

## **SATS AGM August 2015: President's Report**

It has been an honour serving as President of SATS for the last 2 years. My job has been made a lot easier by the council members and the SATS secretary (Emelia Ellapen), who have contributed immensely to the efficient running of the society.

This report covers the last year, as I have submitted a report in June 2014 for the preceding year.

### **1. Membership**

The membership has grown significantly and sits at 172 members at present.

### **2. SATS website**

This has been regularly updated and run by Dr Anish Ambaram, to whom we are grateful. The website provides links to various other societies and resources.

### **3. CME activities and congresses**

There have been a number of CME meetings held since the last report, including:

- A master class sponsored by Novartis and one by Aspen Pharmaceuticals.
- A tuberculosis workshop at the University of Cape Town (UCT).
- A paediatric pulmonology/neonatology workshop hosted by Pierre Goussard.
- An interventional pulmonology workshop hosted by UCT and one by Stellenbosch University.
- Pre-congress workshops have also grown in popularity and include thoracic surgery, interventional pulmonology, spirometry and paediatric pulmonology.
- Smoking cessation symposium hosted by Richard van Zyl-Smit.

The next SATS congress will be hosted by the University of the Witwatersrand in August 2016.

### **4. The South African Respiratory Journal (SARJ)**

Prof. Keertan Dheda has worked hard to continue the smooth running and publishing of the journal and is currently negotiating a contract with the Health and Medical Publishing Group to take over publishing of our journal. He has had certain challenges, which are being addressed, and we are confident that the journal will grow from strength to strength. I strongly encourage you to support the journal by submitting articles as requested by Keertan.

### **5. Guideline development**

The smoking cessation guideline was published last year. Richard van Zyl-Smit chaired this guideline committee and has done an

outstanding job. He has also contributed to the forum of International Respiratory Societies (FIRS) position statement on e-cigarettes.

### **6. Scholarship committee**

The committee is led by Richard van Zyl-Smit, who has done a sterling job. His report refers. The scholarships and awards have contributed immensely to the academic development of society members. The scholarships include the GSK, AstraZeneca, Novartis and Cipla-Medpro scholarships as well as the SATS Senior and Junior Travel Fellowships and SATS best publication award. I urge society members to take advantage of these awards/scholarships.

### **7. The credentials committee**

This committee is led by Prof. Keertan Dheda. Examinations in adult and paediatric pulmonology have been held in 2014 and 2015. The committee ensures standards are maintained in training in these sub-specialities.

### **8. International relationships**

A number of SATS members have worked hard to maintain and promote partnerships with the Pan African Thoracic Society (PATs), American Thoracic Society (ATS), American College of Chest Physicians (ACCP) and the European Respiratory Society (ERS) as well as FIRS. We have signed a memorandum of understanding between SATS and the ERS, which has provided members with various opportunities including joint membership with ERS for all SATS members with no additional cost to the individual members. I encourage all of you to take advantage of this initiative and make others aware of it as well. Prof. Umesh Laloo and I took part in the SPOI congress in November 2014 in our official capacities representing SATS.

### **9. Advocacy**

Dr Alan Peter has led this initiative to focus on public education. There have been activities around World Pneumonia Day, World COPD day, and World Asthma Day. The National Asthma Education Program (NAEP), led by Dr S Naidoo, continues to promote education and activities around asthma.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of the executive council and council as well as Emelia Ellapen, who have worked tirelessly to help in the smooth running of the society. It has been a privilege and a great honour to have led SATS in the last 2 years and I am sure that the society will continue to grow under Prof. Umesh Laloo's leadership.

**Dr S Abdool-Gaffar**

*SATS President*