

Editorial



South Africans find themselves in times which are dominated by political uncertainty, economic hardships and reduced security. Our institutions of higher education appear to be in disarray, raising concern about our children's future education and also the quality of health professionals that will care for us in the next decade.

As a result, many South Africans, including our health professionals, are seeking greener pastures overseas, further reducing the level of healthcare expertise and student mentoring. In addition, this brain-drain is also reducing the disproportionately small pool of tax-payers, which will further strain our economy.

WHASA too, has been through turbulent times of late, with resignations of key members of the ExCo and a decline of our membership numbers in the last few years. However, in the midst of all the doom and gloom, we see signs of hope with members signing up again. Our current ExCo is highly motivated to make a difference and to make it worthwhile to be a WHASA member, both for health professionals and the trade alike.

We have seen very well-attended regional symposiums recently and have received great feedback from our members regarding these. I am pleased to see that there is a growing interest from our members to undertake research and publish. In this regard I have recently delivered two presentations at these symposiums with basic guidelines on how to conduct research and how to get your research published. I hope we will see more budding researchers in the near future who will add to the work we see in this journal!

In addition, we are seeing more involvement from our sister societies, such as the Podiatry Association of South Africa (PASA) and the Lymphoedema Association of Southern Africa (LAOSA).

Closer relationships with these associations will be beneficial for our WHASA health professionals' continued education as there is a huge amount of common interest between these disciplines and ours. In addition, with more members of these societies attending our WHASA meetings, the trade (that we rely on for financial support) will benefit significantly due to the increased exposure they will obtain.

With talk of CPD point acquisition becoming compulsory for nurses, I am pleased to announce that the next issue of WHSA will be CPD-accredited. One of the articles of each issue will contain a set of questions, which can be answered online, and in so doing provide the reader with CPD points if they are a WHASA member.

In the current issue we see a variety of articles including a clinical study about leg ulcers in Togo, an update on maggot therapy in Pretoria and laboratory-based research in an article on bee-derived antibacterial peptide. Natural, antibiotic-free wound treatments, such as those derived from fly-larvae and bees may become more important in the future due to the ever-increasing problem of antibiotic resistance. On that note, this issue also features an exciting new app, which facilitates judicious antibiotic usage, among other things.

There is an interesting paper on hypomagnasaemia in burns, which highlights the type of things we often overlook because we are so focused on these patient's wounds. Lastly, there is an article which is a continuation of the research published in the previous issue, regarding the biomechanics of NPWT and how it affects tissue pressure. In the following issue we will see how these findings affect perfusion, in a way contrary to what we have always believed. Understanding the science behind NPWT is important to any health professional who uses this modality.

I hope you find this issue to be an interesting and educational read!

Nick Kairinos