



Prof E. Lekalakala-Mokgele
**Dean: School of Health
Care Sciences**



Prof Deliwe Rene Phetlhu appointed as the new Head of Department for Nursing Science

The department of Nursing Science (DNS) under the School of Health Care Sciences has appointed Professor Deliwe Rene Phetlhu as Head of Department.

Prof Phetlhu, a seasoned academic and leader has until recently served as Programme Director for Global Fund TB Programme at: TB HIV Care before joining SMU.

She previously served the University of the Western Cape in a number of strategic and leadership portfolios viz. Head of the Centre for Teaching and Learning scholarship [CENTALS] and Research; Head of clinical programme and as the Head of Teaching and Learning.

She also worked as Head of Department (Nursing Science) for the North-West University and as a Senior Lecturer for the same university.

Prof Phetlhu also served the North West government as Programme Director for Communicable diseases responsible for management of TB, HIV and Immunization programmes in a district.

She has supervised many masters and doctoral candidates over the years and continues to do so currently. She has multiple publications in peer reviewed journals, contributed a chapter in a Community Nursing Science book, served as a reviewer for multiple institutions including NRF and an associate editor for an international journal.

continues to page 2...



Department of Nursing Science Awarded an SAMRC Research Grant

Dr Livhuwani Tshivhase and Prof Sophie Mogotlane, from SMU's Department of Nursing Science have recently been awarded a R600 000 grant from the South African Medical Research Council Research Capacity Development Initiative (SAMRC RCDI).

The title of the research project is "Partnering with Mothers and Guardians in Implementing the Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses Strategy in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province, South Africa.

The focus area of the research project is on Maternal and Child Health. According to Prof Mogotlane, the research project was in response to an invite to the nursing department by the MRC for proposals on research in various areas. Prof Kebogile Mokoena, Research Chair in the Department of Public Health, played a big role in bringing this call to Prof Mogotlane's attention.

The funding period is for three years with a possibility for an extension for a further two years pending satisfactory performance.

Dr Tshivhase is the Principal Investigator (PI) with Prof Mogotlane as the Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI). Together, they managed to put up a very good proposal which was submitted to SAMRC RCDI, on time and was approved for funding.

"Children in Vhembe District are still dying from preventable diseases such as pneumonia, malaria, diarrhoea, malnutrition, HIV/AIDS complications and others mostly because their parents, mothers and guardians are not informed or counselled on what to see or do when the children are afflicted with these preventable diseases. So the children end up presenting late for health services. Some die at home. This is an intervention study to help the mothers and guardians realise the potential they have to take care of their children and save their lives" explained Dr Tshivhase.

As a community health nurse by training, Prof Mogotlane explained that she is well placed to understand what Dr Tshivhase's research entails and the impact it will have in the lives of the children in Vhembe.

Editorial Team

Editor in Chief
Dr Eric Pule
Editor
Phaladi Seakgwe

Co-Editors
Prof Sebi Lekalakala
Prof Risenga Chauke
Prof Patrick Demana
Prof Stephen Hendricks
Prof Lawrence Obi

Graphic Designer
Dineo Motshegare

Other Contributors
Tumelo Moila
Maditsi Matlala

CONTACT US

E-mail: phaladi.seakgwe@smu.ac.za
Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University
Molotlegi Road | Ga-Rankuwa | Pretoria 0204

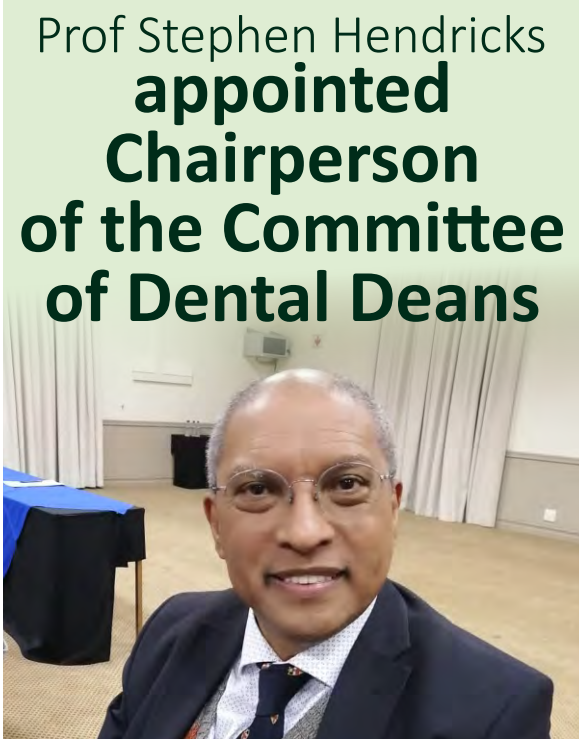
Qualifications

Professor Phetlhu holds a number of qualifications amongst them the following:

- 1. PhD (Nursing Science),** North West University; Thesis _ Social capital: A strategy for improvement of the implementation of policies in the HIV/AIDS and TB programs
- 2. Masters in Health Sciences (Cum Laude),** North West University. Dissertation _ Stigmatization of patients co-infected with TB and HIV

- 3. B.A (Management and Education),** Potchefstroum University for Christian Higher Education.
- 4. Diploma in Advanced Nursing Science** (Nursing Dynamics: Unit teaching and unit management) Rand Afrikaans University (RAU)
- 5. Diploma in General (Psychiatry, Community Health Nursing)** and Midwifery, Western Transvaal Nursing College

A more in-depth conversation with Prof Phetlhu will follow in the next edition of Focus newsletter.



all matters of Dentistry as it affects Dental Schools in the country and to uphold Quality Education of Dentists, Oral Hygienists, Dental Therapists and Dental Specialists in the 6 categories of Dental Specialists in South Africa.

How will your position as the chair, benefit SMU and school of oral health sciences?

Prof Hendricks: It provides SMU an opportunity to set the pace on Dental matters in South Africa, to bring about new innovations in the Dental Curriculum, to promote transformation of Higher education as it affects Dentistry and to promote Oral Health Research both in SA and on the continent and globally.

Are there any issues that you are hoping to address, as the chairman?

Prof Hendricks: This is my first term as Chair-person. My plans are to redress the inequities in access to Dental studies in South Africa, to ensure that we set up a College of Dentistry of South Africa (CDSA) that is transformed and that is representative, both in composition and in the nature of issues addressed and the solutions proposed, and put forward.

What is that you hoping to change in the profession?

Prof Hendricks: To make the study of Dentistry, Oral Hygiene and Dental Therapy more accessible for our students coming from very disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds and to look into the issue of high schooling from which our student come to ensure that at such schools we have very good Maths and Science teachers. By so doing, work in harmony with school principals so that the products of the High Schools for our disadvantaged applicants can excel when they get to University. With regards to the professions of Dentistry, of Oral Hygiene and of Dental Therapy, is to ensure that we produce excellent leaders in these professions who will conduct practice in an exemplary manner as we prepare graduates for the new government proposed National Health Insurance (NHI) Funded System for South Africa.

Your appointment comes at a critical time when the SA public health and internationally public health are being challenged by the COVID 19 pandemic. How will you lead the committee to respond to the challenges of COVID19 pandemic?

Prof Hendricks: In the presence of Covid 19, it is very important that all measures be taken to ensure the safety of the student, the patient and the attending clinical supervisor staff as well as that of the support staff. In Oral Health Services, there are considerable Aerosol generated due to the nature of Aerosol Generating Procedures (AGP) while doing dental procedures and so it is important that there are protection measures instituted. To this extent the Gauteng Department of Health (GDOH) BAC has approved the installation of AGP Equipment and there is a small team of Specialists working on it in the School of Oral Health Sciences (SOHS). The next phase is to improve the total Dental Hospital in terms of AGPs by installing a High Volume Air Conditione (HVAC) which extract the aerosol spray though HEPA filters and which would provide optimal safety.

Focus on Schools spoke to Prof Stephen Hendricks on his appointment to chair the committee of dental deans and also looked at how Covid-19 affects the oral health space.

Tell us about your appointment as the chair of the Committee of Dental Deans.

Prof Hendricks: The Committee of Dental Deans is a structure set up by Deans in their Capacity as academic leaders at Universities. This is my first term of 2 years for 2021 and 2022 as Chair of the Committee of Dental Deans. The Committee of Dental Deans is a Forum which seeks to engage on issues affecting Dental Schools, in the country.

Your appointment is an expression of confidence the profession in SA, has in you and your school, at SMU. What is the significance of your appointment to this position?

Prof Hendricks: The appointment expresses confidence in SMU and in the Chair by the Fellow Dental Deans of South Africa.

What are your roles and responsibilities in this position?

Prof Hendricks: To provide leadership, facilitate discussions with Fellow Deans on matters of academic, clinical and research affecting both undergraduate and postgraduate students. To give direction and advice on



Prof Patrick Demana
Dean: School of Pharmacy



Prof Patrick Demana

re-elected chairperson of Committee of Heads of Schools of Pharmacy

Focus on *Schools* interviewed Prof Patrick Demana on his re-election.

Congratulations on your re-election as Chairperson of Heads of Schools of Pharmacy Committee. Who re-elected you to this position:

Prof Demana: The Committee of the Heads of Schools of Pharmacy is composed of the Heads of Schools of Pharmacy from the nine universities that offer Bachelor of Pharmacy (BPharm) degree and pharmacy postgraduate studies in South

Africa. A representative from the Academy of Pharmaceutical Sciences of South Africa (APSSA) and also another from the South African Pharmacy Council (SAPC) have been co-opted as members of the Committee. The Committee functions under the auspices of SAPC. My last term for 2019/2020 came to an end not long ago, and recently at a meeting organised by the SAPC, fellow Heads of Schools of Pharmacy re-elected me for another 2 year term i.e. 2021/2022 period to continue serving as Chairperson of the Committee.

Your appointment is an expression of confidence the profession in SA, has in you and your school at SMU. What is the significance of your appointment to this position?

Prof Demana: Personally, I am honoured by the confidence that my fellow Heads of Schools of Pharmacy in the country have in me but more importantly, to SMU and the profession at large, it demonstrates that the innovations in teaching, learning and research that the School has pioneered and developed is making significant impact to the society in the quality of education that we offer to our students.

What are your roles and responsibilities in this position?

Prof Demana: As the Chairperson of the Committee, my role and responsibilities entail providing leadership in the matters affecting pharmacy education and training at academic institutions that offer BPharm degree and pharmacy postgraduate studies in pharmacy. Therefore, specifically this will entail provision of inputs into curriculum development at undergraduate level, consideration of matters relating to pharmacy education at post-graduate level, making representations on matters concerning pharmacy education and practice to the relevant local, provincial and national governmental authorities, statutory councils, professional bodies and academic institutions, and also liaising with the National Department of Health on operational research relating to the provision of pharmaceutical services.

continues to page 4...



How will your position as the chair, benefit SMU and school of pharmacy?

Prof Demana: School of Pharmacy and SMU will benefit in many ways. Firstly, issues that affect specifically SMU as an institution which has a bearing on the offering of pharmacy programmes will be adequately presented to the Committee for the benefit of SMU. An example is the recent issue of 60% exemption rule for undergraduate students which I, as the Chairperson adequately presented to the Committee for the benefit of SMU with regard to BPharm programme taking into account the imminent accreditation visit by SAPC. Secondly, it provides SMU and School of Pharmacy ample opportunities to set pace in challenges affecting pharmacy education in the higher education sector. Thirdly, it also offers our institution in providing leadership in areas of teaching and learning, and also in research and innovation for the benefit of our staff and students both at undergraduate and postgraduate level.

Are there any issues that you are hoping to address, this time, as Chairperson of the Committee of the Heads of Schools of Pharmacy?

Prof Demana: There are indeed issues that I would like to address and this include community pharmacy service in academia. In the past 3 years or so, we have fought a good battle as a Committee in terms of allowing our graduates after completing a 1 year pharmacy internship to be allowed to do community service at academic institutions. However, despite the victory with the government as they have allowed universities to offer community service for those have successfully completed their internship post-graduation, the challenge has been the implementation part due to government requirements especially relating to stipulated remuneration packages which universities cannot afford. It is the challenge that during my tenure, I would like to address.

The other challenge that we have as a profession has been lack of partnership between academia and industry which compromise on the quality of education for our students in the undergraduate course and also in research. I plan to address this gap, inter alia, through the recently formed APSSA-SAAPI Steering Committee for which I am one of the founding members. SAAPI is the South African Association of Pharmacists in Industry, for which I am the Vice-President.

I would like also to address the issue of pharmacy academic institutions playing an active role in response to Covid-19 pandemic. For this, I have already convened the meeting of all Heads of Schools of Pharmacy as a Committee with National Department of Health through the Deputy Director General in Health, Dr Anban Pillay, and SAPC delegation led by the Registrar, Mr Vincent Tlala in allowing our pharmacy students to participate in vaccine rollout as part of health care practitioners' workforce.

The issue of specialization in pharmacy is long overdue e.g. having registered specialists such as those in clinical pharmacy, public health pharmacy and management, and industrial pharmacy because government is taking long to finalize regulations so that those who complete such qualifications can register with SAPC as specialists. This in fact affects SMU a lot as we are the innovators in this regard.

Lastly, the issue of shortage of qualified pharmacists in academia or in simply terms, how do we attract pharmacists to choose academia as a career or employ pharmacists to become Lecturers? This is a great concern to me, and it is something that I also would like to address, and perhaps devise a package formula as a Committee that all institutions can buy into.

What is it that you are hoping to change in the profession?

Prof Demana: I would like to address as I indicated above would definitely be lifelong changes in the profession. Change in perception of academia to be an attractive choice as a career, change in ensuring closer ties between academia and pharmaceutical industry, change in government perception in recognising academic pharmacists playing an important role as public service through community pharmacy service in academia, and also change in government, and our statutory/professional bodies to recognise specialists within pharmacy profession which will not only offer unique services to the patients and the public at large but moreover assist society and our country to address the health challenges and socioeconomic issues that we all find ourselves in, including the current pandemic, Covid-19.

Your appointment comes at a critical time when the SA public health and internationally public health are being challenged by the COVID 19 pandemic. How will you lead the committee to respond to the challenges of COVID19 pandemic?

Prof Demana: As indicated above, I have already convened the committee and allowing our pharmacy students in each institution to partake voluntarily in the government vaccination rollout programme in response to Covid-19 pandemic. In other words, amongst other duties that our students can partake in as in education, mixing, storage (cold chain facilities), etc, our students are encouraged also to be involved in injecting vaccines to anyone that needs it, and of course when trained in injection skills. In addition, as a Committee, we have noted a bit of limitation not only to our students but also to pharmacists in general about the specific need for injection vaccination skills in particular. Therefore, we are currently working with SAPC as Heads of Schools in developing a supplementary training short course on immunization and injection skills which will be available in due course. To the benefit of everyone, SMU is at a very advanced stage for this course.



The SMU Mobile Science Bus takes the wonders of Science to neighbouring Schools



the programme offerings of SMU, and hopefully win them over to come study at the institution.

The Diphetogo High School in Kgalabatsane, North West of Pretoria, is one such disadvantaged school whose learners had exposure to the mobile science bus. Their poor Physics results improved. The Class of 2017 were repeaters and the end results were from 0% to 67% pass while the class of 2018 obtained a 100% pass.

Most of them registered with the University of Johannesburg (UJ). Others enrolled with the University of the North West (UNW), Potchefstroom Campus and University of Pretoria (UP). Mr Mashala, the Head of the Department of Physics, expressed his gratitude to Ms Seseng and SMU as a whole.

Ms Seseng also exposes learners to the platforms such as National Science Week and the Open Day Events at SMU. The learners also get an opportunity to touch and feel the exhibits such as the human battery - a detailed and vividly coloured model which provides a visually and kinaesthetically effective method for studying the structure and function of the human body.

The learners play with, among others, mathematical puzzles and to solve puzzles that motivate them in Maths problem solving techniques. Snell's law demonstrations - learners learn about a formula used to describe the relationship between the angles of incidence and refraction, standardization of an acid with a base, Circuit interpretation and floating material densities amongst other things.

Since its inception, in 1998, the mobile science bus has been criss-crossing many township high schools in Gauteng and the North West Provinces taking the wonders of science to them. Hundreds of Maths, Physics and Life Sciences learners who are the target audience of the university, have benefitted from its services.

Essentially a laboratory on wheels, the mobile science bus, is literally, a useful vehicle to enable the school of science and technology to carry out its core business of community engagement to these schools.

According to Ms Florence Seseng, the mobile science coordinator, the bus, visits schools twice per quarter, to conduct experiments in Physics and Chemistry. Ms Seseng, a scientist herself, conducts Physics experiments to fire the imaginations of young minds, in the caravan shaped mobile bus, which is a mini size bus with fixed tables and apparatus to do the experiments.

With its door open, the bus can accommodate several learners who get on board to witness experiments that are conducted. With her supervision, the learners get a feel to conduct the experiments before a captive audience of starry eyed classmates, some of whom had never had an exposure to experiments, for a whole variety of reasons.

The mobile science bus manages not only to exposes them to experiments, but it also serves as a marketing tool to showcase





Prof Risenga Chauke
Dean: School of Medicine



Students who studied in Cuba have arrived at SMU to finish their degrees

Fifty students who have been studying medicine in Cuba, have been admitted to the university to complete their Bachelor Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBChB) degrees. The students were studying at ten universities in Cuba, as part of the Nelson Mandela/ Fidel Castro Medical Programme (NMFCMP).

The NMFCMP is a collaboration programme between South Africa and Cuba to train medical students. Eligible students must come from disadvantaged communities and it is hoped that, upon successful completion of their MBChB degrees, they would return to serve their communities.

Established by President Nelson Mandela and President Fidel Castro, the programme has been going on for 24 years and has produced hundreds of students who are now serving in both the public and private health sectors.

The students spent the junior years of their training studying in Cuba and then return to SA and register to complete their studies enrolled with any of the eight medical schools. According to Prof Dini Mawela from the School of Medicine, these students rotate among internal medicine, Paediatrics and Child Care,

Family Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Psychiatry, General Surgery and Orthopaedics for clinical exposure purposes.

This exposure is meant to familiarize them with curative medicine as practised in SA to complement their training in preventative medicine which they studied, in Cuba. At the end of the year, they will write exit exams that have been organised by the National Department of Health. They will also attend mentorship training for two weeks and thereafter write Cuban exit exams. Upon passing these exams, they then qualify to graduate.

“At SMU, I am hoping that the experience I gained and the training I got from Cuba, will help me so that I can find a way to play my part in curing the sick”, said Mr Goitseone Kefalotse, one of the Cuban trained medical students.

Armed with this kind of training and experience in curative and preventative medicine, the students will join the health care system well equipped to face what the industry throws at them. The students have been allocated accommodation at the Dr George Mukhari Academic Hospital (DGMHA).

