



# A Piece of my Mind

Editorial Comment

## Leadership changes

I love it when I'm right. A young pharmacist once asked me, "What are we going to do when our leaders retire and/or die? We're not going to be able to go forward." I still remember my reply to him, "Don't worry about it. You're busy preparing to become one of the leaders." He was, and he did.

If you read the PSSA newsletter, the YPG newsletter, any of our social media pages and the *SAPJ*, you will surely have noticed that young pharmacists are now dominating the active portion of PSSA membership. So are the older pharmacists who aid and abet them!

There's no doubt that this is an ideal situation. We have the innovation and energy of youth, and the experience and wisdom of the older pharmacists. It's a winning combination.

## Youth working alone

Obviously there are times when the two groups need to work independently. It isn't only that the young need to make their own mistakes as they learn what works and what doesn't. Their criteria for success are often different from older folks. Not to mention criteria for fun! They also need to explore their own formulae for success. We all know that, in our personal lives, what worked for our parents didn't necessarily work for us, so why should it work in our professional lives?

## Institutional memory

A good thing, isn't it? My internal jury is out on this one. My immediate reaction was, yes, of course it is. It prevents you from making mistakes because you don't understand historical actions and difficulties. It's easy to jump to conclusions. Surely if you know the history, you can build on successes and avoid repeating mistakes. To a point, this is true. The problem is that it takes two to tango, and if there's more than one party involved, each is likely to believe that they are in the right, and the other side's argument is incorrect.

A case in point is raised in the PSSA Perspectives, on the issue of the dispensing fee. Having been there since the onset, and having experienced every step of the way for many years, I can only heave a sigh of exasperation and exhaustion at the lack of understanding that has produced very little progress in arriving at a dispensing fee that will, on its own, ensure the sustainability of community pharmacy, and at the same time ensure affordability to the population. Are we ever going to have resolution on this one? I suspect it won't be in my (present) lifetime.

Mm. Maybe this is one of those occasions where we need to throw out our entire history and begin from scratch. Or is it? Let me know your thoughts!

## My mind wanders on ...

Maybe, just maybe ... the logical solution may be found in a well organised, well remunerated national health system, where all health

care providers are adequately remunerated for their services and all people receive adequate health services. Just saying.

## The loss of a dear friend and colleague

In the last issue of the *SAPJ*, I wrote about how uncomfortable I felt with the use of the word "obituary" and how I prefer the word "tribute". Right now, that's more true than ever before.

Ria Pretorius was more than a colleague and friend – she was a sister and an *alter ego*. We shared many hours together, in the dispensary, in meetings, in conferences, in our homes and with other friends. She could be very annoying – she knew my thoughts and feelings before I did, and she was always right!

I've used other people's words in this column before, so I'll let Yolanda Harding have the last word today.

*En so ontaard vandag toe in een groot nagmerrie.*

*Rus sag liewe Ria Pretorius.*

*Sy was nie net my baas, my mentor, my "worst nightmare" en my werksmoeder nie. Sy was my kosbare vriendin en my inspirasie.*

*Sy was AMAZING en elkeen wat ooit die voorreg gehad het om haar te ontmoet, sal dit kan beaam. 'n Regte Hero.*

*Kyk, sy kon my moermeter in die rooi kry vinniger as wat jy kon sê – mes. Sy het my vele kere (soms te veel) in trane gehad, maar sy was ook altyd daar om my hand te vat en my te help opstaan en weer te probeer. Sy het my gedruk en forseer om beter te kan doen, gedryf al het dit gevoel ek kon nie meer nie maar sy het ook altyd in my geglo en my my vlerke laat spreid en laat vlieg.*

*Ria was hardegat, 'n "force to be reckoned with", regverdig, ferm en soms 'n regte moeilike tannie maar altyd positief, sag met 'n hart van goud. Sy het 'n manier gehad om jou te oortuig dat jy enige iets kan bereik. Haar energie was aansteeklik. Jy het geweet as sy 'n kamer betree het en al het sy almal om haar een of ander tyd mal gemaak, was daar diep binne tog altyd bewondering vir haar.*

*Haar werk was haar passie en sy het dit gedoen met soveel oorgawe en liefde. Die industrie verloor waarlik 'n reus ...*

*Haar seun, Markus was haar lewe en Jessica die dogter waarvan sy altyd gedroom het. Hulle was haar ALLES. Elke oomblik saam met hulle was so kosbaar en in elke storie kon jy die liefde en trots aanvoel.*

*Ek weet ek sal moet maar hoe ek gaan afskeid neem weet ek waarlik nie? Ek kan vir nou net die Here dank vir die voorreg om haar in my lewe te kon hê. Dankie vir die voorreg om haar met haar familie te kon deel. Dankie vir die trane, drukkies en lag. Dankie dat ek by een van die bestes kon leer ... sommer net dankie vir alles.*

*Lief vir jou altyd* 