

The Golden Mortar



Newsletter of the Southern Gauteng Branch of the Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa and Associated Sectors

Edition 8/December 2018



Chairman's Year End Message

Lynette Terblanche - Chairperson, PSSA Southern Gauteng Branch



Lynette Terblanche

As 2019 approaches, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt greetings for the Season.

The year 2018 can be described as a year of significant change, both in our country as well as in our Branch.

Throughout the year much effort has gone into establishing a strong foundation on which to build the Branch. A strong, focused branch is well placed to serve you, our members and to continue to restore confidence and optimism in the future of the profession.

There is considerable evidence that the pharmacy profession is moving forward, preparing for transformation, much of which was highlighted during our recent Mini Symposium.

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2018 has been a year during which we achieved many accomplishments including:

- the preparation of a mentorship program which will be rolled out at a National level during 2019;
- the successful execution of our second Mini Symposium on 22 September;
- several clinical CPD offerings;
- a legislative workshop;
- co-ordinating the provision of required items for our Social Responsibility project, Trinity Pharmacy
- rebranding of Glenhove Conference Centre to Glenhove Events Hub

While there is still much work to do and, we will be faced with further challenges, we end 2018 optimistic about the future of the Southern Gauteng Branch. As a Branch we will be prepared for these challenges. We consider it our mandate to also prepare our members to embrace professional challenges.

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank every member of the Branch for your continued commitment to the Branch activities.

To the Branch Committee, thank you for your continued commitment and dedication during the past year.

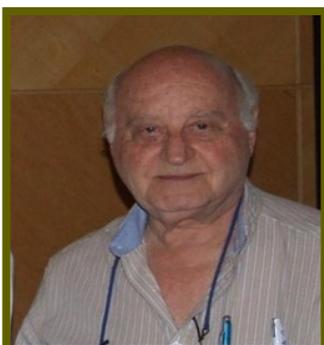
This Branch has a truly remarkable team of enthusiastic, talented individuals who deal with operational matters and who contribute significantly to the success of our Branch. I thank you for your commitment.

I would like to extend Season's Greetings to all the members of this and other Branches and Sectors of the Society and their families.

May you experience the peace and the joy of the Festive Season and a prosperous 2019!

The Golden Mortar Editorial Board

Chairman's End of Year Message



David Sieff

The year has been a period of many changes for The Golden Mortar (GM) Editorial Board, with some of the 'old guard' moving on, while a few new members have been welcomed.

The previous General Manager of the Southern Gauteng Branch of the PSSA, Doug Gordon, retired at the end of July after many years of management of all the Branch's affairs, including service on the Editorial Board; his contributions, advice, participation and involvement in all aspects of planning, production, sourcing of material, and publishing of each new edition were invaluable, particularly during the conversion to a totally 'in-house' operation ; Doug was also in charge of the financial affairs of The GM.

Tribute to Doug's services to the Branch was recognised at a recent ceremony, and we wish him well in his retirement.

The new incumbent of the management function is Dr Judy Coates, Executive Director of the Branch, whom we welcome to this position, as well as to membership of the Editorial Board.

Tribute was also paid on the same occasion to Neville Lyne on his retirement, a true stalwart in the Professional Affairs of the Branch, and similarly on the Editorial Board, on which he served for many years as the 'chief planner' of

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future editions, coordinating the numerous articles contributed, setting and updating Editorial Policy for The GM newsletter, performing important editing and summarising where necessary, and generally 'chasing' us to meet the various deadlines in the production of each edition; we are pleased that he will continue his membership of the Board and his normal valuable duties, and sometimes having to deputise as Chairman at Board meetings.

Owing to health issues, Ms Charlene Steyn had to relinquish her position, including the task of putting together and arranging all the editorial material, including photos and graphics, for the final format of each edition, and we thank her for many years of service to ensure a professional finish. Her duties have been taken over by Cecile Ramonyane, our Board and Branch Secretary.

We welcomed the recent additions to the Board of Ms Tabassum Chicktay, representing the Hospital and Institutional Pharmacists Sector, and then the joint representation of the Academic Sector by Ms Deanne Johnston and Ms Stephanie de Rapper, both Wits University Pharmacy Department lecturers; these three new Board members now complete the Sector representation, and we wish them all successful and enjoyable terms of office and participation in the 'engine room' of The GM production.

I wish to thank all members of the Board for their regular attendance and participation in the processes of The GM production, and also Mrs Lynette Terblanche, the Branch Chairman, for her interest and encouragement at all times; the members and other readers of The Golden Mortar Branch Newsletter are thanked for their loyal following, and we wish all a happy holiday period, and safety if travelling.

Dave Sieff

Chairman, The Golden Mortar Editorial Board

A Message from the PSSA Southern Gauteng Branch Office

Judy Coates
Executive Director



Judy Coates

The second half of 2018 flew by in a flash but not without many exciting developments to report on. The physical location received a long-awaited face lift with new pavement signage announcing the relaunch of the Conferencing Facility to an Events Hub, where we now proudly host an array of events from conferences, seminars, meetings, team building, celebrations, exhibitions and more. Please contact GEH at enquiries@glenhove.co.za

While the building buzzed with many new clients the Branch staff remained hard at work looking into exciting member offerings for 2019. A key undertaking included the CPD Survey to better understanding the when-what-and-hows of our CPD offerings to ensure the CPD Schedule for 2019 considers all our members needs. We look forward to offering a variety of CPDs for 2019, including mornings, evenings, workshops, dialogues, webinars and more. Watch this space for more.

As a Branch we remain honoured being the home of the National Pharmacy Museum. We have been working behind the scenes to uplift the profile of the Museum, with 2019 looking to launch a dedicated website, host an increased number of tours to a variety of audiences, public educational sessions and more.

The latter part of 2018 was not only all work, as reported in earlier editions of the Golden Mortar, we celebrated honoured guests through a lovely Farewell in September and hosted the Chairman's Dinner in November, both opportunities to profile the relaunched Glenhove Events Hub as a venue to enjoy amazing celebrations.

From the Office we would like to take this opportunity to wish all our members a blessed Festive Season, with much deserved rest. We look forward to tackling 2019 together.





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SAAPI 2018 Year End Report

Prof Dougie Oliver
President, SAAPI



Dougie Oliver

I have the honour to reflect on our Association and the activities of SAAPI during 2018.

The Industry is in major transition, not only from a manufacturing point of view but in particular from the impact of the regulatory and National Health Insurance developments. The events in 2018 that affected the health and safety at National Department of Health's Civitas Building and subsequent strike severely paralyzed our Industry and compromised health care delivery.

The volatile South African currency added to the level of uncertainty. In spite of these incredible challenges it is truly heartening to experience the passion the members of SAAPI displayed and continued with remarkable contributions towards sustaining our Industry through their ability to find solutions and thoughtful leadership.

I hereby present four of the primary areas that SAAPI focused on during 2018.

Firstly, Continuing Professional Development occurred through more than 15 training events in 2018. Internationally and nationally acclaimed presenters, including members of the International Society for Pharmaceutical Engineering formed part of the program. The 2018 Annual Conference with the theme: "The time is right, right now" provided a key platform for members to be updated on the trends of Pharma 4.0, regulatory issues and topics such as data integrity and quality metrics.

SAAPI is positioning itself as the training centre for the industry and the regulator including publishing of manuscripts in various journals. SAAPI also embarked on the development of next generation pharmacists in Industry, being critical for the long term sustainability of our Association and Industry.

Secondly, SAAPI increased its relationship with and contributions to National Government on NHI in collaboration with the PSSA and forms the basis of Pharmacy's role and contribution towards increased access to healthcare.

Thirdly, SAAPI's critical engagement to facilitate and support the turn-around strategy of the regulator, SAHPRA is ongoing. Several action plans have emerged from these in-depth discussions and SAAPI looks forward to positive changes.

Fourthly, SAAPI has with excitement embarked on a new branding and marketing strategy. This would facilitate our digital framework for members, stakeholders, collaborators to enhance their interactive engagement with SAAPI. This strategy also allowed for organization refinement of the functions our Executive Committee and governance operations.

SAAPI is most grateful towards its members for their continuous support and guidance during 2018.

Best of Wishes to you in our Industry and our Pharmacy Profession for a wonderful Festive Season and that you enjoy a pleasant time with your family and friends.

Kindest SAAPI greetings





SAAHIP Year End Message

Tabassum Chicktay

Chairperson, SAAHIP Southern Gauteng Branch



Tabassum Chicktay

As I sit here at the tail-end of 2018 writing this note, I am flabbergasted to be saying Happy New Year, 2019! A new year means new beginnings and, of course the utmost attempts to self-betterment.

One of the most effective, and seemingly simplest, ways to grow your career is to expand your network. And that goes beyond keeping your LinkedIn account active and up-to-date. Many successful leaders make networking a top priority—something that should be scheduled just like anything else you do.

There's a proverb that states, "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go with others." While our careers may indeed be just ours at the end of the day, one should never underestimate where the company of others can lead. Most opportunities arise through conversation, because you never know who is looking for what and

when. The Southern Gauteng Branch of Hospital and Institutional Pharmacists kept this in mind in 2018 and aimed to provide a platform where Pharmacists could connect with one another, and share ideas.

The SAAHIP National Conference and AGM were held in March 2018, which provided an amazing networking and learning experience. The 2018 conference saw Southern Gauteng emerge as winners of the best podium, poster and academia awards. I would like to congratulate the winners but also all those members that participated. Members always come back with a long to do list from learning what other provinces are doing to achieve their goals. 2018 also saw the creation of the Southern Gauteng Facebook page to communicate more effectively with members. We aim to have all our members "like" this page in 2019. The SAAHIP website was also revamped and launched in this year where members can log on and interact with their Branch Chairs.

This year really required Pharmacists to have their thinking hats on! There were many pieces of legislation released for comment. The SAAHIP National Office consolidated comments made by Members and Branches and submitted documents on the NHI Bill and the Medical Schemes Act. A survey was sent to all 2018 CSPs from the SAPC register. The main objective of the survey was to understand current CSP experiences and challenges in the process of applying for a CSP position in South Africa during the 2017 application cycle. The outcome of this survey will enable SAAHIP to engage with NDOH and to suggest improvements to the process.

Pharmacy Month in September 2018 brought out the "fun" side of members. Members participated in a park run that took place at Alberts Farm. We all took a deep breath of fresh air to conquer those 5kms! Most importantly we could market the theme of Pharmacy

Month, directly to our community. We promise many more km's in 2019.

Lastly and not least, this year ended with the Branch's AGM. A new and vibrant committee has been elected with some members re-elected. I am proud to inform you all that I have been elected to represent SAAHIP Southern Gauteng Branch for another year with Rofhiwa Mulibana as the Deputy Chairperson and Rashmi Gosai as Treasurer. The branch is truly honoured and full of energy to ensure 2019 is another success.

We have certainly packed in a lot in 2018. None of the Branch's successes would have been possible without the contributions from its members. I would like to thank you all for the invaluable efforts, time and proactivity. I am positive that if we continue this road together, 2019 will be an even bigger success.

Wishing all members, very happy holidays. See you in 2019!

Copied from the PSSA Newsletter #41/ 2018

Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa
PSSA Newsletter #41/2018 - 15 October 2018

The PSSA - Pharmacy in Action

Malaria Chemoprophylaxis

On Friday 12 October 2018, the Health Minister, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, gazetted changes to the Schedules in the Medicines and Related Substances Act 101 of 1965 in Government Gazette No. 41971.

The most eagerly-awaited change is the down-scheduling of co-formulated atovaquone-proguanil, when "intended and labelled for the chemoprophylaxis of malaria in those weighing 11 kilograms or more", from S4 to S2.

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The link to the Government Gazette is:-
https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/41971_rg10877_gon1098.pdf



Academia Year End Message

Prof Yahya Choonara, Chairman & Head: Department of Pharmacy

As the 2018 academic year comes to a close and on behalf of Wits Pharmacy, please allow me to extend my personal appreciation to all for your valuable contributions to pharmacy education in South Africa. Working with you this past year has been a pleasure. I want to specifically thank the academic sector for their incredible work, dedication and commitment throughout the year. Without a doubt, the success of our profession is built on the determination of academics to continuously prepare graduates for the profession who are ready to tackle the next wave of opportunity in Pharmacy armed with a passion for life-long learning and a growth mind-set. This will ensure that we take back our rightful position as the Custodians of Medicines and leaders in Therapeutics among the healthcare team. Over the years we have collectively built strong foundations in all spheres of pharmacy and we need to continue the drive to have graduates who can lead team-based healthcare as Pharmacists.

In 2018 there were many successes witnessed that have renewed our positivity towards a new trajectory for the profession. At Wits Pharmacy we have welcomed and educated a record-number of undergraduate students on our INVEST and PharmApprentice programs designed to prepare graduates with the entrepreneurial skills to drive pharmaceutical business. It is important that our graduates are geared with an entrepreneurial spirit that is needed to remedy some of our health-related socio-economic challenges in South Africa by using the pharmacy degree as a catalyst for change. Delivering patient-centred care while leading an inter-professional team to manage pharmaceutical resources will advance the profession as a powerhouse for all knowledge related to the production, supply and use of medicines. On the research front our dedicated staff has continued our well-known tradition to produce significant accomplishments in research-led pharmacy education.

As we look towards the future, there is no other way to state that the 2019 academic year will bring much hope decorated with its own challenges. We look forward to a year in which we have a newly elected Pharmacy Council, our country prepares for national elections, the exciting potential of the NHI still lingers closer than before and we are at the doorstep of reviewing our current BPharm curriculum. Conversations around these will continue throughout the summer.

Although the coming months will be demanding, with hard choices to be made as certain priorities are elevated over others, we need to approach it collectively

with thoughtful discussion and ultimately with an outcome that reaffirms the true positioning of a Pharmacist as a leader in healthcare. I am also heartened by the thought that in these challenging times our profession is never more positioned to be the redeemer of our ailing healthcare system. Whatever path we carve for our collective future as Pharmacists, it needs to be developed out of a nuanced thought process based on ensuring the profession extracts maximum efficiencies for what Pharmacists are educated and trained to do. More than ever before there is a real need to reignite the hidden value of the BPharm degree to drive various sectors of pharmacy within our economy with much impetus on growing our local pharmaceutical industry to become a beacon of economic growth in South Africa.

As academics we should look to address problems collectively with industry, led by our shared values to ensure that Pharmacy comes out stronger than ever. With the dawn of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) we should also be spearheading new ways of practicing and educating our students by embracing e-Learning concepts and technologies. The review of the BPharm curriculum has not come at a more opportune time for us to explore new competency standards that meet the most pressing demands of our profession.

I am immensely honoured to be counted among you all as a colleague. Let us continue to work hard, and I am deeply positive that Pharmacy will be the leading healthcare profession of the future for our country. I offer my best wishes and happiness to you and your families as we all look forward to a welcomed break and a superbly successful 2019.



APOLOGY

In Edition 7 of *The Golden Mortar* on page 17, "Weeding out the Conceptions", the author's names should have been spelt as follows"

- Faith Masingi
- Nokulunga Mbatha.



SAACP Year End Message

Tshifhiwa Rabali

Chairman, SAACP SG Branch



Tshifhiwa Rabali

The year has been a long one with much uncertainty around us. As Pharmacists, particularly Community Pharmacists, our own problems and challenges were compounded by what is transpiring in our country.

As the South African Association of Community Pharmacists, Southern Gauteng (SAACP SG) Branch, we will continue to strive for the advancement of the Community Pharmacists.

As you all know, during 2018 the Branch held three very relevant and worthwhile Sector Workshops thereby enabling Branch members to be well informed and kept abreast of many issues occurring within our profession. We will continue to arrange pertinent Sector Workshops in the new year and I am appealing to the membership to attend these workshops going forward. To those Branch Committee members and Branch members who regularly attended these workshops, I would like to extend my appreciation.

My sincere thanks and gratitude to all the SG Branch Committee members for their substantial contributions and support during the past year. We could not be a Branch Committee without you. I would also like to thank Ella Edelstein, our Branch Office Administrator, Teresia Stander, the Managing Director of SARCDTA Trade Exhibitions (Pty) Ltd and all the staff at the offices in Norwood for the sterling job they do.

To each and all, best wishes for a very happy festive season and if you will be travelling, please be safe. Enjoy the well-earned rest and return energised to tackle the challenges in 2019.



The PSSA Book Department

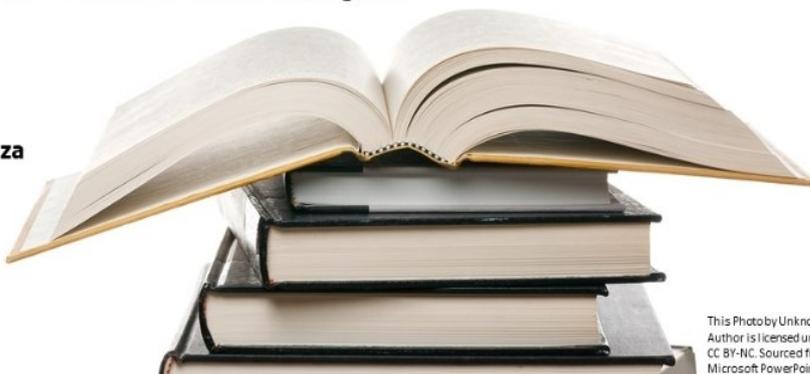
Do you know that the Book Department has a range of essential publications for pharmacists at preferential prices for members of the PSSA?

From overseas publications such as Martindale, Merck Manual and Dorland's Illustrated Medical Dictionary to local publications such as the Daily Drug Use, South African Medicines Formulary (SAMF) and the Scheduled Substance Register.

Ordering is as simple as 1, 2, 3.

1. Go to the PSSA website, www.pssa.org.za click on Membership and then Member Services.
2. Complete the order form and submit it.
3. Make payment via EFT.

Or contact Dinette at PSSA National Office on (012) 470-9559 or at dinette@pharmail.co.za



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ASPEN - A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTOR TO THE PRESIDENT'S INVESTMENT CONFERENCE

Sandton – A significant part of President Ramaphosa's investment drive, which aims to attract \$100bn of new investment into our country over the next 5 years, was the recently held Presidential Investment Conference, held in Sandton. At the conference, R290bn of mostly new investment was raised. A significant contributor to this investment commitment was South Africa and the southern hemisphere's largest pharmaceutical manufacturer, Aspen Pharmacare.

Aspen welcomed President Ramaphosa's inaugural Investment Conference, aimed at positioning South Africa as a preferred investment destination and at establishing a more predictable and stable investment environment in our country. Amongst other initiatives, this includes facilitating the ease of doing business and reducing unnecessary regulatory burden in the South African pharmaceutical sector. These initiatives are aimed at rewarding investors and contributing to higher levels of inclusive growth in the country.



Following the positive sentiment from the President's announcement of a \$100bn investment target and his recently released economic stimulus measures, Aspen was pleased to announce an additional R3,4bn capital expenditure investment at its Port Elizabeth manufacturing site, South Africa's single biggest pharmaceutical investment.

"The President's commitment to establishing a more predictable, stable investment environment and reducing regulatory burden in key economic sectors, such as the pharmaceutical sector, is very encouraging and supports Aspen's decision to make this R3,4 bn investment in sterile anaesthetics manufacture, a niche, high tech manufacturing capability that presents both domestic and export opportunities" said Stavros Nicolaou, Aspen Senior Executive, speaking at conference.

During the announcement at the conference, Nicolaou added, "While Aspen operates manufacturing plants in many geographies, it has chosen South Africa as the location for its largest and most critical manufacturing facilities. Aspen is encouraged by the South African Government's investment direction, but a number of regulatory hurdles remain in the pharmaceutical sector. Our latest investment undertaking is a clear vote of confidence in the President's commitment to resolving these hurdles and establishing a more conducive investment climate in the sector, bringing with it the momentum for further pharmaceutical investments."

Nicolaou concluded that, "Aspen has become one of the global leaders in a number of niche, specialty therapeutic segments, such as anaesthetic, high potency and injectable anti-coagulant products, which present highly specialised public and private health opportunities. The ongoing investment in our Port Elizabeth site will transform it into one of the world's leading global hubs for anaesthetic products and will provide a tremendous economic boost for the Eastern Cape, one of the country's most economically challenged provinces. This is an achievement that both Aspen and our country can be extremely proud of."



Healthy Holiday Travel

The end of year stirs mixed emotions for many, but the thought of the holiday season always offers recourse. While travel plans are top of the to-do list for most people by now, it is often the planning around health risks that is left to last-minute or given the least consideration. More people are travelling greater distances and at greater speeds than ever before. Whatever the reason to travel, it is important to consider that along with discovering new landscapes, there are a number of health risks associated with travelling to unfamiliar environments. The mode of transportation, destination and duration of stay, type of accommodation, activities planned during the trip as well as the underlying health of the traveller are factors that determine the risks the traveller may need to consider. This article is not intended to give individualised advice as some travellers may have pre-existing conditions, allergies or specific needs, but offers some general advice for travellers.

Travellers should consider seeking advice from their doctor or travel clinic at least one month before intended travel, especially if travelling out of South Africa, to minimise potential health risks.

Advice before travel

Consider vaccine-preventable diseases

Vaccination is an effective method of preventing certain infectious diseases.

! Always allow at least one month before departure to consult with a travel doctor, not only to have time to complete necessary vaccines but to allow enough time for these vaccines to be protective. The travel clinic will issue documentation which will serve as proof of vaccination. These documents must be kept safely and be easily accessible as they may be requested by airline or airport officials.

Malaria prophylaxis needed?

Travel to certain areas may increase the risk of diseases carried by mosquitoes such as malaria. Therefore, the need for malaria prophylaxis should be assessed accordingly.

Prepare a Travel Health Kit

A travel health kit should be carried by all travellers, particularly if travelling internationally, with the purpose of managing pre-existing medical conditions, prevent illness and injury and to take care of minor health problems (such as pain, fever, diarrhoea, bites and stings), should they occur. This travel health kit is only useful if it is easily accessible. Therefore, it should be carried with the traveller at all times, although sharp objects like tweezers and scissors should be packed in luggage that is checked in. Any liquid or gel-based items must not exceed the size limitations set out by airlines.

Travelling with prescription medications

Prescription medicines should be carried in their original packaging with the labelling clearly visible. Copies of valid prescriptions should also be carried. Travellers with pre-existing chronic conditions (e.g. diabetes, hypertension) should ensure they carry enough medication for the duration of the trip and an extra supply in the event of any unforeseen delays. Always consult the doctor if participating in any extreme sports or activities, as there may be a requirement for prescribed medication to prevent illnesses such as altitude sickness.

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Advice during travel

Encourage travellers to walk around and stretch their legs, particularly during long-haul flights, to help improve circulation. To minimise the effect of jet-lag, travellers should be advised to keep well hydrated and adjust eating and sleeping patterns to local time as much as possible.

Food and water hygiene

Several infections such as diarrhoea, hepatitis A, typhoid fever, cholera (to name a few), can be contracted by consuming contaminated food and water. In developing countries, where sanitation and personal hygiene are poor, the risks for these infections are higher. Food and water precautions are important to reduce the risk of these infections. Other than being vaccinated, the following precautions help reduce the risk of infection:

- **X** Don't drink or brush teeth with unboiled tap water
- **X** Don't use ice prepared from unboiled tap water
- **X** Don't eat unpeeled fruit or raw vegetables, unpasteurised dairy products, raw or rare meat, fish or shellfish
- **! Remember:** Drink bottled water, especially in countries, where sanitation may not be adequate

Mosquito bite prevention

In addition to malaria, there may be other diseases carried by mosquitoes such as dengue fever, chikungunya, Zika, yellow fever and other vector-borne diseases present in certain countries. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes by following the advice below:

- ! Avoid outdoor exposure during mosquito feeding time:
Between dusk and dawn for malaria, Japanese encephalitis, and West Nile virus
Daytime hours for dengue, chikungunya, Zika, and yellow fever
- ✓ Cover up: reduce the amount of exposed skin.
- ✓ Apply insect repellent containing N,N-Diethyl-meta-toluamide (DEET) to exposed skin; repeat as recommended on the label avoiding eyelids, lips, sunburnt or damaged skin. Do not use sprays on the face and follow the application directions carefully, especially in young children.
- ✓ Use mosquito mats, mosquito coils and mosquito-proof bed nets if possible.
- ✓ Ceiling fans and air conditioners are effective in keeping mosquitoes away.

Sun Protection

Protecting the skin from excess UV exposure is the best way to reducing the risk of skin damage and in turn, skin cancer.

- ✓ Apply sunscreen 20 minutes before going out in the sun.
- ✓ Reapply every two to three hours especially after swimming or excessive sweating.
- ✓ Apply sunscreen prior to insect repellents where applicable.
- X** Combination products of DEET and sunscreen are not recommended.
- X** Discard sunscreen if opened for longer than one year.

There are many health risk factors to consider before travelling, especially if travelling abroad. Emphasis should be placed on encouraging travellers to consult their doctor or travel clinic at least one month before leaving. Carrying a selection of OTC medicines and first aid supplies could help to reduce the inconvenience of minor illnesses. Travellers should be mindful having a fever particular after returning from malaria-areas. This is a medical emergency and travellers should seek medical attention immediately. Offering general health advice to travellers is an effective way to guide and educate travellers to be well-prepared for their journey, thereby ensuring happy, healthy travels.

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A Rewarding Locum Experience

David Sieff

The Golden Mortar has previously published articles describing the opening and establishment of Trinity Pharmacy in premises adjoining the Trinity Church in the grounds of the Witwatersrand (Wits) University. The poor, and often homeless, people inhabiting the Braamfontein, Joubert Park, Hillbrow, and surrounding suburbs, are welcomed every second Monday evening to a free hot soup and bread kitchen, under shelter.

While there, if they have any health problems, they are attended to by volunteer doctors and students from the Wits University Medical Faculty; if prescriptions are issued, they are taken by these patients to the Trinity Pharmacy, where their files are examined, and the medicines are issued, and some are referred to hospitals or clinics for follow-up assessment.

The Pharmacy recently placed an announcement in The Golden Mortar newsletter of the Southern Gauteng Branch of the PSSA, showing the dates of these clinics, and inviting pharmacists to assist in the Pharmacy, manned by a pharmacy student or Pharmacist's Assistant, under the supervision of Mrs Deanne Johnston, a Wits Pharmacy lecturer, and the Responsible Pharmacist.

I was able to take up this volunteer 'locum' duty a few weeks ago, and I was impressed with the professionally conducted dispensing of the prescribed medications, with which I assisted, as well as the relevant record keeping functions, and the advice and explanations given of how to take or use the medicines.

Some scripts had to be referred back to the doctors for amending, as the range of products kept is limited by financial constraints.

While there, we were visited by one of the Doctors, and by three third year medical students who were shown around by Mrs Johnston, who elaborated about the pharmacy operation; I also chatted with them about my long and varied pharmacy experience.

I found this to be an interesting and worthwhile and enjoyable experience, and would recommend that any pharmacists with a spare Monday evening, from 6pm to about 9.30pm, to volunteer their services – a roster of a few weeks interval between duties is drawn up – and attendance should be arranged in advance, by contacting Mrs Deanne Johnston at deanne.johnston@wits.ac.za – and for location and other details.



Deanne Johnston



PSSA Southern Gauteng Branch Survey

In anticipation of new CPD regulations being published for comment in the near future, the Southern Gauteng Branch of the Pharmaceutical Society of SA distributed a survey document to members to determine member preferences regarding CPD offerings that would best meet their needs. The outcome of this survey has assisted the Branch in their planning of CPD for 2019.

To the many members from the different Sectors of pharmacy who responded to the survey, we thank you – your input is invaluable.

Please make a note of these CPD Dates for 2019:

- Wednesday 30 January (am)
- Tuesday 12 February (pm)
- Tuesday 12 March (pm)
- Tuesday 2 / 30 April (am)
- Tuesday 14 May (pm)
- Tuesday 11 / 25 June (pm)
- Tuesday 30 July (am)
- Tuesday 13 August (pm)
- **Saturday 7 September (Mini Symposium)**
- Tuesday 8 October (am)
- Tuesday 12 November (pm)

Venue: Glenhove Events Hub, 52 Glenhove Road, Melrose Estate, Johannesburg.
am 9:30 – 12:30
pm 19:00 – 20:30

Calendar invites with topics to follow monthly before each CPD event.



Professional Indemnity Insurance

You should be aware that pharmacists in all spheres of Practice require Personal Indemnity Insurance. Not to have it is simply not an option – it is a requirement of the South African Pharmacy Council.

PSSA offers its members access to the essential cover at very competitive rates through the Professional Provident Society.



For further details please contact Nikita at the PSSA National Office on (012) 470-9557 or at Nikita@pharmail.co.za

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INVEST Program for Student Transformation and Academic Innovation

*By Stephanie de Rapper, Rubina Shaikh and Zelna Booth
(Lecturers, Pharmacy Practice, WITS Pharmacy)*

The Department of Pharmacy at WITS has established the INVEST Program to provide students with the opportunity to learn from highly successful and experienced executive pharmacists while networking to secure potential career opportunities. INVEST is led by academics in the Department of Pharmacy, Ms Stephanie de Rapper, Ms Rubina Shaikh and Ms Zelna Booth. INVEST provides an environment conducive to fostering talents in professional leadership among undergraduate pharmacy students. This program contributes to the personal growth and professional networking opportunities available to promote student success. Contributors to the INVEST program support, encourage and accelerate student experiences within the undergraduate curriculum by sharing in their career knowledge and expertise within their field of pharmacy. The focus of the program is to specifically foster the values of INVEST and to encourage a passion for the profession through mentorship, leadership development and career networking. The hope is that this passion grows and manifests in the development of innovative, strong, critical and strategic pharmacists of the future.

The aim of INVEST is to connect pharmacy executives to pharmacy students where relationships between students and leading pharmacy professionals are formulated to encourage personal growth and professional leadership.



I = Identify career opportunities in the workplace

Prestigious speakers are invited to deliver lectures to the third and fourth year pharmacy students to share in their professional experiences. The speakers provide students with information relating to their job descriptions, how they can achieve a similar position, acting as a source of inspiration.



N = Network with stakeholders

Following the lecture provided by prestigious speakers, students are given the opportunity to engage with these individuals to forge relationships. This networking platform has had the potential to create career guidance opportunities, job shadowing and future employment.



V = Visualize the workplace with career leaders

During the students' undergraduate studies, we aim to provide students with first hand experiences within the different fields of the pharmacy. Students are exposed to the many fascinating aspects of the pharmacy profession by visiting different pharmacy workplaces. Students use this opportunity to determine whether specific careers are 'the right fit' for them, based on these experiences. Providing students with these experiences in a variety of settings allows the student to determine the skills and character traits required for each sector. Students can therefore make a holistic, informed decision on these options.



.../ continued on page 15



E = Explore the opportunities presented

Students were provided with opportunities to explore the pharmaceutical profession by engaging in professional activities that include the opportunity to attend symposiums, workshops and even national conferences. Students had the option to partake in the activities and were fully funded by external stakeholders to ensure that students' registration, transportation and accommodation was covered.

E

Explore the opportunities presented

S = Set goals to achieve your desired career

Students are expected to create goals based on the experiences offered by INVEST in order to forge their paths while within the undergraduate curriculum. These goals are formed in collaboration with student mentors, academic mentors and external stakeholders.

S

Set goals to achieve your desired career

T = Translate your goals into reality

Students are also offered workshops that coach students on their soft (oral and written communications, etc.) skills, critique their resumes and provide tips for interviews in order to prepare these students to find employment within their chosen sector of pharmacy.

T

Translate your goals into reality

The INVEST program of 2018 was immensely successful in meeting the goals set out by WITS Pharmacy with many opportunities provided to students from first year through to the fourth year. The scope of activities undertaken included:

The First year: Amazing Race Orientation Program and Mentorship Induction

Students in the first year were invited onto the Medical School campus in the Faculty of Health Sciences at WITS University and orientated to the important landmarks and support systems utilized by undergraduate students. This induction has been impactful in that it has better integrated the first year students into the University environment while encouraging relationships between students of different years.

The Second year induction into the profession: White Coat Ceremony

Second year students are introduced to their roles as healthcare providers within the profession of pharmacy through the first White Coat Ceremony offered in South Africa. The White Coat symbolizes the importance of professionalism and ethical conduct to be maintained as a pharmacist. Students are cloaked in a White Coat and then guided through the Pharmacists Oath and allocated a mentor from WITS Pharmacy. This mentorship relationship has aided in identifying students at risk much earlier on in their studies and provides support both academically and personally.

Third and Fourth year exposure to Pharmacy: Prestigious Lecture Series

The prestigious lecture series aimed to provide the students with the opportunity to interact with renowned stakeholders within the field of pharmacy. In the undergraduate curriculum, these lectures were hosted weekly with new and engaging industry experts invited to participate. The lecture series continues to grow with renowned pharmacists presenting to our students both through request and invitation. Students have been encouraged in these lectures with many developing a renewed passion and love for the field of pharmacy.

WITS INVEST Undergraduate Research Expo 2018

The WITS INVEST Undergraduate Research Expo was a platform used to showcase the research undertaken by third and fourth year pharmacy students. Students were invited to present their research to external stakeholders, allowing for further networking opportunities and the chance to showcase the research potential of WITS Pharmacy.

Within the pharmaceutical environment, poor job satisfaction has been associated with poor job performance. Furthermore, literature suggests that graduates are as a result making poor career decisions due to a lack of information or exposure to career opportunities during their undergraduate years. Students need to be exposed to different career opportunities and require support in making the correct decisions in order to improve on job satisfaction and overall patient care. INVEST aims to encourage students to transform their perception of pharmacy through showcasing the diverse and fulfilling career opportunities available to them and encourage students to seize the opportunities offered to further themselves and the profession.





The National Pharmacy Museum
It flies the flag of the Pharmacy Profession
in many ways



Over the review period a series of tours through the museum have taken place including:

- 24 3rd year Wits Archeology students. A request was made by this group of students that they would find great value in having access to video clips of such visits for later study. The Branch, with Dr. C. Sievers (lecturer), will look into the opportunity further.
- 36 3rd year nursing students from the UJA Nursing College 21 September.
- 2 International visitors, one with an interest in Pharmacy due to her son studying Pharmacy in Australia and the second from New Orleans, USA (where they are also a home to a Pharmacy Museum).
- Representatives of the Branch Committee were afforded the opportunity to a tour prior to the Branch committee sitting 11 October 2018.
- 15 ladies from a study group in Johannesburg visited the museum 12 October 2018.

During this period there were 13 entries in the visitors' book. Two interesting entries, one from New Orleans, "This is a treasure museum of immense value to the advance of pharmacy" and one from Adelaide, Australia "This is a tremendous collection". Her son is studying pharmacy in Australia. There are a number of comments on the learning and visual experience gained from the museum.

In addition to his passion within the museum, our Museum Curator (Mr Raymond Pogir), is active in the Society too. He recently shared a presentation entitled "From Observation to Innovation" for the Branch Mini Symposium in September.

Interest in the "Medicines from the Bible" continues to grow with requests for our Museum Curator to present his knowledge in this arena. Presentations include 5th August at Limud, which was a Jewish cultural study weekend. Future presentations booked include the General Meeting of the Jewish Women's Benevolent Society on Monday 12th November and the Decorative Arts Society on Monday the 4th February 2019. This interesting topic was also flighted on SABC2 / DST -192 on Sunday 16th September 2018. We remain proud of Ray's contributions.

NEW COURSE FROM WITS PHARMACY

Introduction to Oncology Admixing



Oncology pharmacy is a growing field in the practice of pharmacy in South Africa. The skills and techniques required to perform basic oncology sterile admixing manipulations are crucial to the preparation of oncology chemotherapy. Quality assurance at every step is a prerequisite to delivering a safe product.

Wits Pharmacy is excited to introduce a new short course, **An Introduction to Oncology Admixing**. Their objective is to expose participants to the basic theoretical and practical aspects of preparing sterile oncology chemotherapy products for intravenous use. This includes developing a basic understanding of the safe preparation of sterile products and aseptic technique, working with biological safety cabinets, performing basic manipulations and calculations, managing the safe disposal of hazardous waste and quality assurance.

The course is held over two days at Wits University Faculty of Health Sciences campus. The first day covers theoretical aspects, and the second day involves practical exposure to techniques. The course costs R6,000.00 per delegate. For more information and for registration please visit the Wits Enterprise website: <https://wits-enterprise.co.za/c/introduction-to-oncology-admixture> or contact razeeya.khan@wits.ac.za



SAACP WORKSHOP



The Glenhove Events Hub recently hosted **Professor Shingai Mutambirwa** to address the SAACP membership on **Genitourinary Infections** and **Erectile Dysfunction**.

Mr Tshif Rabali, President of the SA Association of Community Pharmacists (SAACP) opened the evening, welcoming the presenter and all.

Prof Mutambirwa commenced with the first of two topics discussing options for treating sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in 2018; he shared details on the prevalence of STI noting that Sub-Saharan Africa had the greatest burden of STIs and that STIs are amongst the top five causes of morbidity and mortality in the region. It was interesting to note that STIs were occurring across not only sex workers but also in pregnant women and those attending family planning clinics. He emphasised that STIs are frequently asymptomatic or unrecognised, noting the following stats: 60% of women at family planning clinics are asymptomatic; 2% treated within reasonable time; and 25% of those tested receive the

correct drugs. Prof Shingai went on to share why this is a spiralling epidemic, noting that this is due to poor case management, failure to ensure that sexual partners are also examined, and due to considerable circular migration. Of greater concern is the potential of sequelae in women which include Cervical Cancer, Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID), Infertility, and Ectopic Pregnancies, as well as infertility in men and a series of impacts on children too. He further noted that STIs are influencing sexual transmission of HIV.

Prof Shingai noted if he could **leave the audience with Five facts**, they would be : Education and Counselling; Identification of asymptomatic people and symptomatic patients unlikely to seek help; Effective diagnosis and treatment; Evaluation, Treatment and Counselling of sex partners; and Pre-exposure vaccination of persons at risk - the Symptomatic approach still followed as per the WHO.

An Antibiotic Spectrum was shared. Emerging issues were shared informing guideline changes and management flowchart changes. Prof Shingai went on to share insights about the treatment of male and female discharges and ulcers, and specifically encouraged the use of cultures. Prof Shingai highly encouraged **Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccination**. He left the audience with departing pointers regarding Prevention Counselling: Information should be individualised and should be delivered with respect and compassion.

Prof Shingai then moved on to share insights into **Metabolic Syndrome!** Noting increased risk for cardiovascular events, encouraging Exercise, Cut back on the calories and Decrease plate size. He also shared early intervention in Cardiovascular Disease (CVD), also noting CVD and Erectile Dysfunction (ED) risks factors. Prof Shingai reminded the audience that PDE-5 inhibitors remain the frontline therapy for ED treatment.

Prof Mutambirwa answered questions from the audience, and all agreed that it was a most interesting and dynamic presentation, and we look forward to welcoming him back to share on further passions of the Professor in the future.

A special thank you to Ella Edelstein, Branch Office Administrator of SAACP, for all her efforts in arranging the event, together with a team from the SAACP SG Branch Committee.

Life in a day of a Community Pharmacy

Frans Landman

Frans Landman was invited to address the Wits Pharmacy students on the occasion of their recent Student Ball. The objective was for the students to learn first-hand from a practicing community pharmacist some of his experiences.

It all happened 27 years ago when we moved to the East Rand, looking for a future in community pharmacy. I worked for a small retail pharmacy. My wife was doing locums when she found a small pharmacy for sale. Well it so happened that we bought a house, a pharmacy, and had our first child in one year. "Yho" it was tough times.

.../ continued on page 18



Today we are still at the pharmacy where it all started! How did we stay in business after all the changes in pharmacy, sheer luck? No we had to change with the times. We concentrated on the 20% of business that brought in 80% of our business, namely Pharmacist Initiated Therapy and primary healthcare.

We had to think out of the box to move with the changes happening.

As the prime business portion namely dispensing of prescriptions moved to corporate pharmacy, and the make-up of inner city demographics changed, we realised that to survive, we would have to diversify. We started a beauty salon inside the pharmacy which did not work out; we changed this area into a primary health care clinic, which is still operating to this day.

With primary healthcare becoming the main focus, we had to obtain additional training and we qualified ourselves as primary healthcare therapists.

What do we come across in a day in our pharmacy? Well we have patients arriving with ailments such as hypertension, diabetes, and skin ailments, to name a few.

We also have some emergencies such as anaphylactic shock, very sick babies, some good ladies going into labour, to name a few. We network closely with our local public clinic and public hospital. Our patients range from the affluent to informal settlements, and all with the same need, to be treated as special.

What are the challenges we face as a family? For us to have time to ourselves; to recharge our batteries! Being there for our clients and always smiling is very taxing. Having competent personnel is very important, and can make or break your workplace.

One Saturday morning we had a Dad run in with a baby just over one month old, not breathing, that day we had a very experienced sister assisting in our primary healthcare clinic, she struggled and the baby stopped breathing twice before she pulled through! We asked all the clients in the queue to please pray for the child, and God came through for the child.

One afternoon just before closing one of our regular clients walked in stating that he is not feeling well, and just wanted to rest a little. The next moment he collapsed on the floor making funny noises; by the time we realised what had happened, he went into cardiac arrest from a major myocardial infarction. We could not save him!

We had a patient in the queue with a threatening miscarriage, blood running down her legs, and thanks to Mamakie, our friendly cleaner, took her to the clinic room and helped her to clean up while we summoned the emergency service ambulance.

You might think “wow”, does this really happen in your pharmacy? I will tell you yes, and also in many other community pharmacies. You see we are healthcare professionals, and we should be proud of it, as it is our duty to assist with education, informing and helping our patients wherever we may be! Our focus should be to make a difference wherever we find ourselves. For me, my work is not work, it is an opportunity to serve, and make a difference out there.

For if I have helped one patient to live a better life, I have achieved the goal of making a difference out there. It is not how much you earn, how big a car you can afford, or house you can buy, but if you focus on your client or patients' needs you will always be happy in yourself!

Where do you see yourself in a couple of years from now? Are you going to dare to be different? Are you going to be the one the customer will remember? For it's not what you say, but how you make people feel with what you say and do that will let you leave a legacy.

Expression of Thanks and Appreciation from Mr Faith Masingi and Ms Omphile Sehunoe on behalf of the Wits Pharmacy Students' Council (WPSC) Committee on the occasion of the Wits Pharmacy Student Ball

The Wits Pharmacy Students' Council (WPSC) Committee would like to thank Aspen Pharmacare (Pty) Ltd. and the Southern Gauteng Branch of the Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa for the generous contributions made towards the 2018 Wits Pharmacy Ball event which took place on the 9th of November 2018. We truly appreciate your thoughtful contributions to make the Pharmacy Ball a special event for the Class of 2018.

The Pharmacy Ball is an annual event for all Wits Pharmacy students to network. At this event, outside the space of a lecture theatre or corridors, students share memories, challenges and victories faced during the year.

.../ *continued on page 19*



We also bid farewell to all the fourth years who graduate as qualified Pharmacists. We also hope that they will leave a statement and footprint, for where they began to walk, their footprints will be visible for us, the juniors to follow.



Left to Right: Faith Masingi, Omphile Sehunoe, Nothando Nyambi, Hilton Stevens (Motivational Speaker), Mr Frans Landman (Guest speaker), Ms Christine Landman, Nokulunga Mbatha, Ofentse Mabokela, Mosale Tlaka and Nandile Qwabe.

It was a great honour to receive financial support for this event. As we displayed the fact that pharmacy professionals are not just people who wear white coats behind dispensary counters. We are embodied by unique and diverse cultures, character, intellect, capacity and potential to make a difference in the health and well-being of society. As WPSC, given the opportunity to organise the Pharmacy Ball, we ensured that we made this possible for every unique and embodied future pharmacy professional who attended the event.

We would also like to extend a special thanks to Mr. Frans Landman and his wife for their presence at the event, we are grateful for the time and effort he took to share his experiences in retail pharmacy as PCDT pharmacist. It was very interesting to hear how working in a retail pharmacy can make a difference in patients' lives, and how important it is that we keep updated by continuing to learn in order to remain competent in this dynamic profession.

We would also like to extend special thanks to Mr. Hilton Stevens for his motivational speech to the fourth years going into the workplace. We appreciate the time and effort you took to share a very inspirational speech, including that as a Wits Pharmacist we should always take the initiative to fill in the gaps with our knowledge.

A hearty thanks also to the Department of Pharmacy for supporting us in making this event possible and most importantly memorable.

Please Save the Date

PSSA SG AGM 2019

The Annual General Meeting of the Southern Gauteng Branch of the Pharmaceutical Society of SA is planned for 5 February 2019 commencing at 19:00.

The guest speaker that evening will be Kim Ballantine. Her subject will be "Compassion Fatigue".





WITS
PHARMACY
Encap a Growth Mindset

Wits Pharmacy Announces PharmApprentice: A new opportunity for pharmacy students to be at the edge of pharmaceutical entrepreneurship

Announcing a new curriculum innovation that helps pharmacy students build entrepreneurial experiences with a growth mind-set for pharmaceutical business development

It's Friday morning at Aspen Pharmacare's Central Boardroom Facility in Woodmead, Sandton, where Wits Pharmacy students, their academics and pharmaceutical business leaders have gathered for a showdown of new pharmaceutical business concepts and technologies presented by third-year pharmacy students at Wits. These students are contestants on a new PharmApprentice program launched by the Department of Pharmacy at Wits University in partnership with Aspen Pharmacare.

PharmApprentice focuses on educating and training pharmacy students on the basics needed to take a leap in the world of pharmaceutical entrepreneurship across various sectors of the pharmacy profession. The program necessitates students to develop a growth mind-set and identify a consumer or patient healthcare market need which they are then required to develop a pharmaceutical business model around the concept that provides a solution to the need identified. It involves the incorporation of financial projections and forecasts, skills in accounting, market research and viability analysis skills, all of which are taught during the undergraduate curriculum to develop entrepreneurial thinking. Students are also trained to apply pharmacy law, legislation and policies around intellectual property, medicines importation and commercialization.

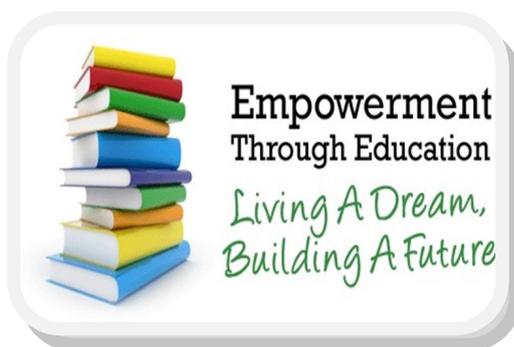
The 2018 PharmApprentice program generated 13 outstanding business plans (viz. Phinder, Livewell, Greenfreeze, Health e-Zone, Apothololve, Virtual Health, MobiPharm, Sportacist, Intergre-Pharma, Excelsior, Siyaxhasana, Oncologene and PharmaTravel). These business proposals ranged from concepts of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) using mobile and online apps to assist an array of people from locum pharmacists, healthcare teams (digitalizing prescriptions and sharing of patient information), to apps for travellers needing medication in foreign countries to traverse language barriers. Other ideas created solutions for more efficient pharmaceutical stock management, pharmacy recruitment, travelling sport pharmacies, mobile pharmacy services and a new model for home-based oncology care. In addition, technologies for more innovative ARV dosage forms, cardiac detection devices and solar-powered portable cold-chain boxes manufactured from green materials for rural areas were also explored amongst the 2018 submissions.

Each business plan was put through a rigorous academic scoring rubric led by the Wits Pharmacy Practice team namely, Ms Stephanie de Rapper, Ms Rubina Shaikh, Ms Zelna Booth and Mr Andrew Jones. This process was followed by a business feasibility assessment pitched to external stakeholders at the Annual Wits Pharmacy INVEST Research Expo.

"PharmApprentice is a welcome innovation that is able to create incredible development opportunities for Wits pharmacy graduates and also ensures that their pharmacy degree becomes a catalyst for positive economic development within South Africa. It sets a new dawn for the pharmacy profession and a foundation for pharmacists to more openly embrace entrepreneurship and 4IR. As part of Aspen's commitment to contribute to youth empowerment and boosting our economy, the

company announced its partnership with Wits Pharmacy on the PharmApprentice program to amplify the need to build business capability among new pharmacy graduates. This year-long program constitutes boardroom exposure, externships and access to business leadership experts who are at the coal face of business in the South African pharmaceutical industry" says Mr Stavros Nicolaou who is the Senior Executive for

Strategic Trade at Aspen and also plays a central role on the PharmApprentice program by delivering a Lecture Series on Intellectual Property, medicines importation and strategic commercialization concepts to augment the students real-world understanding of the daily routine of leading large pharmaceutical businesses. Nicolaou added "this creative approach enables students to diversify their outlook on the pharmaceutical profession, further augmenting their ability to provide future innovative solutions to addressing the disproportionate disease burden that continues to plague our country". Mr Nicolaou is also a strategic advisor and consultant on the program who serves as a mentor for student groups. Awards for the winning group are sponsored by Aspen comprising an Elie Wiesel Noble Peace Prize Laureate dedicated 1oz silver coin for each student on a winning group with a two-day externship learning opportunity based at the state-of-the-art Aspen manufacturing site in Port Elizabeth (South Africa). Aspen's Port Elizabeth site is a world leading manufacturing site for high potency and products and will shortly become one of the most important global manufacturing hubs for anaesthetic products.



.../ continued on page 21



“Research has shown that the practice of pharmacy requires graduates to be competent in business in order to fuel economic growth via start-ups and within multinational corporate environments. The nurturing of business skills for new pharmacy graduates is more important than ever, as our economy endures to recover in the midst of the many opportunities that the 4IR wave promises to change the way people will live, work and strive to stay healthy every day. PharmApprentice has been a major success in its first year of implementation. We aim for it to continue to be a productive experience for our pharmacy students at Wits. This is the Wits Pharmacy Edge, opening opportunities for patients, businesses and entire industries to develop, from the operating room, wards, dispensaries and to the pharmaceutical factory floor. A component of our mission is to empower every pharmacy student to achieve more by unlocking the hidden value within their pharmacy degree” says Professor Yahya Choonara who is Chair and Head of the Department of Pharmacy at Wits University.



Pharmaceutical Society
of South Africa

YPG Professional Innovation Project 2019

Call for applications for the PSSA Young Pharmacists' Group (YPG) Professional Innovation Project 2019 is now open!

The Grant

A grant for **Professional Innovation** is offered by YPG and the PSSA to support and encourage **innovation in pharmacy**.

The Grant consists of **R15 000** for the **implementation of a project** by a young pharmacist/ pharmaceutical scientist.

Projects can stem from **any field of pharmacy** (pharmacy practice, pharmaceutical science and/or pharmacy education) but should directly or indirectly benefit or **improve health of communities** and demonstrate the **value-add of pharmacy on health**.

Judging Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on **five criteria**: Significance and relevance, Creativity and innovation, Scientific accuracy, Feasibility as well as Clarity of communication.

Grant Conditions

The Grant recipient is expected to submit a **project report** to the PSSA and to present on the winning project in 2020/2021 at a PSSA Sector conference. In addition, the recipient will be obliged to submit **interim reports and updates** as required by YPG or the PSSA.

Eligibility - Applicants must be paid-up individual PSSA YPG members.
Deadline - 31st March 2019

Additional Information

PSSA YPG: Tendai Mutabeni
Project Coordinator
(ypg@pharmail.co.za)





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AN APPROACH TO HEARTBURN

By M. Ebrahim (BPharm 111); F. Gardee (BPharm III)
 Department of Pharmacy and Pharmacology, University of the Witwatersrand

Heartburn and acid regurgitation are the main symptoms of gastroesophageal reflux. Heartburn is described as a burning sensation in the retrosternal area, and regurgitation as the perception or flow of refluxed gastric contents into the pharynx or mouth.¹ Occasional acid reflux is normal and does not usually lead to other health problems if effectively treated. However, a third of patients can develop frequent or severe heartburn and acid reflux, which may be indicative of “gastro-oesophageal reflux disease” (GORD).² Recurrent episodes of acid reflux may lead to the development of complications such as ulceration, strictures, perforations, haemorrhage or Barrett’s Oesophagus.¹

CAUSES OF HEARTBURN

Heartburn occurs when a backflow of stomach acid occurs in the oesophagus (the tube that carries food from the mouth to the stomach). There is a circular band of muscle called the lower oesophageal sphincter (LOS) that exists between the oesophagus and the stomach. During swallowing, this sphincter relaxes in order to allow food to gain entry into the stomach cavity. This sphincter then closes immediately after the food has entered the stomach. The trouble arises when the circular band of muscle weakens or relaxes abnormally, allowing acid to flow back into the oesophagus and causing the sensation of heartburn.³

Other possible culprits of reflux may be peptic ulcers or a hiatus hernia (an abnormality where a portion of the stomach pushes up into the chest cavity, past the diaphragm).⁴ These conditions may present with symptoms such as heartburn.

While some people will experience acid reflux regardless of what they eat. Others may find that they experience acid reflux after eating certain foods or large meals. Some of these contributing factors to heartburn are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: List of factors contributing to heartburn

Factor	Effect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citrus fruits and juices • Tomato products • Spicy food • Caffeinated beverages like coffee 	These substances have a direct irritant effect on the oesophageal mucosa ⁵
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fatty foods • Chocolate • Alcohol • Peppermint 	These substances decrease the lower oesophageal sphincter pressure, allowing stomach acid to rise into the oesophagus ⁶
Smoking	Inhibits the production of saliva which decreases acid neutralisation. Smoking also stimulates the production of stomach acid, and can weaken and relax the lower oesophageal sphincter ⁷
Eating large meals	Increases volume of stomach contents causing gastric distention ⁵
Other factors increasing the risk of heartburn:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pregnancy • Being obese or overweight⁵ • Taking medications which lower LOS pressure e.g. antihistamines⁸ • Stress 	



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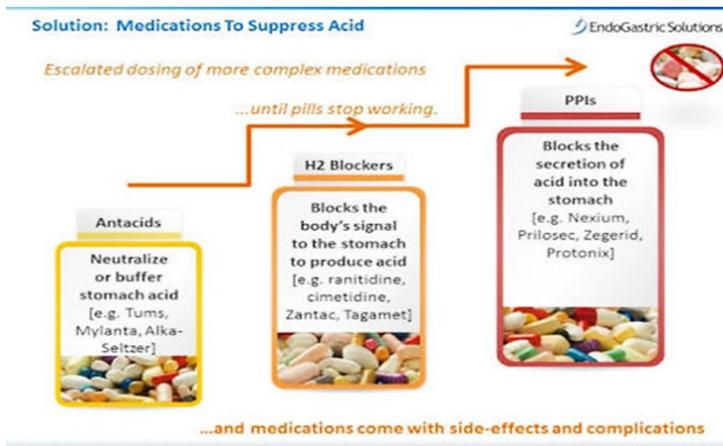
PREVENTION

Introducing moderate lifestyle changes may help prevent the uncomfortable sensation of heartburn.

Table 2. Lifestyle changes to help prevent heartburn^{5,7}

- Steer clear of all contributing factors to heartburn as noted in Table 1
- Elevate the head of the bed, which increases oesophageal clearance; this can be done by placing a piece of wood or blocks under the top end of the bed or by sleeping on a foam wedge
- Avoid eating 2 to 3 hours before retiring to bed
- Eat smaller and more frequent meals
- Maintain a healthy weight; excess weight can make it harder for the LOS to remain closed
- Adding protein-rich meals to the diet augments LOS pressure
- Drink plenty of water when taking medicines that directly irritate the gastrointestinal tract e.g. tetracyclines, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, iron supplements, potassium chloride
- Particularly for pregnant women: When bending down, bend the knees while keeping the torso upright

TREATMENT



Treatment follows a ladder-like approach beginning with lifestyle modification and then leading up to varying pharmaceutical agents⁹

PHASE ONE

Lifestyle modifications mentioned in prevention are considered part of Phase One treatment. This phase also entails the use of antacids and/or alginates.

Antacids contain alkaline salts such as aluminium hydroxide, calcium carbonate or magnesium hydroxide that neutralise the acid in the stomach. Antacids are useful for **mild infrequent heartburn** and have a rapid onset of action. They should be taken **an hour after meals and at bed time**.

Alginates and alginate-containing antacids taken after meals are also useful as these medicines also form a 'raft' over the gastric contents serving as a physical barrier against acid reflux.

PHASE TWO (A)

Histamine-2-receptor antagonists are effective as first-line agents for patients with mild to moderate symptoms of acid reflux.^{9,11} Lower doses can be prescribed over-the-counter for symptomatic relief of heartburn and acid reflux for a maximum period of 14 days. H₂ antagonists include cimetidine and ranitidine.¹⁰ These medicines work much longer than antacids but have a slower onset of action. The patient should always be asked what other medications they are on before prescribing cimetidine as it can interact with warfarin, phenytoin, benzodiazepines, imipramine or beta- and calcium channel blockers.

Other OTC medications that can be prescribed include mucosal protective agents such as **sucralfate or bismuth**.

.../ continued on page 25



PHASE TWO (B)

Proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) are the most effective therapeutic class available for short-term treatment of acid reflux symptoms.⁹ PPIs are usually taken 30-60 minutes before a meal once/twice daily. Only low dose PPIs for short-term relief of acid reflux symptoms can be prescribed OTC (14 days).¹⁰ PPIs available over the counter include lansoprazole, omeprazole and pantoprazole.

CRITERIA FOR REFERRAL

Asking patients for a description of their symptoms with regards to the nature and frequency as well as the severity of occurrences, can confirm the correct course of action.

Criteria for Referral 1

Enquire from patient	Non-prescription therapy	Referral to doctor
Nature of their symptoms	Consistent with heartburn/ acid reflux definitions: A retrosternal burning sensation that may rise to the back of the throat Acidic gastric contents rising into the throat or mouth	Alarm symptoms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vomiting • Gastrointestinal bleeding • Involuntary weight loss • Difficult/painful swallowing • Chest pain • Choking attacks, especially at night • Recurrent cough/hoarseness • Family history of oesophageal adenocarcinoma • New onset of symptoms >50 years of age
Frequency and severity of symptoms	Infrequent or mild/ moderate but frequent (≥2 times/week) for <3 months	>3 months, severe or nocturnal heartburn
If lifestyle modifications or medications were tried to improve symptoms. If so, were they effective?	Treatment effective in past May prescribe effective treatment for 2 weeks	Continued symptoms after treatment with heartburn medication for ≥2 weeks
Family history of gastric and/or oesophageal cancer	No	Yes

NOTE: If the patient receives no relief and still shows symptoms after 14 days on PPI, referral is necessary

CONCLUSION

Heartburn prevalence increases in people older than 40 years.⁹ Symptoms can occur daily in approximately 7% of patients, weekly in 14% and monthly in 15% to 40% of patients with GORD.¹¹ More often than not, the pharmacy staff first hear the plea for help from those suffering with heartburn and acid reflux. It is therefore the duty of every pharmacist and pharmacist assistant to be well-read in the management and step-wise treatment processes that exist for this condition as well as to know when referral is necessary.

As part of the Pharmacy Practice third year undergraduate curriculum, students interact with the Amayeza Information Centre during which students learn the reactive skills required to respond to medicine information enquiries as well as the proactive skills needed to write an educational article for health professionals or patients. This article achieved a distinction and was selected for publication in The Golden Mortar.

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