



YPG annual report

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Here, we reflect on the year that was. COVID-19 has affected the number of activities taking place in recent months, but it has also resulted in more learning through electronic platforms, e.g. webinars. Importantly young pharmacists have both hosted and participated in webinars and critical online discussions.



Meetings over tea-and-coffee – a thing of the past

A key element of any group made up of busy professionals is the time spent in discussions/meetings. The steering committee kick started their term with face-to-face meetings in August and September 2019, and January 2020. At its induction meeting, Ivan Kotzé and Mariet Eksteen introduced the committee to the Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa's (PSSA) Constitution and Regulations, Young Pharmacists' Group (YPG) Operating Guidelines, and YPG Portfolios. These added context to the needs of YPG and how the roles of the PSSA and YPG would work symbiotically. Face-to-face meetings were rapidly replaced with the buzz word platforms "Zoom...

Teams... Skype...Whatsapp Video meetings", which would prove more cost effective and provide better utilisation of time, rather than the conventional travelling for face-to-face meetings.

Activities

One of the main objectives of the YPG was to be present and show support at the activities of organisations/societies linked to the YPG. This included representation at internship and community service orientation events hosted either by South African Pharmacy Council (SAPC) or the local branches, with huge success.

The YPG also participated in and shared the job satisfaction survey that was conducted by FIP YPG, a topic which will present data which will equally serve importance and relevance to the South African Pharmacy community.

In order to ensure that young pharmacists were well represented at the much anticipated 3rd National Pharmacy Conference hosted by SAPC, the chairperson attended, joining other young exceptional pharmacists.

Partnership with pharmacy students is another YPG objective. This relationship ensures support and assistance of annual student activities and campaigns, but is also a marketing tool to show the importance of becoming

active in the PSSA once qualified. One such activity was the presence and representation of YPG being present and represented at the orientation of first years at Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University. The same support was offered to pharmacy interns, with activities such as internship pre-registration exam workshops hosted by YPG Projects Coordinator, Byron Chukwu.

The chairman, Matlapeng Shabalala Mshengu, was invited to the South African Pharmaceutical Students' Federation (SAPSF) conference held at Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) in December 2019 to share insight on YPG.

It is important to understand the needs and expectations of young pharmacists in different practice sectors. The SAAHIP conference allowed for the perfect opportunity to briefly gather young pharmacists in attendance, to discuss objectives, expectations, and challenges of young pharmacists at branch level. The conference was also a perfect display of young pharmacists' active participation in the conference programme, and it showcased the leadership roles of young pharmacists, notably the amazing work done by conference convenor Obey Madzingo, and the election of the SAAHIP president, former YPG Public Relations Officer, Shawn Zeelie.

Public Relations portfolio – Hilton Steven

The objective of this portfolio is to:

- Ensure visibility through engagement on various platforms.
- Ensure frequent communication to members and stakeholders.
- Plan and execute media campaigns for projects.
- Support Chairman and Projects Coordinator in their roles, with input as far as communication is concerned.
- Broadcast relevant importance about Health Days/ Campaigns to encourage activities around those days.
- Create content for South African Pharmaceutical Journal.

Projects Coordinator – Byron Chukwu

The PSSA YPG Project is an important responsibility of this portfolio. The 2019/2020 responsibilities included managing and tracking the progress of current winner Razia Gaida, and previous winner Nicole Hoffman, with regards to the innovation project. This also extended to the management of the new call for participants.

Another project launched was the novel *Recruitment Project*, with the first phase currently underway. This will ultimately lead to the increasing activity of young pharmacists at branch level as well as structured dissemination of information to YPG members.