



## South African Association of Community Pharmacists 66<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting and 1<sup>st</sup> National Symposium

Jan du Toit

The 66<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting (AGM) and 1<sup>st</sup> National Symposium for community pharmacists of the South African Association of Community Pharmacists (SAACP) took place at the Birchwood Hotel and Conference Centre in Boksburg, Gauteng on 13 and 14 May 2016. More information, including the presentations by various speakers at the symposium and photos taken of the gala dinner event, is available at [www.saacpsymposium.co.za](http://www.saacpsymposium.co.za).

Traditionally, as with most AGMs, this AGM was a very business orientated event. It was therefore decided to schedule the AGM to coincide with the 1<sup>st</sup> National Symposium for Community Pharmacists in South Africa and thereby provide additional motivation for members to attend the AGM.

### Election of office bearers

President:	Christine Venter
Vice-President:	Tshif Rabali
Honorary Treasurer:	Joe Ravele
Honorary Secretary:	Pep Manolas
Past President:	Kobus le Roux



(l to r) Joe Ravele, Jan du Toit, Kobus le Roux, Tshif Rabali, Christine Venter and Pep Manolas

### Resolutions and recommendations

Although SAACP is in the process of a strategic review of its structure and relevance it was disappointing that no innovative or ground-breaking resolutions / recommendations were adopted to pave the way forward in line with SAACP's new Vision 2020 and its ensuing approach of "shaping the future of community pharmacists in South Africa". A number of resolutions and recommendations were however adopted.

### Restructuring of SAACP

In February 2016, National Executive Committee (NEC) of SAACP approved the SAACP Vision 2020.

The approach adopted by Vision 2020 requires SAACP to focus its endeavours on shaping the future of community pharmacists in South Africa. The first step in achieving its objectives as well as recognition as an important role player in community pharmacy practice in South Africa, was the change of the association's name from Community Pharmacist Sector (CPS) to SA Association of Community Pharmacists (SAACP).

The strategic goals of Vision 2020 are:

- Strategic goal 1: SAACP as a resource centre
- Strategic goal 2: Advancing community pharmacy practice
- Strategic goal 3: Enhancing communications

Specific projects are to be identified in order to pursue these strategic goals.

Structure follows strategy, so in order to enable SAACP to achieve its strategic goals more effectively and efficiently, the AGM resolved that there should now be an urgent investigation into the restructuring of SAACP, including its NEC.

### Sectoral levy

In 2011, it was decided by the CPS that, in addition to the annual membership fees payable to the PSSA, a voluntary sectoral levy should be payable by community pharmacists who have elected to belong to the community pharmacy sector.

The intention of the sectoral fee was and still is to supplement the income of SAACP National which is heavily dependent on the

SAACP SG Branch (approximately 54% of the income for the 2016 financial year) for its financial and operational survival.

Although the NEC considered a possible CPI increase of the sectoral fee for 2016/17, it also considered all the additional demands on the income of community pharmacists. It was therefore decided to keep the current levy, i.e. R 650.00, for this period. Effectively there will have been no increase in the levy since 2013. It is also hoped that by retaining the current levy, it will encourage community pharmacists who are members of the PSSA to select SAACP as their representative sector.

Clearly, the envisaged role of the SAACP NEC in representing the community pharmacy sector of the PSSA will require pro-active projects for which additional funding will be required.

### ***Negotiation of fees payable by medical schemes to pharmacists***

It is currently not possible for SAACP to negotiate collectively with the medical schemes on behalf of its members. The Healthman Service Provider however is an ideal organisation to handle the fee negotiations on behalf of SAACP members. It is important that pharmacists, as providers of healthcare services, should be paid appropriate sustainable fees. The AGM recommended that SAACP should continue to support the current project financially.

### ***Delineation of functions***

The AGM requested the NEC to revisit and refine the delineation of functions between SAACP and Independent Community Pharmacy Association.

### ***Helen Suzman Foundation (HSF) investigation***

SAACP funded an investigation into pharmacy by the HSF, at considerable expense. The ensuing report provided valuable information which is necessary to guide the profession, especially in terms of the siting of community pharmacies and the professional fee.

The AGM recommended that a follow-up project should be conducted in order to further investigate the results of the investigation.

### ***Medical scheme issues***

Members expressed grave concern with the current bullying tactics by medical schemes in not paying the prescribed dispensing fees, as well as unduly excluding particularly independently owned pharmacies from preferred service provider networks.

### ***PCDT***

It was noted with appreciation that the registration of the PCDT qualification and the issuing of Section 22A (15) permits to pharmacists with a PCDT qualification was on the increase again. Obtaining relevant Practice Code Numbers from BHF seems to be problematic but was receiving attention. PCDT Pharmacists were again reminded that:

- the permit concerned is issued by the National Department of Health subject to certain terms and conditions, which must be complied with; and
- the issuing of a permit is neither a guarantee nor an instruction to medical schemes to pay for claims submitted in terms of the legal authority granted to PCDT Pharmacists. Medical schemes have the right to pay for claims in accordance with scheme rules, which may not as yet provide for PCDT Pharmacists with permits as a legally authorised prescriber.

### ***Overall impression***

Saturday, 14 May 2016, was allocated to a full day symposium for community pharmacists. Two social functions, a cocktail evening courtesy of Aspen Pharmacare and a gala dinner thanks to Adcock Ingram, were very successful. The next issue of the *SAPJ* will contain a report on the symposium, as well as a complete list of sponsors and exhibitors, to whom SAACP gives thanks.

Combining the AGM with a symposium was an excellent idea and many compliments were received for a well organised and very informative AGM and symposium. The effort made by members in finding the time in their busy working schedules to attend both events is highly appreciated.