



PHARMACEUTICAL & TECHNOLOGY CLINICAL MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION
Company registration number 1997/017503/08
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PTCMA – AGM 10th March 2021
MANAGING DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Adie Bryson

I'd like to welcome all the members to this virtual PTCMA AGM – thank you for attending the meeting.

Apologies from ExCo and co-opted members:

Zahiera Adam; Dr Hennie Swanepoel; Thabeng Lepeng; Pride Tlhakudi

Honorary President: Dr Natie Finkelstein

It is hard to believe that the very day of the PTCMA AGM 5th March 2020 was the day the first COVID-19 case was reported in SA. I remember our Key Note Speaker, Adv. Hasina Cassim, sent me the official notification from the NDoH.

What a roller-coaster ride we have all had since then.

I would like to acknowledge our deep sympathies that go to our ExCo members, colleagues and friends who have lost loved ones to COVID-19. Lives have been turned upside down with much devastation and personal distress.

It is fitting to start the MD report with the statement:

“All great changes are preceded by chaos” by Deepak Chopra.

Dr Sundeep Ruder reminded us of this reality in his recent Virtual CPD presentation titled ***The Impact of the 4th Industrial Revolution on Diabetes Care.***

So, 2020 was the year of chaos, not only for PTCMA but for the world as we knew it, with the advent of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Our mission remained true: “To facilitate clinically relevant, evidence-based practice for optimal patient care and access to affordable medicine and technology, by providing continued professional development and healthcare education.”

The core function, the CPD programme, was forced into stepping up and out of the usual physical networking event format into an online Zoom platform to ensure continued connection.

The first online Virtual CPD (V_CPD) programme using this platform was successfully held on the 19th of March 2020 – a full week before lockdown was instituted – when regulations on meetings necessitated us to facilitate what would have been the March Cape Town CPD event on Zoom. **Dr Catherine Samuel**, a microbiologist with Pathcare, appropriately updated us on the Coronavirus.

The next V_CPD was held on the 31st of March 2020 – five days into lockdown.

Prof Anton Stoltz, *Infectious Diseases Subspecialist and Head of Department in the Division of Infectious Diseases (UP)* gave an excellent presentation on the **Update on COVID-19** and Prof Natalie Schellack presented on **Concepts of Anti-Microbial Stewardship**.

We have come a long way in a short time, together.

The PTCMA physical meetings have not taken place since then.

The CPD programme that was hosted once a month in Jo'burg at Discovery Health, in Pretoria at Mediscor or Medihelp and in Cape Town at Medscheme – all stopped, 6 in total per month.

Also our regular workshops did not take place at all. Sadly no face-to-face meetings occurred, which impacted the PTCMA purposeful function of putting names to faces in the healthcare stakeholder network mix.

However, our vision “thinking critically, acting practically, joining the dots” continued. The PTCMA reviewed website reflects this.

PTCMA partnered with SAMA early in 2020 and we are proud to say this relationship has gone from slow beginnings to a synergy where the V_CPD programme has brought us together reading off the same page - and joining the dots.

The PTCMA portal is a well-established functional hub where the PTCMA and SAMA members log into their personal profile, download certificates and manage their PTCMA activities and engagements.

Corporate Membership fluctuated in 2020.

In 2020 we had 31 Corporate and Standard Members:

- 6 funders
- 22 pharmaceutical companies
- 3 device companies

Benefits of Corporate and Standard Membership changed, and in fact were enhanced by the increased numbers of V_CPD attendees. This is illustrated when I review the statistics for 2020.

Corporate Members can now sponsor an unlimited number of unconditional educational grants, enjoy unlimited attendance of V_CPDs, and have access to presentations and recordings.

Standard Members are entitled to sponsor two V_CPDs a year with an unconditional educational grant and the remaining benefits of Corporate Membership apply to ten predefined company employees.

Attendees from all over SA (and some internationally) can log into the V_CPD presentations which has enhanced the attendance from a previous average of 30 attendees per event to over a hundred for each V_CPD.

We are however very strict with the Zoom registration process for security reasons.

In line with our new virtual engagement platform PTCMA reached out to our members and other interested parties and offered an online free Health Technology Assessment (HTA) 101 Lite short course comprising of two Study Units during lockdown.

This was intended to whet the appetite of those who don't usually have the opportunity to do short courses and also to introduce others (who don't know what they don't know) to some of the fundamentals of EBM and Health Economics.

Sadly, we realized in hindsight that our colleagues were becoming "Zoomed out" and another online offering was not enticing enough.

Of course, this reality impacted the take up of the regular HTA in Action 101 online short course where we did not get the anticipated numbers, and consequently our revenue was below budget. This dynamic short course comprises of three modules:

- 1) ***Intervention Research and Clinical Trials***; moderated by **Prof Danie Van Zyl** *Head of Department of Internal Medicine in the Faculty of Health Sciences (UP)*
- 2) ***Pharmacoeconomic & HTA Research***; moderated by **Dr Varsha Bangalee** *Senior Lecturer in the Discipline of Pharmaceutical Sciences, School of Health Sciences (UKZN)*
- 3) ***Evidence Based Decision Making***; moderated by **Prof Manie de Klerk** *Associate Professor at the University of Stellenbosch Business School*; and **Prof Edina Sinanovic** *Professor and Head of the Health Economics Division in the School of Public Health and Family Medicine (UCT)*

30 CPD points are awarded for the successful completion and accreditation of each module.

The DMA110 online short course: ***Demystifying Market Access for Devices in the South African Healthcare Environment***, developed and written by **Mark Brand**, *an Independent HTA Consultant*, was put on hold until 2021 so that we can afford this excellent, relevant short course the drive and attention it deserves in focusing on preparation and the understanding of requirements for device submission to the funding administrators.

The workshops were all cancelled in 2020.

We did however facilitate a webinar to judge appetite for this format:

Data Analytics, the patient link; facilitating the connection where insights into the value of data and modelling during the COVID-19 pandemic presenting international and local scenarios.

Sadly, as interesting and relevant as the topic was, the two-hour webinar did not attract the numbers we hoped for.

PTCMA hosted our first Online Journal Club (OJC) in April 2020.

We were assisted by **Dr Frasia Oosthuizen**, a senior lecturer at UKZN. She has the experience and knowhow to facilitate this online exercise and guided us, along with **Dr Jan Pinchevsky**, our Chairperson. Two topical publications were examined:

- 1) ***A Trial of Lopinavir–Ritonavir in Adults Hospitalized with Severe Covid-19***, published in the NEJM (New England Journal of Medicine)
- 2) ***Characteristics of and Important Lessons From the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Outbreak in China***
Published in JAMA

The intention is to encourage this exercise to continue in 2021, pursuing critical analysis in the form of an OJC under the guidance of **Prof Deb Basu, Academic and Clinical Head of Public Health, Steve Biko Hospital (UP)**, and SAMA Head of Science and Technology Task Team - he is also responsible for the introduction of the practice of EBM at the hospital, and best practice guidelines – well placed in guiding our Journal Club in partnership with SAMA.

The V_ CPD programme

Background notes to statistics observed:

- 2020 only had 13 physical meetings (sessions)
- Mid-March CPDs were moved online
- Mid-2020, the PTCMA negotiated an agreement with SAMA to include their members in the V_CPD programme. This increased attendance significantly.

Basic Statistics

All events	2019	2020	Difference
Total attendance	1 493	6 958	+5 465 (366% increase)
Total number of sessions	56	78	+22 (39% increase)
Average attendance per session	26.7	89.2	+62.5 (234% increase)

The PTCMA recognized the opportunity to become the preferred provider for Virtual CPD events. Subsequently the **forum was opened to non-members**.

This programme commenced in October and was called the non-member Extra Ordinary V_CPD (EO_V_CPD).

The one particular event facilitated attracted over 250 attendees.

PTCMA intends maintaining the opportunity for non-members going forward into 2021.

Final notes on the V_CPD programme - analysing some of the graphs included in the addendum to the MD report:

(Extra-Ordinary events – where the audience is determined by the sponsor and thus gives a skewed representation – are not included in the statistics.)

- Looking at the **monthly trends over 2019 and 2020** (excluding SAMA members)
 - There was definitely an increase in attendance in 2020.
 - In 2019 and probably generally, the attendance dropped over April and May which is expected considering the number of public holidays over this period.
 - In 2020 the trend in April to June was opposite to what we normally see due to the nationwide lockdown forcing people to work from home and preventing people from going on holiday.
- **Average attendance per session** increased notably with the addition of SAMA:
 - Just PTCMA members - funders, we saw an increase in attendance, excluding Medscheme (numbers not as high due to connectivity issues)
 - Funder stats show an increase in the number of sessions attended by each individual

The overall conclusion

While CPDs were moved online out of necessity to continue during the nationwide restrictions, going online has given the PTCMA the opportunity to **extend our impact** and our **sponsors** are benefitting from **greater audiences and a further reach** with one session.

Our **funders** have benefitted by having **more access to sessions**.
CPD accreditation is registered with SAMA.

We have a more than capable **support team in the PTCMA Head Office** made up of:
Janine Janse van Rensburg, our *Operations Manager*, who manages the registrations and online support for the V_CPD programme, moderates the online courses and is in charge of the administrative function and artwork for our notices and online communication, updates and the newsletter;

Sharon Doré, our *Programme Manager* who efficiently manages the V_CPD allocations and
Sandra Slabbert, who manages the finances and our website;

We thank you all for your support and dedication to the service you provide.

The PTCMA Executive Committee would like to award the following **Honorary Memberships** to:

Prof Edina Sinanovic

Prof Manie de Klerk

Prof Marc Blockman

Adv. Hasina Cassim

Prof Danie Van Zyl

Dr Noluthando Nematswerani

Today we have another election - for the Executive Committee for 2021.

Each year we are reminded that the ExCo is the custodian of good practice in maintaining the PTCMA's integrity and making sure that we are financially sound and accountable.

I would like to thank the ExCo of 2020 for their input, willingness to meet online, and time they contribute, unconditionally.

Thank you to our Chairperson, Dr Jan Pinchevsky, who has overseen great progress within the PTCMA despite the challenges we have faced. He is at the other end of a call day or night, giving guidance and advice, especially guiding us in the development of our exciting new project, the Online Journal Club (OJC). He is cool, calm and collected and gives the assurance to our members of sustaining the PTCMA mandate. He oversees the clinically sound educational programme, while remaining non-partisan and unbiased in his approach.

He will continue standing as Chairperson for 2021.

Thanks are due to our PTCMA members who have supported us and who see value in their membership.

I wish us all a healthy year ahead and the ability and strength to face new challenges that will surely be in store this time around.

Let's muster the energy necessary together, and go forward.

Thank you,
Adie Bryson, Managing Director



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