

# The Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa Southern Gauteng Branch

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## **PSSA Southern Gauteng Report of the Chairperson of the Branch Committee AGM: 04 February 2020**

It is my privilege to present to you the Chairperson's Report for 2019.

2019 certainly was a year in which transformation within the country and many aspects of business as we knew it for several years preceding 2019 was talked about and implemented across a range of operations. The same may be said of the Branch. It was a year in which transformation was introduced in this Branch of the Society on several fronts. I will briefly mention these aspects in this report. Transformation is associated with a good dose of optimism among those of us who accept change readily. The challenge is to inspire our colleagues who may be less receptive to such optimism, to also accept that transformation may have positive outcomes for a better future.

2019 once again brought its own challenges to our profession: the continued inefficient implementation of Community Service, which was meant to be a service provided by recently qualified pharmacists to the public sector, remains a matter for grave concern and required intervention by the leaders in our profession and even offers of employment from within the private sector.

On a broader front, we saw the South African Health Product Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA), committing to clear a regulatory backlog within a most optimistic timeframe in order to reduce stock out situations and to ensure that medicines may be made available for patients. However, we have yet to see the positive impact and sustainability of this initiative. Regulatory oversight of the legislative aspects relating to medical devices, in vitro diagnostics and complementary medicines have yet to be introduced, although the licensing initiative and mandated appointment of an Authorised Person for Medical Device companies certainly is positive.

2019 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. Branch activities continued post the departure of Dr Judy Coates who left the employ of the PSSA SG at the end of October 2019. During her tenure at the Branch as Executive Director, Dr Coates was very active in all matters of the Society. We thank Dr Coates for this commitment.

Several working groups remain active in achieving the objectives of the Branch Committee (CPD, Golden Mortar, Museum, Mentorship & YPG, Trinity).

The Committee remained committed to several initiatives to enable members of this Branch to remain to be well informed, well equipped professionals and relevant members of healthcare teams delivering 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. To achieve this objective, a successful symposium took place on 31 August 2019.

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 more and more voluntary organisations flounder because of a continued and increasing apathy towards 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 2019.

The CPD evenings arranged by the Branch CPD sub-committee with administrative support from Ms Cecile Ramoyane 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 is an ongoing priority to reconsider the way members may be accommodated by alternative CPD offerings such as Webinars etc.

15 CPDs were hosted during 2019, of which a number were sponsored.

SG CPD invitations are also shared with National Office.

The student representative who attends our Branch meetings, Siviwe supports the committee with student awareness of CPD activities (as well as all Branch related activities).

Webinars have been made available to members albeit in a limited manner. A very successful Webinar was hosted with the assistance of a company partner during November. The 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 Glen Hove.

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

### **Mini Symposium**

The theme of our symposium: 2020 Reality and Vision covered subject matter relating to the past, present and future of Pharmacy. Topics covered included among others Global Gender Injustice in Sport, Artificial Intelligence and Navigating the Waves and Rapids of Life. Experts from various fields captured the attention of the approximately 60 attendees to the symposium with their exceptional knowledge and experiences. The audience was made acutely aware of the incredible technological changes that were being entrenched in the delivery of healthcare.

Scenarios that were presented left all those who attended the seminar in awe of the latest developments in healthcare delivery. It is evident that adaptation and adoption is key also 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, through the National Office 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 remains 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.

In July representatives from the Office and the SAAPI team served soup at the Trinity Soup Kitchen. The caterers for SG hosted events, donated the soup for this occasion. The sponsor was recognised in the Golden Mortar.

In August, representatives from the Office and BDO our auditors, donated in excess of 100 blankets (donated by members and the BDO team)

The Office has since committed to serving at the Soup Kitchen the first Monday of every month, where soup will be donated by PSSA SG, as well as other donors.

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 2019 as it also is with the activities planned for Pharmacy Month 2020. Those colleagues who attended the Symposium

on 31 August 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 developing a mentorship program aimed at facilitating the development of leaders in pharmacy. This initiative will now be undertaken at a National level.

## **Student Liaison**

The meaningful relationship established during previous years with the Wits University Pharmacy Students Association continued throughout 2019.

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.

## **Academic Liaison**

The Branch continues to reward deserving pharmacy students.

The allocation of awards has been reviewed at the request of the Academy liaison on the Branch Committee and will be implemented in 2020.

## **Museum**

An initiative is underway to register the museum as a Section 21 company.

The museum website is up and running.

Students and other organised groups continue to be taken on very informative tours of the Pharmacy museum.

Many activities such as sorting and cataloguing of books and artefacts have been undertaken by our esteemed curator, Mr Ray Pogir with the assistance of Mr Pat Smith. A need remains to secure young talent to join Ray and Pat going forward.

Video Clips have been made of museum items.

I would like to acknowledge the work of these two gentlemen.

## **Legislative Matters**

Several legislative and governance matters were addressed at Committee meetings during 2019 and comment was provided to the National Executive Committee by the sectors.

## **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 monthly 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.

## **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 2019. The timing of the election process as well as the timely AGM facilitate optimisation and efficiencies of the functioning of the Branch Committee.

## **Chairperson's Dinner**

This event was once again held in conjunction with the Sector Committees during November 2019 here at 52 Glen Hove and was a most successful event thanks to the

superb organisation of 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 remains the foundation on which the success of this Branch of the Society is built.

### **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.

### **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 2019