

The Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa Southern Gauteng Branch

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Report of the Chairperson of the Branch Committee AGM: 05 February 2019

It is my privilege to present to you the Chairperson's Report for 2018.

In more ways than one, 2018 was a year of change and new beginnings for the Branch. It was a year in which change was introduced in this Branch of the Society on several fronts. I will briefly mention these changes in this report. I would even go as far as to say that in as far as this Branch has chosen to and implemented several changes, this was also the situation in our country. The excitement associated with change is the optimism surrounding the change once those among us who may not accept change readily, also accept that change is a time for new beginnings.

2018 once again brought its own challenges to our profession: the lack of efficient implementation of Community Service, which was meant to be a service provided by recently qualified pharmacists to the public sector, remained a matter for grave concern and required intervention by the leaders in our profession.

Pharmacy found it itself in a situation where the reality of Failing to Prepare is Preparing to Fail, was brought home in the theme of PSSA Conference 2018.

On a broader front, we saw the establishment of a new regulatory authority, the South African Health Product Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA), following the amendment to the Medicines Act. However, we have yet to see the positive impact that this juristic body was meant to introduce on the authorization timelines for new medicines as well as the ongoing constrained supply of medicines that we have been experiencing across all sectors of our profession. Oversight of the legislative aspects relating to medical devices, in vitro diagnostics and complementary medicines have yet to be introduced.

2018 was an extremely busy year for the Committee as well as the sub-committees of the Branch. It also has been a very rewarding year for the Southern Gauteng Branch. Tough discussions resulting in extreme decisions and difficult conversations were had. During 2018 the Committee was at the forefront of several initiatives to assist members of this Branch to remain well informed and equipped professionals and relevant members of healthcare teams who delivered quality healthcare to the population of South Africa. Equally important, is that it is incumbent on this Committee to play a pivotal role to ensure the relevance of the Branch and the Society in serving the needs of its members in any future dispensation. The "Back to the Future" Symposium which was held during September 2018 is an example of such an initiative.

The enthusiasm with which individual members of the Committee as well as the Officers of the Branch Office volunteered of their limited available time and expertise to participate in initiatives of the Branch for the benefit of the profession is commendable. This is no mean feat in an environment where many voluntary organisations are floundering because of a continued apathy towards such organised structures.

I would like to briefly report on several activities of the Committee.

Continuing Professional Development

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) remains a focus of attention for the Branch and continues to be appreciated by members of this Branch. A well-planned balance of clinical and business-related professional development activities was provided during 2018.

The CPD evenings arranged by Mr Neville Lyne (who is now retired from the Branch), with administrative support from Ms Cecile Ramonyane, continue to provide extremely relevant and most interesting information. The CPD sessions continued to be well attended.

However, due to changing dynamics in the branch membership (now more than 50 % females) and changing environmental circumstances, it became necessary to reconsider the way members were serviced. To this end, a survey was done towards the end of 2018. It is evident that the needs of the members of this Branch are very diverse and we will build on this diverse scope of preferences during the coming year.

Webinars have been made available to members albeit in a limited manner. This project is still in its infancy, but we believe that all our members will benefit by the availability of these webinars. Face to face CPD meetings will continue to be offered for those members who enjoy and who are able to attend CPD events at the Glen Hove.

I would like to commend the team concerned with CPD for their continued efforts.

Glen Hove Conferencing has been renamed Glenhove Events Hub, but this abode continues to be the home of pharmacists within the geographical boundaries of this Branch.

Mini Symposium

Experts from various fields of pharmacy captured the attention of the approximately 70 attendees to the symposium with their experiences in dealing with the future as well as the past. The audience was made acutely aware of the incredible technological changes that were being entrenched in the delivery of healthcare.

They were reminded of several "light bulb moments" that shaped the future of medicine and pharmacy and contributed to major further developments in the therapeutic sphere.

Scenarios that were presented left all those who attended the seminar in awe of the latest developments in healthcare delivery and associated topics. It is evident that adaptation and adoption is key to the survival of pharmacy.

Universal Health Coverage

UHC is the greatest gift a country can give its people. We all have a responsibility to make it a success

This Branch continued to keep members informed of developments in the implementation of Universal Health Coverage, commonly referred to as National Health Insurance (NHI). It is evident from the available information that the pharmacy profession is integral to the

successful implementation of NHI. In this new dispensation it is imperative that pharmaceutical services are, as far as possible, provided by pharmacists. The role of the pharmacist in UHC has been recognised. Pharmacists must remain committed to the development of workable models pertaining to the contracting of such pharmaceutical services.

The Society has been actively engaging The Department of Health and every effort should be made to continue this positive engagement for the benefit of the members and for the future of effective healthcare delivery in the country.

Social Responsibility Project – Trinity Pharmacy

Our Social Responsibility Project in association with Wits University is a success story of which this Branch is very proud. The pharmacy remains fully operational. The Branch Committee has been able to assist the pharmacy in the provision of essential equipment to enhance the optimal functioning of the pharmacy. The involvement of the Branch in this initiative is intended to continue as it is providing a much-needed pharmaceutical service.

I would like to appeal to any member of the Branch who would like to become involved with this project to contact the Branch office to obtain further details.

Pharmacy Month

September is Pharmacy Month. The Branch committee was actively involved in the preparation of material for Pharmacy Month 2018 as it also is with the activities planned for Pharmacy Month 2019.

Those colleagues who attended the Symposium on 22 September 2018 also were reminded of International Pharmacist Day as determined by FIP to be celebrated on 25 September each year.

YPG

The Southern Gauteng Branch is all too aware of the fact that young pharmacists need to be encouraged to become and remain active members of the Society (and this Branch) to ensure the sustainability of the Society as well as the Branch. The Branch Committee actively assisted the YPG in this geographical region to develop a mentorship program framework aimed at facilitating the development of leaders in pharmacy.

This initiative will now be driven at a National level.

Student Liaison

The meaningful relationship established during previous years with the Wits University Pharmacy Students Association continued throughout 2018.

Representatives of the Wits Pharmacy Student Association were invited to attend Branch Committee Meetings to share information re the activities of the Student Association with the Committee. We are extremely grateful to the student representatives for their enthusiasm and active participation in the activities of the Branch. In addition, students were, as in the past, taken on a very informative tour of the Pharmacy museum.

The Branch further demonstrated its commitment to the students in providing funding towards the Annual Student Ball. A member of the Branch Committee attended the Ball to introduce the students to the Branch activities

Academic Liaison

The Branch continues to reward deserving pharmacy students. The General Manager as well as the Chairperson of the Branch Committee attended the annual prize giving ceremony of the Medical Faculty of the University of the Witwatersrand to award well deserved prizes to pharmacy students who excelled in their studies.

The allocation of awards has been reviewed at the request of the Academy liaison on the Branch Committee and will be implemented as from 2019.

Legislative Matters

Several legislative and governance matters were addressed at Committee meetings during 2018 and comment provided to the National Executive Committee.

We are also proud to be able to present to the meeting for approval this evening a revised version of the Branch Constitution. Many hours of deliberation have culminated in this document which is the backbone of the Branch.

Interaction with the National Office and Sectors

The Southern Gauteng Branch Committee has been active in both initiating and driving initiatives originating from interactions with and meetings of the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the Pharmaceutical Society.

I would like to thank my fellow representatives to the National Executive Committee (NEC) meetings for their commitment to the interests of this Branch, its members and those of the broader profession at these meetings. I do believe that this Branch continues to play a pivotal role at NEC meetings.

Sectors

A good working relationship continues to be maintained with all Sectors – SAAPI, SAAHIP, SAACP and Academia. All Sectors are represented on the Branch Committee. This Branch continues to provide several services to the sectors as and when such services are requested.

Publications

The eight-weekly publication of this Branch, The Golden Mortar, continues to provide extremely relevant and interesting subject matter to members. I would like to congratulate the Editorial Board on maintaining the high standard of this publication.

Fellows Committee

The secretarial services facilitating the functioning of the established Fellows Committee under the very capable Chairmanship of Ms Val Beaumont continues to be provided by the Southern Gauteng Branch office.

Branch Elections

The effective SMS system previously introduced for the election process continues to be used. The nomination and election process for Branch Committee members was conducted during November and December 2018. The timing of the election process as well as the timely AGM facilitate optimisation and efficiencies of the functioning of the Branch Committee.

Chairman's Dinner

The Chairman's Dinner which was once again held in conjunction with the Sector Committees during November 2018 here at the Glenhove Events Hub was a most successful event thanks to the superb organisation of Dr Judy Coates and the conferencing team. Events such as these contribute to maintaining the ongoing good relationship between the Sectors represented in this Branch.

Branch Committee

My sincere thanks are extended to every member of this most professional and dedicated committee for the time and effort that each one, individually and collectively, has given to the many projects and activities that this Branch has successfully managed during the past year.

The Branch Office under the professional management of the very enthusiastic Dr Judy Coates, who took over the reins from Mr Gordon following his retirement, remains the foundation on which the success of this Branch of the Society is built.

Judy, thank you for the dedication with which the office is managed.

I would like to extend a word of sincere thanks to Mr Gordon for his guidance while he managed the office.

Financials

The financial situation of the Branch continues to be healthy, I would like to recognise the Honorary Treasurer, Mr James Meakings for his efforts in keeping the Committee abreast of the finances of the Branch.

Recognition

This Branch is very privileged to have had the opportunity to recognise Mr David Boyce during the past year, by awarding him the William Patterson Award for his dedication to pharmacy.

Acknowledgements

To my husband, Pieter and my family:

Thank you for your continued support and for allowing me the opportunity to serve my profession about which I am so passionate.

To the incoming Committee:

Congratulations on your election to the committee. It will be hard work.

The challenges will always be there, but I am sure you will find the experience most rewarding.

Lynette Terblanche
Chairperson 2018