



Annual General Meeting

Fundisa African Academy of Medicines Development

11 December 2023

President Report

Dear members of the General Board,

This official President report delivered to General Board covers the activities of the Fundisa Academy since March 2022.

First of all, I would like to officially welcome Tirhani Maluleke. She has joined us already in February 2023, initially as administrator. Besides her general admin role, she strongly engages in event planning and shows great interest in research initiatives around the programmes of the Fundisa Academy. Such additional commitment is strongly supported by the Board, and for this reason, we have agreed to appoint her as Postdoctoral Research Fellow in our Academy in October 2023. She has been a great asset to our team, and we wish her much success and interesting experiences in her new role.

I am glad to report that our Fundisa Academy has remained an active and strong driver of several capacity strengthening projects in medicines development and regulation. The training programme for African Medicines Regulatory Agencies, under the leadership of Colin Pillai, has been extremely successful, with further expansion of the participating Agencies. The third, 13-week module is currently being offered to staff of 8 African Agencies (South Africa, Zimbabwe, Ghana, Namibia, Tanzania, Kenya, Nigeria, Ethiopia). For the first time, a small group of delegates not working for an Agency have been accepted in the programme. In contrast to the regulators, these participants pay a registration fee.

At the last meeting, I have already reported about the World Conference on Pharmacometrics in Cape Town in March/April 2022 which included 2 Regulatory Side Meetings co-hosted by SAHPRA, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), Pharmacometrics Africa, CP+ Associates GmbH and our Fundisa Academy.

Following my active participation in the Symposium "Charité meets Southern Africa" on 9 September 2022 in Berlin, contacts have been initiated with the telemedicine group at the Charité. Scientists from this group will actively participate in our Digital Health Africa DHA-2024 Workshop.

The Second Edition of the South African Covid-19 Country Report commissioned by the SA Presidency is being finalised. Official launch is planned for early next year. I am convenor of the Chapter on leadership,

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governance and institutional arrangements which covers general recommendations on disaster management systems, besides specific Covid-19 issues.

Haylene Nell organised the next CLIC Course at the usual venue, Nitida Wine Farm, on 24 - 28 April 2023, purely as face-to-face event. This course and its format were highly appreciated by the 34 delegates who came from various institutions, including five experts from the Namibian National Department of Health. Organisation was largely in the hands of a team of TTC staff who did an excellent job.

A major activity during the report period was the planning of two symposia/workshops. Both events are organised by the School for Data Science and Computational Thinking and the Division of Clinical Pharmacology, both at Stellenbosch University, Pharmacometrics Africa and our Fundisa Academy.

The Cross-Disciplinary Mathematical Modelling Symposium was held as virtual event last Saturday, on 9 December 2023. The aim was to bring together scientists from totally different disciplines to talk about concepts and applications of mathematical modelling and simulation. The symposium was attended by up to around 100 delegates. Speakers from the fields of quantum computing, personalised medicine, pharmacoconomics, agriculture, climate change and epidemiology participated in the discussion facilitated by Catriona Waitts.

The Digital Health Africa DHA-2024 Workshop will be held at the BMRI as hybrid event on 23 – 24 February 2024. The aim of this workshop is to give an overview on the main themes, digital health, telemedicine, artificial intelligence and personalised medicine within the African context. Speakers who have already accepted our invitation include Prof Nicholas Crisp, Deputy Director General of the South African National Department of Health (Digital health in South Africa - Position of government), Prof Koleka Mlisana, NHLS, Noluthando Nematswerani, Discovery, Karin Steinecke, coordinator of the tele-ICU at Charité Berlin, and her partners in Pulmonology at Tygerberg, Francesco Petruccione, Interim Director of the South African National Institute for Theoretical and Computational Sciences, Jeff Barrett, Aridhia Informatics, Darlington Akogo, Founder, CEO, minoHealth AI Labs (Ghana), Marietjie Botes, legal expert on human rights and digital rights, and Salomé Meyer, South African Cancer Alliance Access to Medicine Campaign (patient perspectives). The planning is full swing now, including sourcing of sponsorship. If successful, it is planned to make this workshop a regular event.

As already mentioned at the previous AGM, the address of the Academy has changed during the report period from Karl Bremer Hospital to the new location of TTC, at Tygervalley Health Centre.

All relevant information about the Fundisa Academy activities, including publications by its Directors, is published on our website (www.fundisa-academy.com). This website has been totally updated and

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provides current information about past and ongoing projects. It therefore serves as appropriate reference for our programmes. Sincere thanks to Tirhani for facilitating this.

The new auditor of Fundisa Academy, Visionary Accounting (Taufeeq Maker) was appointed on 15 February 2023. The signed Audited Financial Statements for Year End February 2021, 2022 and 2023 are available. Income and expenses will need to be carefully monitored, as in previous years.

I would like to sincerely thank everyone who has contributed to our success, including Tirhani Maluleke, all Board members and Directors. I would like to take this opportunity to express my special thanks to Colin Pillai and the Pharmacometrics Africa team for their continued cooperation with the Fundisa Academy. Our organisation has grown considerably in reputation since its formal establishment in May 2014, almost 10 years ago. Regular cooperation partners include the National Department of Health, SAHPRA and other African Medicines Regulatory Agencies, South African National Government (DPME and GTAC), Wits University, as well as the organisations of our Board members, Pharmacometrics Africa, CP+ Associates, Stellenbosch University, Tiervlei Trial Centre, and Synexa Life Sciences. For all of us who are engaged in capacity building and passionate about supporting young scientists in our fields, Fundisa Academy provides an excellent infrastructure for such efforts.

It is always a pleasure working with all of you, to the benefit of many young scientists in the field of medicines development and regulation and ultimately their customers – the patients - in Africa.

Cape Town, 11 December 2023

