

SASOM 2016 Annual General Meeting and Conference

The South African Society of Occupational Medicine (SASOM) Gauteng Chapter hosted the SASOM Annual General Meeting (AGM) and associated conference at Glenburn Lodge in Muldersdrift, Gauteng, on Saturday 26 November 2016. The last Executive Committee (ExCo) meeting of the year was held on Friday evening, at the same venue.

At the AGM, the 2016 annual report by the incoming SASOM National Secretary, Dr Jenny Sapire, highlighted the following activities and outcomes for the past year:

- SASOM members attended the National Department of Health (NDoH) consultative meeting in February for discussion on an Occupational Health and Safety System Model for South Africa, where the establishment of the National Public Health Institute of South Africa (NAPHISA) was presented, following the passing of the NAPHISABill in Parliament. Several SASOM members volunteered to serve on a reference group related to NAPHISA.
- The SASOM Annual Conference, held at the Kopanong Hotel in Benoni in June, was well attended by occupational medicine and nursing practitioners who appreciated the varied and interesting topics of the presentations.
- SASOM and the Foundation for Professional Development (FPD) signed a Memorandum of Understanding in July, to develop and present training courses for healthcare workers based on the SASOM Guidelines.
- Dr Steve Goosen represented SASOM at the NDoH Steering Committee Meeting held in July, to finalise the NDoH policy on occupational health for healthcare workers in respect of HIV and tuberculosis.
- The Department of Labour's (DoL) Occupational Health Forum held regular meetings during the year to prepare uniform presentations to the DoL. SASOM and the South African Society of Occupational Health Nursing Practitioners (SASOHN) drafted a document on the 'Requirements for Registration as an Occupational Health Service Provider' which was presented to the Forum in mid-July, and was the topic of a workshop facilitated by the DoL in September.
- Prof. Daan Kocks represented SASOM at the International

Occupational Medicine Society Collaborative held in Amsterdam in September. He also serves on the Council of Health Services Accreditation of Southern Africa (COHSASA) which reviews evaluations of healthcare facilities.

- SASOM was invited to participate in the Annual Conference of the Southern African Institute for Occupational Hygiene (SAIOH) in October; Prof. Daan Kocks attended and presented a paper on 'Organisation of Occupational Medicine Practitioners in Southern Africa'.
- The SASOM website was revamped, and new information and presentations delivered at SASOM conferences were uploaded to the website.
- In recognition of their valuable contributions to the occupational health disciplines and distinguished long-term service rendered to the Society, SASOM bestowed Honorary Life Memberships on Prof. Mary Ross and Dr Frank Fox.

At the AGM, SASOM elected its ExCo Members for 2017:

Prof. Daan Kocks (Chair); Dr André Kotzé (Vice Chair); Dr Adriaan Combrinck (Treasurer); Dr Jenny Sapire (Secretary); Dr Jan Lapere; Dr Basil Dhaniram; Dr Steve Goosen; Dr André Louw; Dr Sophia Kisting; Dr Angel Ndlovu; Prof. Mary Ross; Ms Claudina Nogueira; and Ms Jenny Acutt (Project Coordinator in the National Office).

Conference Programme

The theme of the conference was 'SASOM Guidelines – High Flyers in Occupational Health' and conference participants agreed that valuable information was shared in the following presentations:

Dr André Kotzé gave a comprehensive overview presentation of the recently updated SASOM Guideline 'Audit of an Occupational Health Service' which is written as a general approach and is mostly applicable to the chemical industry, in terms of scope. Auditing is an essential component of the quality management of an occupational health service, demonstrating the competencies, compliance and shortcomings of the service. This SASOM Guideline serves to introduce some uniformity into this process.

Ms Lyndsey Swart's presentation on 'Incapacity at Work and



The last SASOM ExCo meeting of 2016, chaired by Prof. Daan Kocks, was convened on Friday evening, 25 November

Photos courtesy of Claudina Nogueira



The SASOM 2016 AGM and Conference were held at Glenburn Lodge, a relaxing country retreat in Muldersdrift, Gauteng

Functional Assessment' reminded the audience that legislation places a duty on the employer to properly investigate an employee's incapacity to work, and discussed the role and the various dimensions of functional capacity evaluation in determining individual workers' abilities to perform the essential physical and mental demands of their jobs.

Ms Judy Hendra presented 'Mobile Occupational Health Services in South Africa: a SASOHN Viewpoint' which highlighted how occupational health service provision across South Africa has changed as a result of the economic climate, and was mostly focused on the delivery and evaluation of audiometry services.

Dr Mojaki Mosia, Human Resources Executive of the National Health Laboratory Service (NHLS) gave an engaging and thought-provoking presentation on the 'Management of Absenteeism owing to Illness and Injury', from a corporate perspective.

'Absenteeism and Medical Certificates' was the topic of the presentation delivered by Dr Adriaan Combrinck who highlighted the roles played by both employer and employee in the management of absenteeism; and discussed the requirements set by the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) and the South African Medical Association (SAMA) for the content and issue of medical certificates.

Dr Jan Pienaar, developer of theHealthSource, an integrated electronic health record solution, gave a presentation titled 'Shared Integrated Occupational Health, Hygiene and Medical Records'. He demonstrated that it is indeed possible and feasible for longitudinal health and occupational health records to be maintained across healthcare providers from all sectors as this system tracks the health of individuals over time, irrespective of healthcare provider, geographical location, or source of healthcare funding, and takes into consideration medical confidentiality and ethics principles.

Dr Basil Dhaniram's presentation titled 'Assessment of Fitness to Work: Clinical Decision Making', discussed the role and functions of the occupational medicine practitioner as outlined in the SASOM Guidelines, including the design of risk-based medical surveillance programmes, essential components of medical examinations, and fitness for duty criteria.

Ms Claudina Nogueira presented on 'Occupational Health Training', and gave an overview of the collaboration between SASOM and FPD, and progress to date, in terms of the development and presentation of training programmes in the form of

short courses and seminars for healthcare workers, based on the SASOM Guidelines.

Prof. Daan Kocks delivered a presentation on the history and current status of SASOM, a professional society registered as a special interest group with SAMA, and affiliated to the International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH), with the main aim of advancing the occupational medicine discipline in South Africa, and building global bonds for the benefit of its members.

SASOM representation at the Department of Labour's Occupational Health and Safety Conference

The DoL's Occupational Health and Safety Conference was held on 15 to 17 October 2016 at the Lakes Hotel in Benoni, Gauteng, with the theme 'Sustaining Occupational Health and Safety within the Small, Medium and Micro-sized Enterprises (SMME) Environment through Innovative Solutions'. The DoL invited SASOM to participate. Ms Claudina Nogueira represented SASOM and presented on behalf of the SASOM Chair, Prof. Daan Kocks, on the topic 'Sustainable Occupational Health Services for the South African Labour Market'.

SASOM representation at the official celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the National Institute for Occupational Health

SASOM was invited to attend the official celebration of the 60th anniversary of the National Institute for Occupational Health (NIOH) on 30 November 2016. Dr Murray Coombs represented SASOM and participated in a tripartite panel discussion on 'The recalcitrant employer: what are our ethical responsibilities?'

SASOM Programme 2017

The two-day SASOM Annual Conference will take place in mid-June 2017; dates and venue to be confirmed.

Report by:

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Seen and heard at the SASOM event: Presenters, Session Chairs, Society Chairs and Fellow Frenchmen – L to R: Dr Philippe Casanova (Thales, France), Dr Jan Pienaar, Ms Lyndsey Swart, Dr André Kotzé, Ms Kim Davies, Prof. Daan Kocks, Ms Judy Hendra, Dr Basil Dhaniram, Dr Steve Goosen, Dr André Louw, Ms Claudina Nogueira