

Mere Pharmacy: The Heart of Pharmacy

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Dear young pharmacist

As we navigate the early stages of our careers, many of us are confronted with the stark realities of the pharmacy profession in South Africa. Our field, rich with potential, is challenged by high unemployment rates, limited opportunities, and, at times, a culture of complacency. Amid these challenges, we are reminded of the profound responsibility we bear: the task of safeguarding health and well-being in our communities.

According to the **South African Pharmacy Council (SAPC)**, there are approximately 24 000 registered pharmacists in South Africa. Yet, many of our peers are grappling with unemployment, searching for roles that allow them to contribute meaningfully to healthcare (SAPC, 2020). This statistic is more than a personal struggle for those affected; it represents a collective challenge for our profession to fulfil its potential.

Beyond the counter: Our higher calling

We must ask ourselves: are we satisfied with simply dispensing medications, or do we aspire to something greater? As pharmacists, we are educators, advocates, and guardians of health. Every interaction we have with patients is an opportunity to make a lasting impact. The Guidelines for Good Pharmacy Practice (GPP) urge us to be “committed to the well-being of patients” (SAPC, 2019), a principle that should drive us to embrace our roles with passion, purpose, and determination.

Now is the time to shed complacency and reignite our commitment to excellence. By stepping into our roles with confidence and purpose, we can propel our profession forward and ensure that the contributions of pharmacists are valued and recognised within the healthcare system.

United advocacy: Amplifying our voice

One of our most powerful tools as young pharmacists is collective advocacy. When we unite, our voices become stronger, and our impact more profound. Advocacy can take many forms—campaigning for fair employment practices, equitable pharmacist-to-patient ratios, or greater integration within the healthcare team. The **National Health Act of 2003** highlights the importance of pharmacists within the healthcare system, but it is up to us to ensure this recognition is realised in practice (National Health Act, 2003).

Together, we can reframe the role of pharmacists as essential partners in healthcare, not merely as dispensers of medication but as integral contributors to patient outcomes. By sharing our stories, promoting the incredible work being done in our profession, and advocating for the changes we need, we can transform perceptions and unlock new opportunities.



Building a Vibrant Community

The **Young Pharmacists Group (YPG)** of the **Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa (PSSA)** offers a platform for us to connect, share experiences, and support one another. Whether you're facing unemployment or seeking ways to elevate your practice amidst challenges, we want to hear your voice. Let's explore solutions together and create a vibrant community that uplifts and empowers every young pharmacist.

Imagine a future where pharmacists are respected for their expertise, valued for their contributions, and seen as vital partners in healthcare. This vision is within our reach, but it demands action. Start by sharing your thoughts, challenges, and ideas with us—your feedback is essential to our growth as a profession. Connect with us via our social media pages and through the PSSA YPG directly at ypg@pssa.org.za - include "YPG" and your email topic.

The PSSA and the PSSA YPG are committed to supporting and promoting the profession of pharmacy in improving medication use and advancing patient care. Together, we can redefine the essence of our profession and shape a brighter future for pharmacy in South Africa.

Thank you for your dedication to the communities you serve. Let us inspire change, uplift each other, and drive our profession forward. The time to act is now. Join the conversation, share your experiences, and become a catalyst for progress.

In unity and purpose

PSSA YPG

Website	Facebook	Instagram	LinkedIn
www.pssa.org.za/young-pharmacists-group	Young Pharmacists' Group of PSSA	@pssaypg	Young Pharmacists' Group of the PSSA.
			

Feel free to reach out to us at | Email: ypg@pssa.org.za | Facebook: Young Pharmacists' Group of PSSA | Instagram: @pssaypg
Young pharmacists – connected, engaged, empowered and inspired!