



## Presidential report

**Tshifhiwa Rabali**

PSSA President

The past few months have been busy ones for the Society. One of the issues that we as PSSA have to address is the number of pharmacists who are unemployed after completing their community service. Our members who are not employed will have to come forward so that we can be able to seek clarity from the government. The number of unemployed pharmacists is increasing year after year, and we have advised them to come forward so that we can help to look at solutions, particularly those who are members of the Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa.

### SAPHEX 13-14 March 2024

The SAPHEX exhibition was held at the Sandton Convention Centre and as in previous years, the PSSA and its sectors were present. It was a watershed moment as FIP also had a stand, advertising their upcoming congress in Cape Town. All the speakers in our sessions were of high quality with emphasis on our scope of practice which is very wide. We also had good interactions with our colleagues from different stakeholders. This year's SAPHEX exhibition was more on the 4<sup>th</sup> industrial revolution as most of the exhibitors were showcasing the latest technologies in the health and pharmaceutical industry.

FIP held a reception for the exhibitors on 13 March and PSSA, as FIP member and host organisation on the African continent, was given the opportunity to say something. I, as the President of the Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa, spoke at the reception. It was an opportunity for me to market and give details on who we are as PSSA and pharmacists in general. I would like to urge our members and non-members to attend this memorable congress that will be the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress of the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) to be held in South Africa and will benefit the African continent as a whole. The PSSA, as the local host, will do everything in its power

to support this event to ensure that the whole pharmaceutical profession attends this once in a lifetime event.

### Medicines to Africa

Medicines to Africa is an initiative that will assist countries in Africa to obtain medicines and medical supplies should they experience a disaster. This issue is being addressed as the PSSA has a different opinion in as far as the memorandum of understanding (MOU) is concerned. A meeting was held with ICPA and a decision was taken that a committee will be formed in order to look at the wording of the MOU so as to include pharmacists in the document, as this was not the case in the previously signed MOU. A letter was also sent to FIP about these concerns and a meeting with them will be happening soon. The PSSA does not want to be associated with an initiative that excludes pharmacists from overseeing the procuring and distributing of medicines to other countries in need.

### Mentorship programme

This programme has been running for some time now and the National Executive Committee of the PSSA has agreed that the current Honorary Treasurer can mentor those who are interested in being elected as Honorary Treasurer in the future. Branches are encouraged to elect their candidates and send the names to the national office. All branches are also encouraged to continue supporting the mentorship programme so that our YPG members continue to benefit from it.

Lastly, as PSSA we will continue to engage with government on the issue of community service placements of pharmacists and the challenges experienced in previous years.