
Tribute: Douw GS Greeff

6 November 1974 - 11 November 2014

It was with deep sadness that we mourned the sudden departure to the great beyond of Dr Douw Greeff, who was the director of Medpharm Publications. Medpharm is a medical and pharmaceutical scholarly journal publishing company, established in 1988, which has since grown to publish prominent scholarly titles. My first contact with Douw was at Elsie Ballot Hospital, Amersfoort, Mpumalanga, as a young energetic community service doctor while I was coordinating the Extended Programme on Immunisation for Mpumalanga province as a specialist family physician. It was later on in 2004 that our paths once again crossed at the Medpharm offices when I was appointed associate editor of the *South African Family Practice* journal and he was the publisher of the journal.

Douw was responsible for 11 journal titles, comprising 45 journal editions per annum. He worked closely with scholarly society editors and editorial boards with whom he developed peer-reviewed contents. The journals are available online and in print. As the publisher and director, he played an important role in managing the journal finances on behalf of the societies to ensure sustainability and to keep abreast of international journal publishing trends and developments. He was always on his toes in terms of the quality of content for the various journals, and strived for perfection in whatever was printed. He was extremely meticulous to the extent that if there was a typographical error in any journal, he was willing to insert an erratum in the next edition.

Douw's enthusiasm for nurturing the journals published by Medpharm went far beyond merely attending to administrative and technical functions. His passion for innovation helped each journal to strive to achieve its full potential. As a medical practitioner, Douw knew the

importance of accurate and up-to-date scientific information so that healthcare professionals could make informed decisions during the course of their professional practice.

We jointly managed two journals, namely the *South African Family Practice* for the South African Academy of Family Physicians and *Transactions* for the Colleges of Medicine of South Africa. During the many years of working together in our roles as associate editor and later editor-in-chief (mine) and his as publisher, we complemented each other in terms of the skills that we brought to the table. I focused more on the scientific contents, and he on the production and finance part of the business. Towards the end of his journey on Mother Earth, he believed that the future of any scientific journal was to be read electronically using an app. He succeeded in this following the launch of the Red Brick Library, a library app for scholarly society journals, guidelines, newsletters and CPD. The library currently houses 11 South African medical and pharmaceutical journal titles and is available in both Android® and Apple® app versions. I encourage you to visit it as you will be amazed by his vision and foresight. The library's URL is <http://www.redbricklibrary.co.za/index.php>

We take comfort in knowing that Douw is no longer suffering, and in knowing that his legacy will live on in the journals that he loved and for which he worked hard. Our heartfelt condolences go to his wife Justine, his parents Oppel and Esther, his sisters and their families, and to all his family and friends. *Adieu* to a good friend and younger colleague!

Prof Gboyega Ogunbanjo

Editor-in-chief: *South African Family Practice*