

# National Family Practitioners Congress a huge success

*SA Academy of Family Physicians*

The Department of Family Medicine, University of Pretoria, under the auspices of the SA Academy of Family Physicians (SAAFP), hosted a very successful virtual 23rd National Family Practitioners Congress from 13 to 14 August 2021. The focus was on the theme of primary healthcare in the era of the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

COVID-19 has instigated new local and global norms, forcing us to rethink how we do things. The virtual platform embraced this new reality by gathering brilliant minds and sharing information through scientific presentations, workshops, seminars and robust debates, making this a memorable experience for the over 400 delegates who attended.

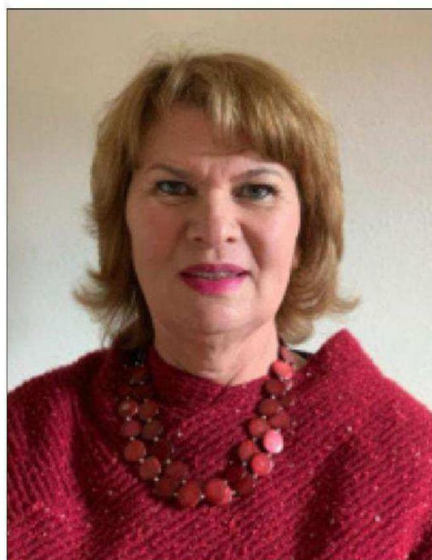
Delegates who were not able to attend all the virtual sessions had the opportunity to catch up on missed presentations via the on-demand viewing facility after the congress.

An interesting programme included international faculty and globally recognised local participants who covered key cross-cutting themes, listening to healthcare professionals' experience of COVID-19 infections, maternal health and immunology around COVID-19 infection, and the latest information on COVID-19 across thematic tracks (variants, COVID-19 in children, long-term COVID-19 and prevention, diagnosis and treatment).

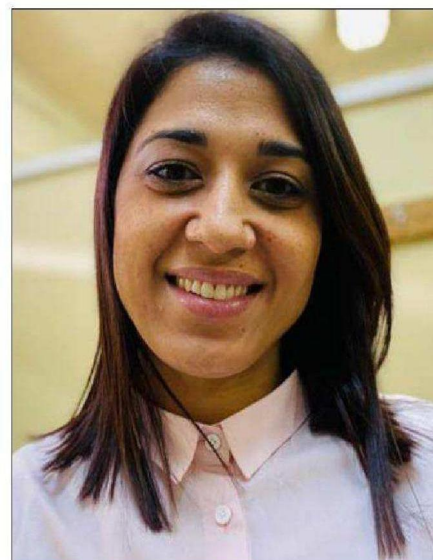
The highlight of the plenary sessions was a presentation by Prof. Salim Abdool Karim discussing COVID-19 in SA: the good, the bad and the complicated. The session reflected on some of the challenges, and a portion of the good, the bad and the complicated lessons learned in responding to the pandemic, and how we can draw upon these experiences to prepare for the next pandemic.

Congratulations to the research presentation prize winners at the national congress:

- Dr Leigh Wagner, a family physician at Khayelitsha Community Health Centre, received the award for best student poster. As a registrar, she explored factors influencing resilience among family physicians in Cape Town.
- Prof. Hanneke Brits, from the University of the Free State, who chairs the SAAFP national education and training committee,



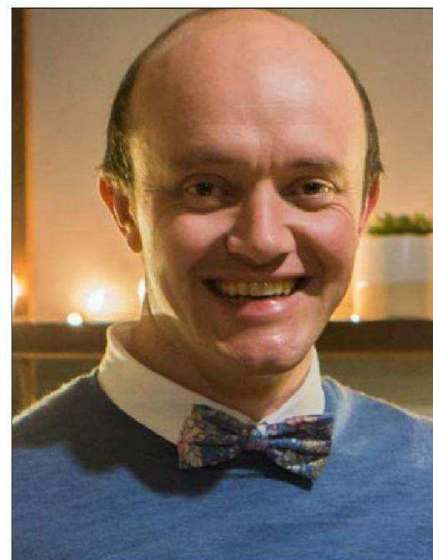
*Prof. Hanneke Brits*



*Dr Leigh Wagner*



*Prof. Bob Mash*



*Dr John Lotz*

received the award for best researcher poster. She looked at improving the reliability of clinical assessment.

- Dr John Lotz, from Madwaleni Hospital in the Eastern Cape and Walter Sisulu University, received the award for best oral research presentation as a student. He looked at the treatment of drug-resistant TB.
- Prof. Bob Mash, from Stellenbosch University and the president of SAAFP, received the award for best oral research

presentation, with his results of a scoping review on community-orientated primary care in Africa.

Our sincere gratitude is extended to the following sponsors for their support: Eli Lilly; Servier; Novo Nordisk; MSD; Equity Pharmaceuticals; Lancet Laboratories; Stellenbosch University Hybrid Learning; and Van Schaik.

We hope to see you all at next year's congress: 19 - 20 August 2022.