



President's Message

One profession, many roles: Celebrating unity and purpose in South African pharmacy

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PSSA President

Each September, our profession unites to celebrate Pharmacy Month. This year's theme, *"Think Health, Think Pharmacy – One Profession, Many Roles"*, served as a reminder of the vital contribution pharmacists make to healthcare in South Africa.

The enthusiasm in the weeks leading up to Pharmacy Month was remarkable. Across hospitals, community pharmacies, universities, and industry settings, pharmacists and pharmacy students organised creative and meaningful initiatives. It was especially encouraging to witness young pharmacists and students stepping forward as leaders. Their passion, innovation, and dedication bring new energy and purpose to our profession. To every pharmacist, pharmacist's assistant, and pharmacy student who took part: your efforts have once again showcased the breadth and excellence of pharmacy practice in our country.

Among the most encouraging developments this year was the emergence of a spirit of unity. Though we work in diverse settings, academia, industry, hospitals, community practice, regulation, and research, we share a common mission: ensuring the safe and effective use of medicines while advancing the health of our communities. We are truly one profession with many roles, each equally valuable and mutually reinforcing. Together, we form the backbone of a healthcare system that strives to be accessible, dependable, and patient-centred.

Our recent Annual General Meeting and Conference reinforced this sense of collective purpose. The gathering brought together authentic voices of pharmacists serving real communities and addressing genuine challenges. We heard accounts of dedication, resilience, and meaningful impact. On Women's Day, we had the privilege of learning from extraordinary women leading change in their fields. Their perspectives and lived experiences underscored not only the strength and compassion within our ranks but also the critical importance of inclusivity and collaboration in shaping pharmacy's

future. The atmosphere was electric, and the respectful engagement of all attendees reminded us that meaningful progress emerges from listening, learning, and working together.

As we reflect on the past year, we can take pride in what we have achieved as a profession, yet we are reminded that our work is far from done. The coming year invites us to build on this momentum with renewed purpose. Guided by the PSSA's mission to serve the needs and interests of pharmacists and to promote the profession for the benefit of society, 2026 presents an opportunity to deepen our collective impact. We will continue strengthening collaboration across sectors, advocating for a healthcare system that fully recognises the pharmacist's contribution to universal health coverage, and ensuring that our voice remains strong in shaping policies on public health, patient safety, and rational medicine use. Above all, let us commit to supporting one another, mentoring future leaders, and advancing the values of excellence, integrity, and unity that define our profession.

On a personal level, I look forward to continuing my studies in law, with a focus on health as a human right, a principle that lies at the heart of what we do as pharmacists. Access to healthcare, safe medicines, and equitable treatment are not privileges; they are rights. As we move into 2026, I challenge each of us to reflect: what will you focus on in 2026? How will you contribute to advancing our shared vision of a healthier South Africa through pharmacy?

As this year comes to a close, I wish to extend my deepest gratitude to every member of the pharmacy family for your dedication, compassion, and steadfast service to patients and communities. Though your work often occurs without fanfare or recognition, its impact resonates profoundly.

May the festive season offer you rest, reflection, and renewed energy for the year ahead. I wish you peace, good health, and joy during this holiday season.