influence at all and 5 was major influence. The factors provided to the participants are listed in Table 1. Results will be reported for the scale which most participants selected when answering each question.

For all the factors listed except two, the majority of the participants indicated that the factor had a major influence on their decision to employ an intern. More than 40% of participants indicated that SAPC requirements to register the training facility (49.6%) and the tutor (46.6%), the profitability of the facility (40.9%), and the remuneration demanded by the intern (40.3%) were major influences on their decision. More than 30% of participants in this survey felt that the time and effort to train the intern during the internship year (30.0%) as well as the time demands of the internship programme (32.0%), in particular, were major factors influencing their decision to employ an intern. A return on investment in an intern was only considered a major influence by 27.5% of participants. The majority of participants (36.7%) were neutral on the influence of the skills, knowledge, attitudes and productivity of an intern, whereas the downgrading of pharmacies after SAPC inspections were not considered to be a factor of influence for the majority of participants (36.7%).

**Table 1: The level of influence of different factors on the decision to employ an intern.**

Factors	Level of influence					
	1	2	3	4	5	Not answered
Profitability of workplace (gross profit at the end of the financial year, sufficient cash-flow to employ another staff member)	18 13.6%	13 9.9%	17 12.9%	<b>30</b> <b>22.7%</b>	<b>54</b> <b>40.9%</b>	11
	23.5%		63.6%			
Remuneration of pharmacist interns (salaries, cost to company)	13 10.1%	8 6.2%	24 18.6%	<b>32</b> <b>24.8%</b>	<b>52</b> <b>40.3%</b>	14
	16.3%		64.8%			
Time and effort to mentor a pharmacist intern and assist with internship programme (training, attending SAPC internship workshops, CPD submissions, progress reports)	16 12.3%	19 14.6%	26 20.0%	<b>30</b> <b>23.1%</b>	<b>39</b> <b>30.0%</b>	13
	26.9%		53.1%			
Return on investment (the contribution a pharmacist intern can make to your workplace/business)	19 14.5%	17 13.0%	28 21.4%	<b>31</b> <b>23.7%</b>	<b>36</b> <b>27.5%</b>	12
	27.5%		51.2%			
SAPC requirements to register as a tutor (application process, registration fee, inspection, etc.)	<b>24</b> <b>18.3%</b>	10 7.6%	14 10.7%	18 13.7%	<b>65</b> <b>49.6%</b>	12
	25.9%		63.3%			
SAPC requirements for the premises to be registered as a training facility (application process, registration fee, inspection, etc.)	22 16.8%	9 6.9%	<b>23</b> <b>17.6%</b>	16 12.2%	<b>61</b> <b>46.6%</b>	12
	23.7%		58.8%			
SAPC downgrading after inspections	<b>47</b> <b>36.7%</b>	13 10.2%	24 18.8%	17 13.3%	<b>27</b> <b>21.1%</b>	15
	46.9		34.4			
SAPC internship programme (Intern/tutor workshops, pre-registration exam, CPDs, progress reports)	24 18.5%	12 9.2%	<b>25</b> <b>19.2%</b>	24 18.5%	<b>45</b> <b>34.6%</b>	13
	27.7%		53.1%			
Skills, knowledge, attitudes and productivity of interns	25 19.5%	16 12.5%	<b>41</b> <b>32.0%</b>	19 14.8%	<b>27</b> <b>21.1%</b>	15
	32.0%		35.9%			

It is clear from the data that all factors that were considered major influences are linked to the financial implications and expenditure incurred in employing a pharmacist intern – the profitability of the pharmacy, remuneration of employee, return on investment and registration fees for the training facility and tutor.

There were also other factors that participants identified that might influence the decision to accept an intern. Some pharmacist participants expressed a fear that universities were overproducing graduates and thus contributing to the perceived increase in intern unemployment. Another factor considered by employers was that an intern potentially takes the place of a member of staff who does not leave at the end of the internship year, and can therefore be developed. Some pharmacies do not have sufficient space available for another staff member as they are already running at full capacity. The willingness of employers (decision makers) to make funding available for interns was raised. The effort required creating internship positions and navigating the bureaucracy involved in sourcing funding and approval for the position from management was also cited. It was reiterated that interns must remember that the internship is still a year of training. Although the scope of practice is in line with that of a post-basic pharmacist's assistant, the salaries demanded are

significantly higher. A notable variety in salaries offered between sectors also contributed to interns preferring certain employers over others. Pharmacists mentioned the potential impact of government subsidies or discounted SAPC fees as ways in which their decisions could be influenced. A suggestion was offered that a pharmacist may train two interns simultaneously.

## **Recommendations**

From the data obtained in both surveys, the PSSA was able to make the following recommendations to various role players, as an attempt to avoid a similar lack of internship positions in future.

### ***Interns***

The PSSA suggests that interns, when working on their 400 hours or any other part-time work during university recesses as part of their undergraduate training, where possible should consider approaching these facilities for potential internship. It is important to indicate the intention of conducting an internship at the facility and in which year the pharmacy student will or plan to be an intern.

In negotiating with a pharmacy with the intention to conduct an internship there, the student must ensure that he/she is able to provide the pharmacy a return on investment and work towards becoming the pharmacist's preferred choice of intern. This may include ensuring that the pharmacy student are familiar with the specific dispensing programme used in the pharmacy, such as Unisolve, Propharm and RxSolutions, so that the pharmacist does not have to allocate time training the intern on the dispensing system. This is typically something the pharmacy student can learn whilst working in the pharmacy before the internship year. Exposure to and training in a variety of dispensing programmes or systems will always be an advantage. The pharmacy student needs to highlight to the pharmacist previous work experience (if conducted at another pharmacy), unique capabilities and the potential value-add the pharmacy student might bring to the pharmacy as an intern. This includes any additional courses (such as first aid or contraception) which may be valuable expertise that the pharmacy currently lacks and/or which may result in increased patient satisfaction. Both pharmacy students and pharmacists commented that no incentive exists to benefit the institution to train the intern. An option to consider could be an agreement for post qualification compliance to return for a specified period as an added return on investment for the pharmacy.

The intern must also exhibit an attitude of willingness to learn as much as possible and do whatever is assigned to him or her. This may include dispensing, patient counselling, stock order and receipt thereof, to organising the dispensary or assisting colleagues with a higher workload.

From the data, it was noted that there were a few pharmacy students who had one option for internship in mind, limiting the possibility of finding placement. Internship can be performed in a wide variety of practice settings. It is also important to keep on applying for internship positions until the student were a successful candidate and secured a position. From the students' responses it seem as if pharmacy students do not keep record of their applications and do not follow-up. It is essential to follow-up on all applications on a regular basis. Majority of advertisements will mention that if applicants have not heard from them by a certain date, they should consider their applications unsuccessful. Pharmacy students should keep record of those dates so that they can manage their applications and know when they were unsuccessful to avoid waiting for feedback on

an application that they will never receive. If no such date is provided, feel free to follow-up on the progress of the applications 2-3 weeks after the closing date with the relevant contact person provided in the advert. Pharmacy students should remember that they are the one actively sourcing an internship position and that this process is not similar to medical interns who will be placed for internship through a central system.

The last recommendation is that pharmacy students who have government provincial bursaries should in the beginning of their final year of study, remind their provincial head of pharmaceutical services of their bursary so that the necessary budgetary allocations for the following year can be confirmed.

### ***Tutors and pharmacists***

PSSA members who offer internship positions can forward the details on the internship position being offered to PSSA office staff who will upload the information to the website for pharmacy students to access.

The PSSA will present a webinar to PSSA members on how to approach the Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) in order to apply for internship funding through the Skills Development Fund (SDF).

### ***Universities***

It was requested from both pharmacy students and pharmacists that universities should play a more active role in ensuring their graduates can continue with their training. Pharmacy students requested more assistance with preparation to apply for internships as well as distributing advertisements to students. This could be sourced through communication to the university's alumni. Pharmacists suggested that universities work together with SAPC in preparing the profession on the number of interns expected the following year.

### ***SAPC***

Both pharmacy students and pharmacists suggested that SAPC look into changing the current ratio of 1 intern to 1 tutor so that tutors may have more than one intern.

Another big contributor to pharmacists not being willing to participate in the internship process is the registration fees for facilities and tutors together with the registration process and compulsory inspections of facilities.

SAPC should also work with universities in informing the profession of the expected number of graduates annually so that the profession can prepare for the incoming number of interns. SAPC has access to all registers and can easily compare the number of registered tutors with the number of graduates.

Official communication on the abovementioned will be sent to the Registrar of the SAPC for feedback.

### ***Government and National Department of Health***

The majority of the pharmacy students who were still without internship positions by December 2017 indicated that they had applied, among others, to public institutional pharmacies. The responses that they got for being unsuccessful in their applications were mainly due to budgetary cuts and lack of funding. Together with pharmacy students and pharmacists, the PSSA plea with the National Department of Health to ensure and secure sufficient and transparent funding to employ pharmacy interns in public hospitals and institutions.

Formal communication on the abovementioned will be sent to the Minister of Health.

### ***PSSA***

Pharmacy students identified that poor interview performance might have contributed to not being successful candidates for internship positions. In addition to other commitments listed above, the PSSA will host webinars in 2018 to assist PSSA pharmacy student members with compiling a Curriculum Vitae (CV) and provide advice on preparing for interviews.

## Appendix 1 – Intern Placement Survey (for final year pharmacy students)

Intern placement survey (for final year pharmacy students)

December 2017

The purpose of this survey is to determine reasons for so many final year BPharm degree students unable to secure pharmacist intern posts in South Africa for the year 2018. You are eligible to participate in this survey because your name was included in a list of pharmacy students without internship positions.

All data will be collected anonymously and no personal data will be requested. Data will be handled confidentially in the Professional department of the PSSA. Your participation in this survey is voluntary and you may reject participation without any consequences.

Please complete all 15 questions. This survey will take less than 5 minutes to complete.

Section A: Demographic data

For all questions in Section A, please choose only one answer from the options provided.

Question 1: From which university did you graduate in 2017?

- Nelson Mandela University (NMU, previously NMMU)
- North-West University (NWU)
- Rhodes University (RU)
- Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University (SMU)
- Tshwane University of Technology (TUT)
- University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN)
- University of Limpopo – Turfloop campus (UL)
- University of the Western Cape (UWC)
- University of the Witwatersrand (Wits)

Question 2: In which province do you live? This refers to the province where your permanent address is currently, and not a temporary address.

- Eastern Cape
- Free State
- Gauteng
- KwaZulu-Natal
- Limpopo
- Mpumalanga
- North West
- Northern Cape
- Western Cape

Question 3: Are you a South African citizen?

- Yes
- No

Section B: Internship needs

Please read the questions carefully.

Question 4: In which province(s) did you apply for internship positions? You may select as many provinces as are applicable.

- Eastern Cape
- Free State
- Gauteng
- KwaZulu-Natal
- Limpopo
- Mpumalanga
- North West
- Northern Cape
- Western Cape

Question 5: What is the reason for your answers in question 4? You may select more than one option, should more than one be relevant to you.

- It is the same province as where I've studied
- It is the same province as where I live
- It is the same province as where my parents/family live
- It is where the work is
- It is more urban than where I live

Question 6: In which sector did you apply for internship positions? You may select all the options applicable to you.

- Academia (Universities) – continue studies with Master's degree/PhD
- Community pharmacy – Corporate (Clicks, Dis-Chem, PnP, MediRite)
- Community pharmacy – Independent (all other community pharmacies)
- Hospital/Institutional pharmacy – Private
- Hospital/Institutional pharmacy – Public/government/state
- Industry
- Wholesale/Distribution
- Other (please specify)

Question 7: What is your monthly salary (after tax and other deductions) expectation during your internship? This is the nett amount that you would receive in your bank account.

Question 8: Do you consider that you are worth the amount indicated in Question 7 and that your employment will be value for money for your employer and ensure a return on his investment in you?

- Yes
- Not yet but I will get there
- Maybe
- No

Question 9: What is the absolute minimum monthly salary (after tax and other deductions) that you are willing to work for during your internship? This is the nett amount that you would receive in your bank account.

Question 10: Are you willing to work in rural and remote areas?

- Yes
- No (please provide a reason)

Question 11: Have you applied to the same pharmacy(ies) where you did your 400 hours of work during your pre-grad training for an internship position?

- Yes
- No

Question 12: If you answered Yes in question 11, why wasn't your application successful? If you answered No in question 11, why didn't you apply at that pharmacy(ies) for an internship?

Question 13: In general, why were your applications for internship been rejected? State as many reasons as possible and provide sufficient detail for us to clearly understand these reasons.

Question 14: What would you say needs to be done to solve this perceived national lack of internship positions?

Question 15: You are welcome to provide any other feedback or information not yet provided in this survey.

## Appendix 2 – Intern Placement Survey for pharmacy managers or responsible pharmacists

Intern placement survey (for pharmacists)

December 2017

The purpose of this survey is to determine reasons for the lack of pharmacist intern posts in South Africa for the year 2018. Therefore you should only complete this survey if you are a pharmacy manager, responsible pharmacist or any other person who is in a position to appoint employees.

All data will be collected anonymously and no personal data will be requested. Data will be handled confidentially in the Professional department of the PSSA. Your participation in this survey is voluntary and you may reject participation without any consequences.

Please complete all 16 questions. This survey will take less than 5 minutes to complete.

### Section A: Demographic data

For all questions in Section A, please choose only one answer from the options provided.

Question 1: In which sector of pharmacy do you work? (excluding after hour locums)

- Academia (Universities)
- Community pharmacy – Corporate (Clicks, Dis-Chem, PnP, MediRite)
- Community pharmacy – Independent
- Hospital/Institutional pharmacy – Private
- Hospital/Institutional pharmacy – Public/government/state
- Industry
- Wholesale/Distribution
- Other (please specify)

Question 2: In which province is your workplace?

- Eastern Cape
- Free State
- Gauteng
- KwaZulu-Natal
- Limpopo
- Mpumalanga
- North West
- Northern Cape
- Western Cape

Question 3: Is your workplace situated in an urban, semi-urban or rural area?

- Urban

- Semi-urban
- Rural

Question 4: Have you previously (including 2017) trained interns? If yes, for how many years?

- No, I have not trained interns ever before
- Yes, between 1 and 3 years
- Yes, between 4 and 7 years
- Yes, more than 8 years

Question 5: Are you currently registered to train an intern?

- Yes, and I have an intern for 2018
- Yes, but I do not have an intern for 2018
- Yes, but I do not want an intern for 2018
- No, I just have not registered as a tutor before
- No, and I am not planning to register as a tutor
- No, but I was registered before, I just didn't renew my registration

Section B:

In each of the following questions, please indicate the level of influence of each factor listed on the decision to employ a pharmacy intern in your workplace on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is no influence at all and 5 is major influence.

Question 6: Profitability of workplace (gross profit at the end of the financial year, sufficient cash-flow to employ another staff member)

1	2	3	4	5
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Question 7: Remuneration of pharmacist interns (salaries, cost to company)

1	2	3	4	5
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Question 8: Time and effort to mentor a pharmacist intern and assist with internship programme (training, attending SAPC internship workshop, CPD submissions, progress reports)

1	2	3	4	5
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Question 9: Return on investment (the contribution a pharmacist intern can make to my workplace/business)

1	2	3	4	5
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Question 10: SAPC requirements to register as a tutor (application process, registration fee, compulsory CPD entries)

1	2	3	4	5
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Question 11: SAPC requirements for the premises to be registered as a training facility (application process, registration fee, inspections, etc.)

1	2	3	4	5
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Question 12: SAPC downgrading after inspections

1	2	3	4	5
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Question 13: SAPC internship programme (Intern/tutor workshops, pre-registration exam, CPDs, progress reports)

1	2	3	4	5
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Question 14: Skills, knowledge, attitude and productivity of interns

1	2	3	4	5
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Question 16: Can you identify any other factors that will influence your decision to employ a pharmacist intern in your pharmacy. Please describe the factors in sufficient detail in the space provided.

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