

## CIRCULATION

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## JOURNAL POLICY

SA Family Practice is published monthly by the SA Academy of Family Practice/Primary Care. It offers a voice to local family practice, placing original contributions from the research of family practitioners/primary health care workers as a priority. It aims at stimulating original research amongst family practitioners. The length of articles should preferably not exceed 2 000 words. References should be used in SA Family Practice according to the Vancouver system. Three copies of a contribution, typed in double spacing, should be submitted. Articles will be sent to expert referees before acceptance for publication. The journal also has an update or continuing education section, placing review articles that take cognizance of the information needs and frames of reference of primary health care clinicians. SA Family Practice further serves as the mouthpiece of the Academy. As such, meetings are reported on, along with other news. Special topics are discussed in Forum, and future events are published.

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ISSN 1025-1979

# editorial

## GRAHAMSTOWN

It is Congress time. We are in Grahamstown for the 10th Family Practitioners' Congress from 8-12 September.

The Congress is about CARING for South Africa and all our population. The theme depicts the family practitioner/general practitioner as the constant carer.

We have a problem though. People are ambivalent about our caring. We get bad press, hear horrendous stories at parties, funders complain about us and many in high places are more concerned about creating a career path for medical officers than about planning seriously for a coherent family practitioner service for the country. On the other hand most people speak kindly about their GP.

To be able to care for others we need to have experienced being cared for ourselves. The time has come for those who fund or employ us to make sure that we are cared for. People who spend most of their energy thinking about their own survival have little left to care with outside of themselves. To feel cared for we in family practice need a clear place in the primary health care sun. We need sound vocational training, a quality improvement and CME system and adequate remuneration.

These things are achievable if we work for them ourselves. Our problem, however, is that the political divides of the past still operate within our ranks. We will remain a neglected group until we have one academic body for family practice to which the majority of us belong. We will then, in all likelihood, be able to negotiate successfully for our own care and be able to turn our full attention to those whose care has been entrusted to us.

## PRETORIA

Back in Pretoria things are changing hands. This is my last editorial of *SA Family Practice*. From next month our new editor will be Roy Jobson, also from Pretoria, who has worked with me on this edition. The Academy executive has appointed him as the interim editor until the post is advertised and filled on a permanent basis. I wish him great success and support from you, our valued reader. The years I have spent as editor have been very happy and fulfilling ones. In future I will be serving as the editor of the *SA Family Practice Manual* as Manfred Teichler is unable to continue with the excellent work he has done in building up the *Manual* over the years.

I want to thank all those who have served on the editorial board, those who have written for us, the faithful readers of our journal and the advertisers for their support. I'm not leaving, but merely moving next door!