



SASOHN KZN Coastal region

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The South African Society of Occupational Health Nursing Practitioners (SASOHN) has 10 regions or branches across the country, which promote occupational health nursing through their activities, monthly meetings, and projects. In KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), SASOHN has three regions, one of which is KZN Coastal, located along the coast, which captures members extending from KwaDukuza (Stanger) to Port Shepstone.

Monthly meetings

KZN Coastal region has monthly regional meetings with its members and its regional committee, which is responsible for the activities in the region. Speakers from various organisations or institutions address the members on any interesting topics pertaining to occupational health or any other relevant trending or interesting topics, mainly guided by the National Department of Health calendar. Meetings are usually held at the Umkumbaan Hall in Mayville, but during the COVID-19 pandemic, meetings have been virtual via Zoom or Microsoft Teams. These virtual monthly meetings have resulted in an increase in members' attendance. The 2021 programme for KZN Coastal region is detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. KZN Coastal region 2021 programme

Date	Topic
Tuesday, 16 March 2021	COVID vaccine training
Tuesday, 13 April 2021	How to process an NIHL claim
Tuesday, 11 May 2021	Managing an obese client in an occupational health setting
Tuesday, 8 June 2021	Substance abuse in the workplace
Wednesday, 13 July 2021	Workshop: health risk assessment
Tuesday, 10 August 2021	Enriching the soul and mind
Tuesday, 14 September 2021	Annual general meeting
Wednesday, 13 October 2021	Traditional medicines in the workplace

Annual regional workshop

The region will be holding its annual workshop in July, which will be virtual, as a highlight of the year. The proposed topics will be related to risk assessment, occupational risk exposure profile (OREP), and medical surveillance. Invitations for the event will be shared widely and the event will provide an opportunity for exhibitors to attend,

display goods, and engage with practitioners who use their products on a daily basis.

Community project

Every region in SASOHN has an ongoing community project of its choice, which members support and to which they contribute. The KZN Coastal region has a shoe project, which started in 2019, where school shoes and socks are donated to an underprivileged primary school in Kingsburgh. The school is situated in Illovo township, just outside Amanzimtoti, and has approximately 1 500 learners. In 2019, the KZN Coastal region donated 50 pairs of shoes and socks to needy children at the school. This event was attended by the principal and staff of the school, and the SASOHN KZN Coastal Committee. The project will continue in 2021. The region would like to expand on the project and increase donations. All donations towards this very noble project will be welcome.

Projects

- The KZN Coastal region was part of the KZN occupational health task team, headed by Prof. Rajen Naidoo from the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The main objective of the task team was to bring together relevant stakeholders to provide expertise in occupational health during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The region was also involved in the Small Workplaces occupational health support project, also headed by Prof. Rajen Naidoo. The objective was to assist small companies, that do not have the occupational health facilities, with expertise and information regarding safety, occupational health, and compliance during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Currently, the KZN Coastal Committee and the KZN Provincial Department of Health: eThekweni Occupational Health Division are in discussion to facilitate the COVID-19 vaccine training, which will enable our occupational health facilities to be vaccine sites.
- The region is working closely with the Durban University of Technology (DUT) as the only institution that has been accredited by the South African Nursing Council (SANC) to offer a Postgraduate Diploma in Occupational Health Nursing Science in KwaZulu-Natal province. The occupational health nurses in the region are committed to assisting students in the programme with opportunities for experiential learning.