



CMSA

The Colleges of Medicine of South Africa NPC

Nonprofit Company (Reg No. 1955/000003/08)
Nonprofit Organisation (Reg. No. 009-874 NPO)
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Media release

CMSA Cape Town Admission Ceremony, Cape Town 19 May 18h00 Good Hope Christian Centre, Corner Plantation and Panton Road, Ottery

Admission to prestigious membership of the CMSA for 3187 medical specialists, sub-specialists and diplomates

While sister Colleges around the world were cancelling and postponing their specialist examinations, The Colleges of Medicine of South Africa (CMSA), mindful of the critical shortage of medical specialists and sub-specialists in South Africa, overcame the challenges of hosting examinations during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021, and has now had the opportunity to welcome 3187 new members to its ranks in 7 admission ceremonies around the country, comprising 1553 medical specialists (Fellows), 284 sub-specialists (Certificants) and 1350 diplomates. Becoming a medical specialist takes a minimum of 14 years – 6 to complete medical school and become a doctor, 2 years of internship, a year of community service, a year as a medical officer and 4-5 years of specialist training. Becoming a sub-specialist takes a further 2 years. Such an achievement is truly a cause for celebration.

Transformation at the forefront

Transformation is advancing impressively in the medical fraternity as reflected on by Professor Flavia Senkubuge, the first African Women to be elected President of the Colleges of Medicine in its 66 year history. Professor Senkubuge said: *“Historically, diversity has been lacking in the medical workforce with under representation of women and Africans, especially in medical specialities. I am delighted that more than half (1670, 52%) of our successful candidates are women and more than 40% (1383, 43%) are African, including 737 African women – a massive shift. Women are also moving into fields that were traditionally male dominated, including in the surgical specialties in which 23 women qualified as neuro, cardiothoracic, vascular, plastic and trauma surgeons.”*

259 specialists and sub-specialists to be admitted in Cape Town ceremony on 19 May 2022

The admission ceremony to be held in Cape Town on 19th May is the sixth of seven ceremonies including a historic first ceremony held in Mthatha. The ceremony will be led by the incoming President of the Colleges of Medicine of South Africa, Professor Johan Fagan and the two Vice Presidents, Professors Zach Koto and Johnny Mahlangu. The new members will be addressed by the outgoing CMSA President, Professor Flavia Senkubuge, the first Black Women President in the CMSA's 66 year history.

Due to COVID-19, the CMSA has not been able to host Admission Ceremonies for two years. *“As an organization we had always promised to host admission ceremonies to honour our new members for their incredible achievements under extremely challenging circumstances and because we recognize how special this occasion is to our graduates and their families after the sacrifices they have made to reach this milestone,”* said Prof Eric Buch, CEO of the CMSA.

259 medical specialist and subspecialists will be honoured at the CMSA Cape Town Admission Ceremony to be held at the Good Hope Christian Centre on 19th May 2022. The new members span 26 medical specialties and 23 sub-specialties, including 43 Anaesthetists, 31 Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, 54 Paediatricians, 51 Physicians, 22 Psychiatrist and 15 Surgeons.

CMSA widely acknowledged for ground-breaking changes to successfully deliver its examinations during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Traditionally about 600 candidates and 400 examiners from around the country would gather at a host medical school for a week of examinations for this national unitary exit examination, without which you cannot become a medical specialist or sub-specialist. *“But, with COVID-19 this was out of the question”* said Professor Flavia Senkubuge, President of the CMSA. *“Colleges around the world were cancelling their exams, but we felt we could not do this to our candidates who would have been left in limbo, nor to our country, which faces a serious shortage of medical specialists. The CMSA Senate made a bold decision to continue offering examinations through what has become a world leading innovation: to do structured oral examinations by videoconference. We have become global players in re-engineered and decentralized examinations, have really flattened the curve of disparity, and our pass rates actually increased.”*

Professor Salim Abdool-Karim to be made an Honorary Fellow, the CMSA’s highest award

The CMSA will award Professor Salim Abdool-Karim, already a fellow of the College of Public Health Medicine, its highest award, an Honorary Fellowship of the Colleges of Pathologists in Virology at its Admission Ceremony on 19 May 2022. The award recognizes his exceptional scientific knowledge generation and his national and international scientific leadership in virology. **(Refer to the attached press release for a detailed statement).**

The Colleges of Medicine of South Africa

The CMSA is a non-profit company comprising 29 Constituent Colleges covering all the specialist disciplines in Medicine and Dentistry. *“promote the highest degree of skill and efficiency in medical and dental practice and to cultivate the highest ethical standards and professional conduct ... not for pecuniary profit, but for the betterment of humanity”*. The CMSA is the body authorised to conduct unitary national exit examinations for medical specialists and sub-specialists for the entire country. You cannot become a specialist without becoming a Fellow of the Colleges of Medicine.

For further information and background please contact:

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To make arrangements to attend the ceremony or for interviews with Profs Senkubuge and Abdool-Karim or with new specialists, please contact:

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