

10th Biennial Society of Private Nurse Practitioners Conference, 2018: Guiding the future of nursing practice

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Introduction

The 10th Biennial Society of Private Nurse Practitioners (SPNP) Conference was held in Umhlanga, Durban, South Africa from 25–26 May 2018. The conference theme was: *Guiding the way – the future of nursing practice*. Conference attendees received guidance and information in professional, therapeutic, legal and business domains and enjoyed the scenic ocean view. The choice of venue at the light tower in Umhlanga strikingly complemented the conference theme and logo.



The SPNP aims to promote the professional image and character of the private nurse practitioner through continuing education, support and advocacy on various statutory and regulatory bodies. The aim of the conference was to guide private nurse practitioners towards safe, accountable and best practice within the current transforming ethical and legal milieu in South Africa. Approximately eighty delegates from across South Africa attended the conference and represented a variety of nurse specialist fields, including midwifery, primary health care, advanced wound care, psychiatric nursing and occupational health nursing. The two-day event provided an opportunity to network, benchmark and learn from a variety of experts within the multidisciplinary team.

Keynote address

The conference delegates were welcomed to the conference by the outgoing SPNP president, Anne Berzen, who expressed special thanks and appreciation to the conference organisers and sponsors, including the SPNP corporate members and trade partners (listed in Table I). Anne emphasised the importance of support from industry and trade, recognising that they often

plant the first seeds that inspire nurses to further their education in a specialty area.

The conference opened with a presentation by Mr MM Zungu, who represented the office of the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Minister of Health, who is a member of the National Task Team for the National Health Insurance. He accentuated the need to work together as equal partners to revitalise the health of the South African population and reach the outcomes of the National Development Plan: A vision for 2030.

Conference presentations

The conference theme resonated in the presentations urging nurse practitioners to remain current and relevant in a time of change. Several presentations focused on ethical-legal challenges as well as recent ethical-legal frameworks that should guide nurse practitioners.

Professor Dianne du Plessis from the University of Fort Hare made the delegates aware of the cost of medico-legal court cases and argued that there has never been a time that professional indemnity was more important than now, with reference to the escalating numbers of medical malpractice claims especially against private midwives. She appealed to nurses to keep detailed records and supporting evidence and to diagnose and act promptly. Ms Ulundi Behrtel, a lawyer and health law and ethics consultant, confirmed that a trust relationship with the patient and informed consent is essential to prevent legal claims against practitioners. She also provided an overview of the relevant Acts impacting private nursing practice, including the new Protection of Personal Information Act (4 of 2013). Getrude Nare, elaborated on the complexity of the legal framework guiding nursing practice and highlighted the impact thereof. Simone Rudolph-Shortt pointed out the regulatory impact on procurement of medical devices and how this will affect private nursing practice.

Several presentations informed the delegates of evolving research in wound care practice to allow evidence-based practice. Trish Idensohn, an advanced wound care practitioner who serves on the International Skin Tear Advisory Panel (ISTAP), reported that the 'Best practice recommendations for the prevention and management of skin tears in aged skin' were recently published at the International European Wound Management Association conference in May 2018. She shared these best practice recommendations with the attendees and reported that the ISTAP is still in the process of securing an ICD 10 code specifically for skin tears. Febe Bruwer, an advanced

wound care practitioner, presented a case study on the effect of a superabsorbent wound care dressing in combination with compression on the interface pressure of a venous leg ulcer. Mr Butana Mboniswa, the director of Inqaba Biotechnologies, presented the benefits and methods of commercialised maggot therapy in wound debridement. It should be noted that only the *Lucilia sericata* species can be used for debridement due to its ability to selectively target necrotic tissue. The maggots are custom prepared in a scientific laboratory and placed in the correct size 'bag' as per individualised order placed by wound care practitioners.

Dr Sean Chetty, a specialist anaesthesiologist at Stellenbosch University, gave an interesting presentation on the benefits, challenges and current legislative issues regarding pain control with medicinal cannabinoids. He explained that medicinal cannabinoids have shown beneficial effects as an analgesic (also for neuropathic and chronic pain), anti-inflammatory, antiemetic and in the reduction of glaucoma eye pressure. He explained the adverse effects and concluded that the existing clinical equipoise means that it cannot be certain whether medicinal cannabinoids are of benefit or disadvantage in pain control. This conclusion is essential for the Medical Research Council of South Africa, who is taking a leap into research in this field.

Several therapeutic approaches to care were shared, including a demonstration of the technique for patient self-lymph drainage and the 'SPECAL' technique. The SPECAL technique allows caregivers to understand life with dementia from the person with dementia's point of view and allow for person-centred care.

The conference had an exceptional multidisciplinary approach with the involvement of presenters of various disciplines. Dr Penny Orton, senior lecturer in Occupational Health at Durban University of Technology, updated the delegates on the future of Occupational Health nursing in the South African context and urged occupational health nurses to remain relevant and visible within the healthcare system. Discovery Medical Scheme showcased the new Care Coordination Programme (CCP). The CCP is a programme coordinated by a registered nurse in a sub-acute facility to allow for a multidisciplinary approach to risk reduction and the consequent prevention of readmission. Twenty-one sub-acute facilities in South Africa currently subscribe to the CCP programme.

Exhibition

The conference was well supported by SPNP corporate members and trade partners (see Table I). Delegates visited the exhibition and interacted with the representatives during tea and lunchtimes. These interactions provided them an opportunity to update their knowledge on the most recent products and developments. Brochures, pamphlets and other materials provided information on evidence supporting the use of the products.

Table I. SPNP corporate members and trade partners

SPNP corporate members:
• Safarmex
• Acelity
• Smith & Nephew
• Medhold
• Coloplast
• Hartmann
• BSN Medical
• MEDIS
• Sourcedmed
• B Braun
• Equity Medical Technologies
• Nestlé
• Medika SA
SPNP trade partners:
• Mölnlycke
• Arjohuntleigh
• Maisha Medical
• Ascendis Medical
• Lancet Laboratories
• Inqaba

Conclusion

Presentations followed each other sequentially and the conference was concluded with a workshop on hygiene within a private practice facility. The essence of steam sterilisation of equipment for the prevention of contamination was emphasised and explained during this session. The SPNP bi-annual general meeting (BGM) was held on the second day of the conference. The outgoing president, Anne Berzen and Debbie Regensberg, the society secretary, reported on the work the society has been involved in since the last BGM. With thanks to the outgoing committee for their time, Siegie Fitzjohn was appointed National President with Gertrude Nare standing as Vice President. Two honorary memberships were awarded to Elizabeth De Chazal from KZN and Cherry Hart from Gauteng. These are only given to members who are recognised for their dedication and service to the society over many years. The meeting also provided delegates an opportunity to elaborate on current issues in order to inform the SPNP executive committee of the expected way forward. Private practitioners, researchers and nurse educators expressed appreciation for the value of the SPNP conference and were updated on issues, trends and legal information relevant to their field of practice. Information for future SPNP events can be obtained from: <https://nursesa.org.za/>