



South African Association of Pharmacists in Industry

Report to the PSSA AGM

Yolanda Peens, SAAPI President

SAAPI had a very eventful first and beginning of a second quarter of 2016! We started the year with a strategic session, where we discussed what we envisage for the future of SAAPI. We realised that it is a challenge and a half that is going to keep us busy for a long time!

The objective we set ourselves for the year is to give tools to pharmacists in industry to be an empowered leader and ultimately be the decision maker. With the inherent knowledge of pharmacists, we felt that our skills are often underestimated and the value of the pharmacist is not always recognised in the decision making process in a corporate environment, or by the time we are invited to the decision making process, it is often too late and we end up having to do damage control rather than creating preventative measures by continuous improvement of our systems and procedures.

One of the most important offerings we give our membership is the CPD (Continuing Professional Development) sessions, arranged by SAAPI. With waiting lists of people wanting to attend our CPDs we know that we are addressing the training needs of our members and that we have a winning formula. Miranda Viljoen (Executive Director of SAAPI) has been an integral part in the success of the expansion of our SAAPI CPD programme.

We have thus far offered the following CPD events:

1. A practical workshop on Product Quality Reviews and Quality Risk Management, Presented by Dr Andre van Zyl on 11 March 2016
2. Hands-on-Training: Section 21 application, Presented and facilitated by Leneri du Toit and Esthi Beukes on 07 April 2016
3. Training Workshop on Self Inspections, Audits And Continual Improvement, Presented by Dr Andre van Zyl on 26 May 2016
4. Hands-on-Training: Conversion of MBR1/MRF1 dossiers to ZA-CTD, Presented and facilitated by Leneri du Toit and Esthi Beukes on 18 May 2016

The highlight of quarter two (to date) was our Annual Conference on 13 and 14 April 2016 at the CSIR, "**Success through Synergy**". The SAAPI conference committee could not have put a better agenda together which resulted in a hugely successful conference. We had both local and international speakers addressing the delegates on topics such as:

1. The NHI Initiatives
2. Changes in legislation which included the changes from MCC to SAHPRA
3. Medical devices, complementary medicines and pharmacovigilance
4. Feedback from the MCC on various topics relating to the registration of products and the associated quality aspects of such products
5. New technologies in medicine development, not only in actual drug delivery systems but also moving toward electronic submissions for registration of our products
6. Harmonisation of regulatory requirements in Africa, Europe and the rest of the world
7. Impact of medicines on the environment
8. As well as how we can better perform as organisations, looking at the value of a corporate culture and how that can be used to our advantage in business

The golden thread throughout the conference was not only knowledge sharing but also the importance of the pharmacist in all aspects of the value chain of medicines.

Another question raised during our initial strategic session was the fact that although we do communicate extensively with our members we seldom have a meaningful conversation with our members. On an ongoing basis, SAAPI is represented at various stakeholder meetings, where we give our input on issues impacting the pharmacist in industry. We are in continued discussion with the MCC and the ITG (Industry Task Group) on issues such as inspection fees, new and updated guidelines and newly published legislation, BUT we want to get more participation of our members in giving feedback on issues that impact our profession. As a result of this, at the conference we introduced a new initiative to create a platform to open communication channels with our members through social media.

SAAPI can now be followed on Twitter at: [@SAAPI_ZA](https://twitter.com/SAAPI_ZA)

This is still a very new initiative, but we are slowly but surely gaining followers and confidence with 'Tweeting'. Our next step will be to roll this initiative out to all the SAAPI Members.

As the SAAPI Exco, we are currently reviewing how we manage our office and our Association. Within the SAAPI Exco we have already started trying different ways of doing things such as making

use of technology available to us (ultimately to our advantage!) e.g. introducing alternative meeting solutions which include teleconferences and for quick discussions WhatsApp groups, additional to the Twitter account and e-mail correspondence.

We are at a fork in the road and we need to decide how to proceed i.e. what we need to do to take SAAPI to the next level. It is vital for SAAPI to get our members' feedback and suggestions to ensure we make the right decisions. We are extending an open invitation to our members to get involved; if you have any thoughts you want to share with us, do not hesitate to contact us with your input, suggestions and ideas, with doing this you are not only supporting SAAPI but you are making the pharmacy profession stronger. The project is in its infancy but we will keep

you updated on the progress of all the changes we are proposing and challenges when implementing these changes; everything is geared to making SAAPI a force to be reckoned with!

I am sad to announce that Miranda Viljoen has decided to retire at the end of July 2016 from the SAAPI office and her position as Executive Director of SAAPI. Miranda personified SAAPI for many years. Miranda, a huge THANK YOU for everything you have done to promote SAAPI, the pharmacy profession and for expanding the CPD Project to the important and successful project it has become for SAAPI. We wish you only the best, enjoy the grandkids but please remember you will always have a home away from home at SAAPI!