



Public Health Association of South Africa

# 2013 LEKGOTLA REPORT

**Intercontinental O.R. Tambo Airport, Gauteng**

**Thursday, 7 February 2013**

**09h00 until 16h30**



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## 1. EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

Laetitia Rispel (chair) –University of Witwatersrand

Stephen Knight – University of KwaZulu Natal

Flavia Senkubuge – University of Pretoria

Annette Gerritsen – Consultant

Maggie Mokonoto –

Waasila Jassat – Health Systems Trust

Tladi Ledibane - University of Free State

Gail Hughes – University of the Western Cape

Mandy Salomo – Medical Research Council

Landi Swart - University of Free State

Ehi Igumbor - CDC

Tracey Naledi – Western Cape Department of Health

Julia Moorman – WITS University & Gauteng Department of Health

Saiendhra Moodley – Western Cape Department of Health

Siyasanga Valencia Mbiza – Department of Health, Eastern Cape

## 2. WELCOME

This being the first face to face meeting of the current PHASA Executive, members reflected on why they joined the organisation.

- Grooming young professionals to contribute toward PHASA
- Growing PHASA to be the main Public Health Grouping in South Africa
- Being part of the broader Public Health Community
- PHASA provides the opportunity to grow PH discipline and for networking in South Africa and throughout Africa
- PHASA provides an opportunity to translate research and using it in terms of programme development
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### 3. NETWORKING

#### 3.1 Public Health medicine specialist and registrar subgroup under the auspices of SAMA

A discussion was held around the formation of the PHM sub group under SAMA. The questions considered were whether this constituted a threat to PHASA if it created another body for public health professionals; and whether there was a reason for distinction between public health medicine and public health professionals within the broader discipline.

The committee agreed that no direct confrontational approach will be necessary as this will create further divisions. PHASA remains an inter- and multi-disciplinary grouping and should continue to focus on its core business. We need to ensure PHASA caters for our members' needs. The following recommendations were made, some general and some specific to the issue of the SAMA sub group:

- PHASA to continue to make PHM group feel welcome e.g. continue the professional sub-group and include them as advisory group (e.g. PHASA “elders”)
- Executive to revise the sub group proposal to more strongly emphasize the space created for professional sub groups
- Ensure dialogue around critical issues relating to growth of the discipline and career pathing for public health professionals via newsletter, conference workshop, etc
- Be cautious about competing for funding e.g be aware of SAMA discussions
- Consider nominating senior PH medicine specialists to the Executive and inclusion on conference committees
- Consider a formal meeting at a later point between PHASA and the individuals who are driving this initiative
- Increase our policy voice and advocacy to government and in that way have an influence on career paths. This can be done through establishing clear criteria for every district to employ public health professional in its district health management team
- Current PHM specialists who are also members of PHASA should join the SAMA sub group to ensure we are involved in those discussions

#### 3.2 Sub-Groups

A proposal was drafted and some discussion around the proposal took place. It was agreed that the revised proposal should prioritise the professional grouping; special interest

groups which will require identification of champions to lead and develop the groups; and expansion of the Student Assembly.

A suggestion was put forward to re-look this proposal and focus on the following:

- Draft guidelines (use WFPHA guidelines) which includes benefits to sub groups and to gains to PHASA; and a reporting system from sub groups to the Exec
- Get existing groupings active and update our records
- Reach out to groups that showed interest in the past (e.g. Health Systems Research Group, Mental Health and Environmental Health, Food Security & Hygiene)
- Review what support we can offer sub groups in order to finalize the budget

### 3.3 Websites, Newsletters, Community

The web master presented a report that outlines the success of the website and newsletters which the Executive is happy with. The issue for discussion was the PHASA Community.

The webmaster indicated that for this PHASA Community to work, she would need assistance from the Executive. The following is required:

- We need to set up discussion groups –select a few to start with
- These discussion groups must be managed by a dedicated manager, someone who is on the executive or closely affiliated
- Manager must respond quickly, avoid mis-use, keep active, etc.

In line with the Sub group proposal each sub group can be offered the PHASA Community as a platform for communication and discussion. The secretariat will send members information on registration and include details of online forums on the membership forms.

The committee recommended the following forums in the interim:

- 2013 Conference, Mandy
- Experience of clinical Associates in the work place, Siyanda
- Public health education, Stephen and Julia
- Each sub group to have a forum

## 4. STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

### 4.1 Members review priorities and actions for 2013

- Increase use of social media (E.g twitter, Facebook)
- Host a green conference
- Strengthen advocacy role and issue more position papers on health reforms
- Harness the energy of enthusiastic people and develop list of experts to refer people to when specific questions are directed at PHASA
- Advocate for government to employ people who are public health trained
- Media structure marketing (More media exposure for PHASA between conferences as well as at the conference, contract or designate media spokesperson to raise the profile of PHASA)
- More regular activities during the year between conferences, possibly quarterly events, piggy-back onto universities events (explore webinars)
- Group members into regions with contact person
- Award for public health
- Expand on the Policy Influence workshop held Ethiopia and act on recommendations made, eg joint media statements
- Improve links with neighbouring countries, ensuring stronger SADC presence (esp Botswana, Namibia) at conferences
- Vibrant student platform
- PHASA to have a technical voice using the media as a vehicle
- Greater efforts at fundraising
- Advocacy for role clarification and career pathing in PH
- Grow membership in terms of numbers and activity, through creating value for members and starting a drive for membership through delegations visiting universities during orientation etc
- Stronger efforts at encouraging organizational memberships, through letters to government, NGOs, Universities
- Strengthen collaboration with like-minded organisations, eg having a presence at their conferences

### 4.2 World Federation on Building Capacity in advocacy

PHASA conducted a survey of WFPHA member countries and then successfully hosted a workshop last year at the WFPHA Conference in Ethiopia. It was attended by more than 200

delegates with mostly African representatives and was co-hosted by the WFPHA. A paper is to be written for public health policy journal.

A proposal was written for the Global Health Equity Group for 'Skills building in Advocacy' workshops. It is proposed that this workshop could be held at the 2013 conference. APHA and CPHA will be approached about their interest in funding and hosting this workshop on the day of the Student Assembly (24 September).

#### 4.3 PHASA 2013 Conference

Laetitia presented the 2013 Conference proposal document. The executive agreed to the theme "Africa's Public Health Legacy – Beyond the MDGs".

French and Portuguese translation should be done for just the plenary sessions and WHO, CPHA and Abrasco to be approached to assist with this and possibly fund. The venue is confirmed as Cape Town ICC but suitable venue for the Students Assembly is required close to the main venue.

Special features: Write up will be added to the document and website

- Student Assembly - Landi and Flavia
- Satellite sessions - Waasila and Gail
- Save the planet - Stephen
- Workshops - Julia and Maggie
- Abstract mentorship programme – Event Office

All document changes/edit will be done (e.g. registration, deadline, etc.) and sent to all committee members. Difference in fees between members and non-members was agreed and fees were increased 6% from last year. Laetitia is to write to potential speakers. Tracey to write to NDoH and City of Cape Town.

#### 4.4 Proposal on Recognition of PH Achievements

A proposal was put forward to the committee for comments and thereafter adapted for final review at this meeting. The proposal relates to a PH Innovation and Leadership Award - 'PHILA' awards (one would be annual award for outstanding achievements and another awarded every three years for lifetime achievement. It was agreed that a call for nominations be placed on the website and the award be made through a launch at the 2013 Conference. A committee will be set up evaluating specific criteria for those who would be considered for the award. Laetitia is to approach philanthropists to sponsor the award.

## 5. PHASA FINANCES

The auditors noted the following issues with the audit: the membership fees and conference fees not separated; MRC used as bridge for funding Executive expenses such as travel expenses; and membership period not aligned to PHASA financial year. MRC have started to address these and the auditors have responded positively.

Our major achievements are that we have caught up with the past ten years financials in terms of the audit processes. We have also in the process started managing the financials in terms of the audit requirements. The Executive is happy to sign the audited statements.

Concerns were raised that the reserves were dropping as the last few conferences did not generate substantial profits. We need to be strategic and do aggressive fund raising and try and get Colgate to commit to the accreditation and newsletters again this year.

The 2013 Budget was discussed and the estimated costs approved. An additional Cape Town based Exec member is required to assist with the Finances seeing that MRC and auditors are based in Cape Town. Tracey and Gail have been appointed as signatories.

## 6. SUSTAINABILITY

### 6.1 Endorsement Policy

Waasila and Tladi will circulate the draft document for comments from the Committee. PHASA committed to ethical funding sources.

### 6.2 PH Journal

Ehi, Laetitia and Flavia to set up a meeting with the Charles Feldman (Epi Journal) to start discussions around options for PHASA such as dedicated pages for PHASA as is done for WFPHA in the Journal of PH Policy.

### 6.3 Membership

The committee will update the proposal to include organisational membership and produce guidelines.

### 6.4 Secretariat contract

Mandy reported that she enjoys assisting PHASA with secretariat duties although the end of last year was very difficult for her and her staff. This year some staff will be finishing their contracts and will not return, so there will be some changes but on the support will continue.

PHASA recognises the importance of this office and cannot do without their assistance as the members volunteer their time on the Executive. Requests were made that the minutes be summarized in terms of key discussion points and that action items be circulated and updated regularly to keep exec members to the tasks they were required to attend to..

## **7. CLOSURE**

Laetitia thanked all members for their input, enthusiasm and input at the meeting.