

# Message from the SASOM Chair

## SASOM ACTIVITIES

At the Department of Labour's (DoL) Occupational Health Forum quarterly meeting held on 14 February 2018, various issues were discussed, including the recommendation for occupational health service providers to be made public via DoL platforms. The meeting was attended by representatives of the three sister organisations: The South African Society of Occupational Medicine (SASOM) (Daan Kocks, Adriaan Combrinck, Jenny Sapire, Funeka Ngcakani); the South African Society of Occupational Health Nursing Practitioners (SASOHN) (Denise Minnie, Kim Davies, Trudie Oates, Lindie Jansen van Rensburg, Karen Michell); and the Southern African Institute for Occupational Hygiene (SAIOH) (Jaco Pieterse). Dr Lucas Mosidi, representative from the DoL Compensation Fund, also attended. On 16 February 2018, Daan Kocks (SASOM) and Kim Davies (SASOHN) met with DoL representatives to discuss recommended changes for the Hazardous Biological Agents (HBA) regulations. SASOM and SASOHN have been reviewing the recommendations for changes to the regulations (in terms of requirements for occupational health service providers) as a combined effort, to inform labour and employers, via the DoL. The meeting was also attended by representatives from the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) of the National Health Laboratory Service (NHLS), and the Hospersa union.

The first meeting of the year of the SASOM Executive Committee was held on 13 February. Prof. Mary Ross (SASOM lifetime member) represented SASOM at the annual *Occupational Health Southern Africa* Presidents' meeting on 16 February 2018.

## HELLO AND GOODBYE: PASSING THE BATON

After close to 15 years of dedicated service to SASOM, Ms Jenny Acutt, in her capacity of Project Coordinator at the SASOM National Office, will be retiring officially. Jenny, an occupational health nurse by training, has managed the SASOM National Office very competently for many years, and



**The end of an era is the beginning of a new chapter: Ms Jenny Acutt (left) retires officially as the SASOM National Office Project Coordinator and passes the baton to Ms Margarethie Bredenkamp, her successor. SASOM wishes both ladies much success in their respective future endeavours** *Photograph: Daan Kocks*

has been responsible for much of the behind-the-scenes work that is required to ensure the smooth running of day-to-day tasks, the maintenance of the membership database, and the SASOM special projects, such as the administration required for the SASOM guidelines and communication with members, the annual congresses, the meetings of the SASOM Executive Committee, and the SASOM Annual General Meetings and Academic Days. Jenny has been an active and enthusiastic SASOM promoter and supporter who has lectured to many Diploma in Occupational Health students at various tertiary institutions over the years.

SASOM has appointed Ms Margarethie Bredenkamp as the successor to Jenny, from 1 March 2018. Margarethie has extensive experience in all aspects of office management and administration, project management and budgeting, and a good working knowledge of procedures and protocols (national and international) across sectors. An economist by qualification, Margarethie has worked for the Departments of Trade and Industry, National Treasury, and as a consultant for the Global Growth Green Trust and the Climate Resilient Infrastructure Development Programme.

Jenny will continue to be employed as a SASOM contractor, to ensure a smooth transition in the SASOM office, and to assist and support Margarethie with her on-boarding to the SASOM office tasks, procedures and responsibilities.

SASOM takes this opportunity to thank Jenny for her invaluable contribution to the success and sustainability of the Society and her dedication to her work over many years, and welcomes Margarethie as the new SASOM Project Coordinator, wishing her a successful and rewarding career at SASOM.

## SASOM MEMBERSHIP FEES 2018 AND NEW OFFICE HOURS

SASOM members are reminded that their membership fees for 2018 are due, as per invoices sent in December 2017. Members are asked to please ensure that SASOM has their correct contact details to secure receipt of all issues of *Occupational Health Southern Africa*, the subscription of which is included in the annual membership fee.

Please note that, from 1 March 2018, the office hours of the SASOM National Office are 08:00-13:00 daily.

## SAVE THE DATE – SASOM ANNUAL CONGRESS 2018

SASOM is pleased to announce that this year's Annual Congress will take place on 22 and 23 June 2018, at the Protea Hotel by Marriott, ORTI Airport, Kempton Park. The theme of the Congress is 'Occupational Health – Looking back to move forward: Old lessons inform solutions for new issues'. The congress programme is under development, and we will keep members informed of progress.

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