



MINUTES OF THE 47th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE PHYSIOLOGY SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA, HOSTED BY WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY (WSU), EAST LONDON, 19 AUGUST 2019.

Members present: MF Essop, B Sishi, K Erlwanger, IM Mackraj, E Umapathy, Mrs Umapathy, M Blignaupt, B Skosana, B Huisamen, N Muhammad, R Tladi, M Gomes, KC Motshoane, NM Gumede, TP Dladla, M Pipedi-Tshekiso, M Maseko, MS Seloka, WM Dibalwane, MR Mlwana, M Gondwe, E Ndebia, CR Rusike, KS Peterson-Ross, YSL Powrie, IL Mentoor, P Ngubane, A Khathi, A Akimnuga, AM Sosibo, M Maseko, MM Sekhotha, BC Mkhize, KH Myburgh, M van Staden, L Erasmus, S Rouz, H Davids, V Thaver, G Dealtry, P Mabeta, N Ramoshaba, AV Namugowa, NO Shibe, SI Hadebe, P Mosili, ND Xulu, B Mbatha, HT Musarurwa, MM Shauli, YY Stofile, T Nyundu, NS Nyathi, MG Matumba, E Mukwevho, A Ayeleso, T Nyakudya, A Siboto, CM Baloyi (60 members).

- 1. Welcome by Faadiel Essop (MFE)**
- 2. Apologies received: Prof. William Daniels, Dr Aletta Millen, Dr Wayne Smith**
- 3. Approval of minutes of the previous meeting [HOSTED JOINTLY BY THE APSSA, PSSA, SAALAS, SASBCP, SANS AND TOXSA SOCIETIES (CoBNeST), SPIER WINE ESTATE, 8 OCTOBER 2018]. The AGM accepted the minutes.**
- 4. Additional items / Matters arising elsewhere on the Agenda**

4.1. None

5. Secretary/Treasurer's report – Dr Balindiwe Sishi (BS)

BS provided feedback on the financials. Audits have been initiated. The current ABSA account has a positive balance of R 51 578.36. Expenditure was allocated to the CoBNeST conference, website design, PSSA prizes and travel support for students, PSSA lapel pins as well as the auditors. BS also provided feedback on

the SATRIX investment account (R 242 063.16) and the profit made from the CoBNeST 2018 conference (R0.00). In addition, the PSSA partners (Axiology Labs and BiocomAfrica) sponsored all the PSSA prizes including travel grants for the 2019 congress (WSU). Membership fees have not been changed, i.e. R100 for students, R200 for postdocs and R400 for academic/technical staff. A membership number of 136 delegates was noted of which generated R28 500 towards PSSA income. The AGM accepted the financial report.

6. Presidents report – Prof Faadiel (MFE)

MFE provided a synopsis of some highlights of his terms as President beginning in 2013.

- Strategic initiatives were implemented to include benefits for membership, strengthen and empowerment of society, increasing visibility and the society's financial base.
- A PSSA website (<https://physiolsoc.org.za/>) and new society logo was also established during this time.
- An online database of equipment from various participating institutes was established (<https://physiolsoc.org.za/resources/pssa-database/>). Although three institutions are currently represented, an urgent call for other universities to submit their equipment was made.
- MFE also indicated and acknowledged the contribution of the PSSA partners (Axiology Labs and BiocomAfrica) over the years towards PSSA student travel and awards □ R 64 000.
- The PSSA launched new awards in addition to the already existing awards (for example: best scientific paper, best general poster, young investigator and the newly initiated Koeslag Human Integrative Endocrinology award).
- MFE revealed The Legacy Project. With the assistance of KHM and Jurgen Kriel, this project entailed a history of where the society comes from and where the society is currently. This includes previous presidents of the society (<https://physiolsoc.org.za/us/history/>), past winners of the main competitions (Wyndham and Jonny van der Walt competitions) (<https://physiolsoc.org.za/resources/previous-pssa-winners/>), previous minutes and the very first PSSA constitution (<https://physiolsoc.org.za/resources/pssa-documents/>). While there is still some missing information, the PSSA community was once again urged to contribute towards the completion of this project.
- Over the years links were firmly established between the PSSA and other societies where workshops, symposia and joint conferences were held. These include: African Association of Physiological Sciences (**AAPS**), South African Neurosciences Society (**SANS**), Mitochondrial Physiology Society, Indian

Ocean Rim Colloquium (**IORC**) and the South African Society for Cardiovascular Research (**SASCAR**).

- MFE provided some positive comments from delegates who attended the first Conference of Biomedical and Natural Sciences and Therapeutics (CoBNeST). PSSA hosted this conference with five other societies which included the Academy of Pharmaceutical Sciences (**APSSA**), South African Neurosciences Society (**SANS**), Toxicology Society of South Africa (**TOXSA**), South African Association for Laboratory Animal Sciences (**SAALAS**) and South African Society for Basic and Clinical Pharmacology (**SASBCP**).
- As part of the President's term, he served together with the first council member from Botswana (Ms Mary Pipedi-Tshekiso) and the first student representative (Ms Mari du Toit - UFS).
- MFE commented on the PSSA investment (reserve funds). Initially funds were invested in a conservative SANLAM investment fund (2016 – R167 809), which was then switched to a more progressive SATRIX investment (2017 – R 190 000). Since then the investment has gained interest and currently stands at R 242 063.16 (2019).
- MFE indicated that the society should continue building partnerships with our PSSA partners who have previously been involved in the young scientist's session and at this year's conference who participated in the undergraduate session.

Going forward, MFE indicated the following regarding the revitalisation of the PSSA not only for academics but also for the students:

- Extending the invitation of PSSA membership to Southern African countries
- The feasibility of hosting of future PSSA conferences outside South Africa
- The costs related to hosting PSSA conferences
- Extension of the database – contribution from other universities
- The relevance of the PSSA newsletter in the age of social media
- Can we increase membership number beyond what it currently is (136)?
- Having lost LASEC as a sponsor for the LASEC award, Axiology could potentially take over and sponsor this award (to be followed up by new leadership).
- NPO registration: due to numerous requests from various universities requesting the PSSA to become a vendor so that membership dues can be paid using research funds, this requires the PSSA to be registered as a Non-Profit Organization. This may require amendments to current PSSA constitution. The PSSA auditors may assist in this regard (to be followed up by new leadership).
- MFE asked whether we can continue growing the PSSA reserve funds?

7. PSSA 2020 – Prof Kennedy Erlwanger (KE)

KE provided a brief update on the organization of the 2020 conference that will be jointly hosted by WITS and UJ along with the African Association of Physiological Sciences (AAPS). The conference will take place either at the Crown Plaza or the Wanderers Hotel (to be confirmed) between the 22-27 August 2020. This conference will include a pre-congress workshop involving either Axiology Labs and/or ADI instruments. Approximately 250 delegates are expected. The PSSA community can assist by (i) spreading the news, (ii) suggesting activities, (iii) suggesting potential speakers and (iv) sponsors.

8. Prof Koeslag Award – Prof Kathy Myburgh (KHM)

In honour of Prof Koeslag, KHM provided a brief history of Prof Koeslag's teaching, research and his contribution to the PSSA.

- Prof Koeslag designed the very first PSSA logo (1990) - 'Adam receiving the spark of human life in the cradle of Africa'
- He served as President of the society between 2001-2004
- He authored numerous publications focused on 'whole body' physiology including endocrinology, homeostasis, human applied and integrative physiology, as well as teaching, learning and examinations
- He was a stalwart teacher of Physiology

This award, known as the award for ***Human Integrative Endocrinology*** could be initiated at the current conference (2019-WSU) in addition to the other PSSA awards for students. The following ***guidelines for inclusion and exclusion criteria*** were discussed:

- Level: MSc and PhDs

KHM asked whether postdocs should be included. I Mackraj indicated yes due to the fact that postdocs are at a senior, mature level and are at their peak. As this is a prestigious award, they should be allowed to enter the competition. Moreover, it was indicated that should there be no deserving winner, the award can stand over to the following year.

- Must be an oral presentation
- There should be clear elements of integration and aspects of human physiology measurements in the presentation

- The award could also be made for teaching and learning as Prof Koeslag played a big role in this regard as well

Other criteria that were considered:

- Presenter must have had research interaction with the human volunteers
- Clear involvement in the recruitment strategy and implementation
- Hands-on testing and/or sample collection
- Clear identification of proportion of involvement in the methodology (if not the majority, then the majority for the specific ‘storyline’)

Exclusion Criteria:

- The majority of the data is from a database or gathered by a more senior level of researcher
- No specific and significant element of new data

The following format for submission should accompany the abstract:

Must apply ahead of the time with the abstract if want to be considered for the prize.
In addition to abstract – submit a short motivation for the award AND the following explanatory statements:

- A.** In relation to both “involvement” AND “support” explain role in:
- Gaining ethical approval or ethics addendum for the study
 - Recruitment of the human volunteers
 - Precise explanation of (A) above
- B.** Type of study: Free-standing; follow-on; part of larger study; teaching study
- If a free-standing study, who assisted you with what and how.
 - If a free-standing study, but a follow-on from a previous student/researcher; which data is from the first primary student investigator’s work and where does the presenter’s involvement in data collection start
 - If a part of a large study, explain precisely what data is from database or shared; what was the primary role of the presenter in data collection
 - Explain members of the researcher team
 - If teaching study – clearly explain the bullet points above
- C.** Statistical analysis and/or central analytical facilities
- Explain support given; e.g. if a statistics centre was used for larger data sets or ‘difficult’ data sets

9. PSSA council election

Four vacancies were indicated for members of council.

- Nominations for **Student Representative**: M Mathuba (NW) and K Motshoane (WITS). M Mathuba was elected and welcomed by the president.
- Nominations for **member of council**: V Thaver (UJ) was elected unopposed and was elected and welcomed by the president.
- Nominations for **Secretary/Treasurer**: A Khathi (UKZN) was elected unopposed and welcomed by the president.
- Nominations for **President**: IM Mackraj (UKZN), M Maseko (WITS). M Maseko was elected and welcomed by the former president.

M Sekhotha suggested that the PSSA revisit the constitution regarding how many consecutive terms an individual and president can serve on the council.

There being no further business, the AGM was adjourned.

20 August 2019 – Brief meeting held with delegates to discuss future PSSA conferences

After some discussion it was agreed that PSSA congresses for next few years would be organized as follows:

PSSA conferences 2020-2023

- 2020 – WITS and University of Johannesburg (UJ)
- 2021 – University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN)
- 2022 – University of Limpopo (UL)
- 2023 – Nelson Mandela University (NMU)

Please note that the secretary/treasurer (BS) observed a typographical error in the 2018 minutes. The error related to the congress number. The minutes indicated **47th** annual general meeting instead of **46th** annual general meeting.