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## Are we stuck in the old way of practising pharmacy?

**Joggie Hattingh**, President: SAAHIP



Joggie Hattingh

I have recently started wondering if our profession is as effective as we think we are!

We have submitted wonderful documents to government on pricing structures, NHI and quite a number of other issues, but we do not get the reaction we thought appropriate to these well drafted and crafted documents. Then I took a step back and thought about the number of huge documents and legislation that has been

coming across my desk on a weekly basis the past few years.

Do I read them in detail? It is so laborious and time consuming that instead of reading it weekly, I do so very weakly! No one has the time to go through all these documents in detail, unless it is your job to do so! Most of us look for the essence of the document and if it is not craftily summarised early in the document we place a marker against it and with the best of intentions to revisit it later, shift it to Neverland!

In our practice, we have been doing things in a pertinent way for years and our pharmacies are organised in a specific order for as long as we remember. We treat our patients and members of the multi-disciplinary team in the exact manner as we have for all these years!

How can there be anything wrong with it?

It is sometimes necessary to take a step back and evaluate ourselves from a distance and just maybe if we do, we may find that we have spun ourselves into a cosy cocoon! If it is the case, it is now time to complete the metamorphosis. Like an egg, a cocoon can be broken in two ways. If we allow someone to do it from the outside it means the death of the organism, but if it is broken from the inside, a wonderful new life will emerge! The choice is ours!

And the best of all is that the organism emerging from the cocoon or egg is not unrelated to what it was, it is actually even better! We truly do not need to lose any of the core values we hold dear.

Electronic media does give us good options for communication, but it should not and cannot replace good interpersonal relationships! Only when a good relationship exists with members of the multi-disciplinary team, do electronic media become useful. So we need to get out of our pharmacies and out from behind our desks and we need to interact with all members of our team, if we want attitudes to change.

We need to be brave enough to start tearing at the confines of the cocoon or egg shell, and YES – it will be painful. There is of course the other option...