



From the Editor . . .



**Gill Nelson,
Editor-in-Chief**

Welcome to the start of another new year, and our 25th volume of *Occupational Health Southern Africa*. In continually striving to improve the Journal, we introduce new improved aspects at the start of each year. In 2017, we stopped the practice of including sponsors' advertisements on the same pages as the scientific papers. In 2018,

you will have noticed that we introduced continuous page numbering, starting at page 1 in the Jan/Feb issue, and ending on page 203 in the Nov/Dec issue. This year, we require that all research papers include a list of contributions from the authors. All these changes are in line with international norms, and are in preparation for our application for international recognition of *Occupational Health Southern Africa*. As most of you know, the Journal is already accredited with the Department of Higher Education and Training. Accreditation, once achieved, is not for life; we need to adhere to a high standard to maintain our status, and reapply to the administering body every five years.

This issue is packed with news, reports and research. We also feature Karen Michell, the longest-serving Editorial Board member since the Journal started, and celebrate her personal and professional achievements.

SAIOH and SASOHN members feature strongly in this issue. Derk Brouwer and colleagues from the University of the Witwatersrand discuss the differences (and similarities) between occupational hygiene and exposure science. This is particularly relevant as Wits has introduced a new MSc in Exposure Science this year. Not to be outdone, research colleagues from North-West University present a technical review of six inhalable aerosol samplers. We hope that this will generate discussion amongst our SAIOH members (and other occupational hygienists). Only a step away from

inhalable exposures, Muthelo and her fellow researchers have taken a slightly different tack with regard to noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL), by asking mine workers and hearing conservation programme managers about their perceptions with regard to factors that cause the impairment. Disappointingly, the original NIHL-related milestones set by the Mine Health and Safety Council were not met, by a long shot. We hope that the targets set for 2024 are more realistically achievable.

SASOM, SASOHN and SAIOH continue to provide members and non-members alike with interesting news and reports of past events. It is encouraging to the occupational health community that the Societies are growing – in member numbers, the quality and quantity of scientific meetings, and international participation.

Finally, I would like to draw your early attention to an international conference that will be held in Durban in May 2020. The 7th International Conference on the History of Occupational and Environmental Health will be hosted by the University of KwaZulu-Natal (see our Events page for contact details). This gives you ample time to prepare abstracts for submission to what promises to be a fascinating event, especially if some of our country's more senior occupational health practitioners agree to come out of retirement for a brief period and share both their knowledge and memories. South Africa has led the world in many aspects of occupational health, stemming primarily from the long-standing interest of occupational health practitioners in mining-related diseases. There is also a growing occupational health community across Africa – we therefore look forward to strong participation from our continent.

On behalf of the *Occupational Health Southern Africa* team, I wish you a productive and exciting 2019.