

Human resource challenges in healthcare delivery in African communities

This edition showcases work from South Africa, but having relevance to the African continent as a whole. The papers concerned serendipitously all have the same theme – that of addressing the human resource challenges in healthcare delivery in African communities.

Hugo *et al.*¹ describe the structure of the curriculum that has been developed to provide South Africa's underserved populations with 'generalist' practitioners who work in district level hospitals under the supervision of doctors. The first graduates of this curriculum, rolled out at three of SA's eight Health Sciences Faculties, are now at work and a recent evaluation² has confirmed the success of this educational strategy in boosting health delivery personnel.

Draper *et al.*³ describe development of a standardised patient programme in the primary healthcare-orientated MB ChB curriculum that has been in place for the last decade at the University of Cape Town. They describe the usefulness of such a programme as a stepping stone to 'real' patient interaction in the third year for second-year students who currently have no ward or clinician time.

Oltmann⁴ describes use of aspects of Bernstein's pedagogic device to review and re-align the pharmacy curriculum at Rhodes University while colleagues Srinivas and Wrench⁵ of the School of Pharmacy at the same institution describe an innovative service-learning elective aimed at teaching final-year pharmacy students about the key role they can play in health promotion in a country – mirroring those in the rest of the continent, where there is *double jeopardy* in the burden of disease borne by the populace in the form of infectious disease and non-communicable disease.

The importance of e-learning in serving SA's future dentists, facilitating learning in paediatric dentistry, is highlighted and evaluated in the paper by Mohamed and Peerbhay⁶ of the University of the Western Cape.

The need to assist radiographers in achieving qualifications in the specialised radiology fields that characterise modern radiological diagnosis and ways to achieve this is the substance of an elegant qualitative and quantitative study by Du Plessis *et al.*⁷ of the Central University of Technology, Bloemfontein. Finally, since progress in healthcare depends on research, a single faculty's strategy to develop research capacity is elegantly outlined in the report from Frantz⁸ of the Department of Physiotherapy, University of the Western Cape. And Madzima *et al.*⁹ describe the creation of a rich pilot course, tailored for Africa and aimed at offering junior oncology

professionals (trainees and junior staff) *training-in-context* in research methods, data management and statistics.

Lastly, colleagues will be delighted to share in the good news that *AJHPE* has been accredited for inclusion in the Department of Higher Education and Training's approved list of South African journals.



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