



The College of Medicine of South Africa

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FACULTY OF GENERAL PRACTICE (Cape of Good Hope Region)

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Dr G. Davie
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Dear George

The appearance of Family Practice/Huisartspraktijk represents an important step in the advancement of general practice in this country. For several years the Faculty of General Practice of the College of Medicine of South Africa has published newsletters which have provided a forum for its members. However, the time has arrived for a journal which is broader in scope and appeal. Hopefully this journal will receive the support of all who wish to raise the standard of general practice in South Africa, not least the university department of family medicine.

Academic general practice has had a struggle for recognition in this country. With a few notable exceptions medical schools have been reluctant to accept family medicine as an academic discipline to be included in the undergraduate curriculum. Moreover we have had little support from government and the medical establishment for the concept of vocational training in our field. Thus we have largely been dependent on our own resources and our own efforts. This new journal offers a valuable opportunity

to educate ourselves and to enlighten the medical establishment.

Traditional medical training has led to the belief that general practice is the sum of multiple medical disciplines. In fact it is the integration of these disciplines in the care of our patients that is unique to our field. To this must be added the knowledge, skills and attitudes inherent in the concepts of primary, personal, holistic and continuing care. In addition, general practice has a special contribution to make in the understanding of the doctor-patient relationship.

In addition to the struggle for academic recognition and our efforts to raise the standards of general practice there is a further important challenge. This is the need to provide sound primary care for all the peoples of this country. In this respect we have an important contribution to make and medical planners would be well advised to consult us if they hope to provide a satisfactory service that is acceptable to those they wish to serve. Family Practice/Huisarts will provide the opportunity for discussion and constructive suggestions in this important field.

On behalf of the Faculty of General Practice, I wish the new journal every success. Hopefully it will be a landmark in the progress of family medicine in our country.

Yours sincerely
DR BASIL JAFFE