



PSSA and PPS engagement sessions with pharmacy students

The PSSA has a long-standing relationship with PPS mainly through the Professional Indemnity Insurance product offered to PSSA members. In 2019, PPS approached PSSA with the idea of engagement sessions at all pharmacy schools for the final year students. The topic of the engagement sessions is "A prescription for financial and professional health" and the purpose of these sessions is to provide pharmacy students with insights and tools to enable them to effectively manage their financial health, empower them to successfully transition into the work environment and position the support structure available for a fulfilling career in pharmacy.

Kapish Singh, Professional Association Specialist at PPS, stressed that the wellbeing of pharmacists is of paramount importance to PPS and they continually strive to contribute to pharmacist's professional and financial health in a meaningful way. This lifelong journey starts at student level and PPS is committed to helping all pharmacy students achieve personal, career and financial goals. Selma Kruger, financial planning specialist in the graduate division explains that the key message from these engagement sessions is that PPS takes care of pharmacists' financial health, to enable them to focus on their patients' physical well-being.

During the second half of 2019, five engagement sessions were conducted. During each of the sessions, the PSSA had an opportunity to address the students and promote the value of membership of the Society. This was then followed by the workshop presented by PPS.

The first engagement session was on 6 September at the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) and PSSA was represented by Joe Ravele, Chairperson of the Pretoria Branch, who found the session to be educative, informative, eye-opening and enlightening to the students. Students felt that the session prepared them well for the future in terms of financial management and life skills.

The second session was on 12 September at Rhodes University and Mari-san Bodenstein from the Cape Midlands Branch represented the PSSA. Mari-san felt that overall it was a positive experience. She enjoyed engaging with the students and thinks that they have learnt a lot from these engagement sessions.

On 7 October the team visited Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University (SMU) where Wandisile Grootboom, also from the Pretoria Branch, presented on behalf of PSSA.

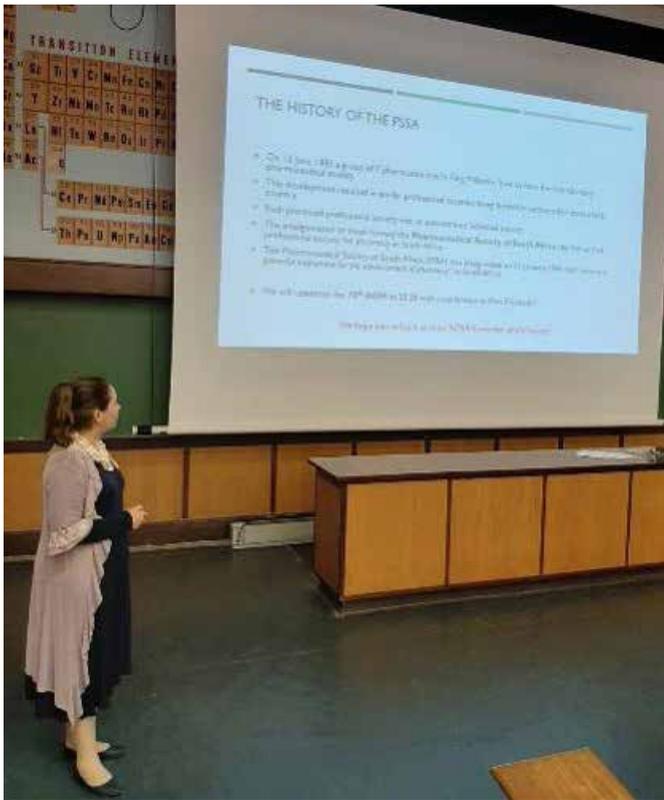
The University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) was visited on 9 October. Due to short notice it was not possible for a representative from the local PSSA branch to attend this session.

Rhulani Maluleka, Chairperson of the SAAHIP Limpopo Branch, represented the Society during the visit at the University of Limpopo (UL) on 17 October. Rhulani reported that the UL students were excited about the support from PSSA on their career paths, received updates on internship placement at the Limpopo Province Department of Health and the financial education by PPS. Prior to these engagement sessions the pharmacy students were not aware of their benefits as a member of the Society.

Both PSSA and PPS hope that the other four universities can be visited in the first quarter of 2020 to ensure their students are also exposed to the opportunity to engage in "A prescription for financial and professional health". The anticipation is to have this event as an annual engagement opportunity between PSSA, PPS and the nine Schools of Pharmacy.



Rhulani Maluleka addressing the final year pharmacy students at UL



Above: Selma Kruger engaging with TUT students

Left: Mari-san Bodenstein presenting on the history of the PSSA to final year pharmacy students at RU

The PSSA in action ...

One of the most important functions of the PSSA is communication. In particular, the PSSA needs to bring its members' concerns to the attention of a number of stakeholders. This may be formal written communication about a specific issue, or it may be comment on draft legislation that will affect pharmacists. When draft legislation is published in the Government Gazette for comment, the PSSA is happy to receive comment from individual PSSA members. The submission is prepared in collaboration with the PSSA sectors so that all concerns can be addressed.

During 2019, there have been many opportunities for the PSSA to represent its members' interests. It must be remembered that, in all cases, the PSSA engages in communication and consultation to ensure that the comment to be submitted will adequately address pharmacist's concerns.

January 2019

The following letters were written:

- To the Minister of Health regarding the outstanding publication of the dispensing fee for pharmacists for 2019.
- To the Registrar of the South African Pharmacy Council (SAPC) regarding pharmacists not able to commence with community service due to proposed commencement dates by the employer.

- To the Minister of Health regarding the (non)implementation of the Presidential Stimulus Package in Limpopo province (collaboration with SAAHIP).

Input into the Presidential Health Compact, which was introduced in 2018, was requested from healthcare professionals into nine key components of health service delivery. The PSSA's submission dealt with each of the nine components, with special emphasis on how they affect the pharmacy profession. The areas identified as requiring attention are human resources, supply chain management, infrastructure, private sector engagement, quality improvements, financial management, leadership and governance, community engagement and health systems information.

February 2019

The PSSA, in collaboration with Academy of Pharmaceutical Sciences of South Africa, wrote to the Minister of Health, Minister of Higher Education and Training, the Presidency, the national Department of Health and the South African Pharmacy Council regarding the human resource crisis in South African Schools of Pharmacy. If this is not adequately addressed soon, the quality of pharmacy education in the country may be in jeopardy.

March 2019

The PSSA approached the Registrar of the SAPC regarding the illegal sale of codeine containing products.

May 2019

The PSSA wrote to the Registrar of the SAPC regarding the 2018 Council elections.

June 2019

There were three opportunities for the PSSA to submit important comment.

- *Good Pharmacy Education Standards (Occupational Qualification Sub-Framework)* in terms of Section 34 of the Pharmacy Act, 53 of 1974, read together with the Regulations relating to pharmacy education and training (GNR 1156, were published on 20 November 2000), Board Notice 34 of 2019. The PSSA's comment was formulated in collaboration with APSSA.
- The Office of Health Standard Compliance draft Enforcement Policy.
- A guideline, published for comment, was titled Scheduling of substances for prescribing by authorised prescribers other than medical practitioners and dentists.

July 2019

The PSSA wrote to the Registrar of the SAPC regarding its failure to publish the annual fees for comment.

There were also three opportunities for the PSSA to comment on important issues:

- Board Notice 75 of 2019, published by the SAPC, proposed amendments to the rules relating to Good Pharmacy Practice (Minimum standards for pharmacy premises, facilities and equipment; locum tenens pharmacists and pharmacy support personnel; and pharmacy administration and management).
- The PSSA sent comment on the Strategy and Strategic Plan for 2020/2021 - 2024/2025.
- The PSSA submitted both written comment and an oral public presentation regarding the proposed "Minimum standard for

alternative models for the delivery of chronic medication to patients".

August 2019

The PSSA submitted comment to the Compensation Fund on the 2019-2020 Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases (COIDA) Medical Tariff Consultations.

In addition, it submitted comment to the Department of Higher Education and Training on the 2020 List of Occupations in High Demand.

October 2019

The PSSA write to the Minister of Health regarding the publication of the annual fees payable by persons registered in terms of the Pharmacy Act.

In addition, the PSSA wrote to the National Department of Health about the call for nominations of individuals to participate in the expansion of the Standard Treatment Guidelines (STGs) for Universal Health Care (UHC).

November 2019

This month, there were five opportunities to comment on draft legislation that will impact on pharmacy practice:

- The draft Dispensing Fee for pharmacists for 2020 – this submission was made by the Pharmacy Stakeholders Forum, which consists of ICPA, PSSA and SAACP.
- Board Notice 171 of 2019 regarding the draft Guidance Document for Continuing Professional Development (CPD).
- Board Notice 173 of 2019 regarding the draft Scope of practice and qualification for specialist pharmacists in industrial pharmacy (collaboration with SAAPI).
- Board Notice 175 of 2019 regarding Rules Relating to Good Pharmacy Practice and the draft Minimum standards for trading title(s) (collaboration with ICPA).
- The National Health Insurance Bill – B11 of 2019.

The PSSA looks forward to 2020, when more opportunities will arise in which the PSSA can ensure that the voice of pharmacists is heard.

The PSSA/Alpha Pharm distance learning programme 2019

The PSSA/Alpha Pharm distance learning programme continues to offer pharmacists useful, practical, up-to-date information that enables them to provide optimal pharmaceutical care to their patients.

Module 5/2019 – Major depression

Major depressive disorder (MDD) or unipolar major depression, is a leading cause of illness and disability globally and in South Africa. It is the most common psychiatric disorder worldwide with a prevalence that is increasing over time.

Despite the high prevalence rates, few people with depression discuss their symptoms with a doctor. This is known as the 'treatment gap'. Instead, nearly two-thirds of people with depression who see a healthcare provider for routine care come in complaining of physical symptoms, such as headache, back problems or chronic pain.

People are often reluctant to discuss their symptoms of depression. Often, they are concerned about the stigma of mental illness or

they may be worried that a primary health care provider is not the appropriate healthcare professional to approach. Some people still see depression as a personal weakness rather than a real illness. Yet, there are effective treatments available for depression and not treating depression may have serious and lasting consequences.

People with untreated depression have a lower quality of life, a higher risk of suicide and a worse prognosis if they have any medical conditions besides depression. In addition, depression not only affects the person with the disorder, but also those around him or her. However, with appropriate treatment, 70 to 80% of individuals with major depression can achieve a significant reduction in symptoms.

This module discusses major depression and its medical management in adults, adolescents and the elderly.

For more information about this programme contact Taryn or Glynis at Insight Medicine Information on 011 706 6939 or email: cpdalphapharm@insightmed.co.za.

The PSSA/Alpha Pharm clinical education programme 2019 for pharmacy staff

The PSSA/Alpha Pharm pharmacy staff clinical education programme continues to offer front-shop assistants or pharmacist's assistants up-to-date information that enables them to provide optimal pharmaceutical care to their patients. All pharmacy staff need to be familiar with the use of unscheduled medicines and should be reminded of when it is necessary to refer the patient to the pharmacist.

Module 5/2019 – Depression

Depression is a medical condition that is more serious than everyday sadness. It causes long-lasting symptoms that interfere with a person's ability to function. In children and adolescents, depression affects their ability to perform well in school and to develop and maintain relationships and is often accompanied by behavioural problems, substance abuse and other mental disorders, such as attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Despite being the most common mental disorder worldwide, depression often goes unnoticed, usually because people are reluctant to discuss their symptoms. People may be concerned about the stigma of having a mental illness and may see their condition as a personal weakness rather than as a 'real' illness. Many people with depression also suffer from anxiety symptoms. In fact, anxiety symptoms may occur in up to 80% of people with

depression. People with untreated depression clearly carry a high burden of personal suffering, they have a lower quality of life and suffer a higher risk of suicide. What's more, depression not only affects the person with the disorder, but also the family, friends and colleagues around that person.

However, depression is a treatable condition and between 80% and 90% of people have a good response to treatment. Psychotherapy (counselling), medicines and other measures offer effective treatment of symptoms. Yet, two-thirds of people with depression who see a healthcare worker for routine care complain of physical symptoms, such as headache, back problems or chronic pain and the depression is missed.

This module discusses depression and anxiety symptoms and how those affected by these disorders may present in the pharmacy. It is important to refer people with symptoms of possible depression and/or anxiety to the doctor for appropriate assessment and treatment. Once identified, it is important to offer support to those suffering with depression and to encourage them to persist with their treatment.

If you would like to participate in the PSSA/Alpha Pharm pharmacy staff clinical education programme please contact Taryn or Glynis for further information on 011 706 6939 or email cpdalphapharm@insightmed.co.za

SAVE THE DATE

2022 FIP World Congress of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

25 - 29 September 2022
Cape Town, South Africa



SAVE THE DATE

Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa 75th AGM and Conference

06 - 08 August 2020
Port Elizabeth



**PHARMACEUTICAL
SOCIETY OF SA**

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