

Farewell to Karen Michell

Dr Karen Michell, PhD, Fellow of the Academy of Nursing of South Africa, South African Society of Occupational Health Nursing Practitioners (SASOHN) Honorary Life Member, South African Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (Saiosh) member, and Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Consultant at Concept Safety Systems, recently resigned from the Editorial Board (EB) of *Occupational Health Southern Africa*. Karen is the longest-serving member of the Board, having been nominated in 2001. When she began, she was, in her words, “a novice with limited understanding of the process required to take a scientific manuscript from submission to publication”. She counts herself as fortunate to have worked with two editors at this early time – Dr Fiona Robinson and Dr Linda Grainger – who served as mentors, and helped her to appreciate the hard work that goes into the publication of a peer-reviewed paper. This was at a time when the Journal had no academic accreditation and the Board wanted to change this. The change included the need to engage with a publisher who shared our vision of attaining academic accreditation. Karen was instrumental in engaging Kevin Beaumont from Technique who remains the Journal’s publishing partner (although he moved away from Technique and now has his own publishing company, MettaMedia).

As the Journal is the official mouthpiece of SASOHN and three other professional Societies, namely the Southern African Institute for Occupational Hygiene (SAIOH), the South African Society of Occupational Medicine (SASOM) and the Mine Medical Professionals Association (MMPA), Karen encouraged occupational health nurses to write and submit scientific papers, based on their research, to the Journal. A motivational initiative was the introduction of the SASOHN award to the occupational health



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nursing practitioner (OHNP) judged as having the best published paper in the Journal during a prescribed 12-month period. There have been a number of recipients of this award, and Karen was herself honoured with the award on two occasions.

Another of Karen’s initiatives was the implementation of a writing skills workshop for OHNPs. The workshop objective was to encourage and promote writing within this professional group. A few papers did emerge as a result of this workshop but it has sadly not yielded the desired number of publications.

Representing SASOHN as a Board member has been a challenge in many respects. Karen’s biggest challenge was to fulfil her EB duties while completing her doctoral degree. We are very proud to announce that she graduated from the University of the Witwatersrand with a PhD in December 2018.

In her farewell message to the EB, Karen said, “I wish to thank all the Board members with whom I have served over the years, for their support and friendship on both a professional and personal level. It has been a period of significant change in the Journal, including the ongoing quality improvement and the professional recognition through academic accreditation. I am a true believer that it is only we, as professionals, who can improve the recognition of our professions, and the Journal is a very positive vehicle for this growth. I wish Gill Nelson, Editor-in-Chief, and the Board, success with all future endeavours in enhancing the Journal’s academic status.”

In return, the *Occupational Health Southern Africa* team wishes Karen a successful and happy future. She has been one of the most productive Board members that we have had, and her boundless knowledge, energy, and enthusiasm for occupational health will be greatly missed.

2018 Reviewers

We are most grateful to our reviewers for their evaluation and guidance on articles that are submitted to the Journal. As always, we acknowledge this contribution by listing those who assisted in 2018. Their names and countries are listed below, in alphabetical order.

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