



PsySSA Membership Update

- June 2016

08 June 2016

PsySSA membership update

Dear Members

It has been a busy time for PsySSA. Aside from organising the 2016 PsySSA Congress, PsySSA has been largely involved in attempting to contact medical aids to discuss the various reimbursement policies that our members are being subjected to. All medical aids contacted (Keyhealth, Metropolitan Life, Profmed, Polmed, and Gems) with the exception of Discovery have not been open to meeting with PsySSA pending the outcome of the case on 21 April 2016 in the Western Cape High Court matter involving RELPAG and the HPCSA. Contrary to earlier information, PsySSA has recently learned that the court matter has, in fact, been postponed to a date in August. Given the importance and urgency surrounding this, PsySSA has decided to approach both parties in an effort to help broker a solution. PsySSA will keep members updated on this issue.

PsySSA meets with Professional Board for Psychology (HPCSA)

PsySSA representatives met with the Professional Board prior to the court case on the 1 April 2016 to discuss the concerns of members re: medical aid reimbursement policies. The Board has undertaken to provide feedback from the meeting in the form of an official communication which PsySSA will share with members when it is received. At the meeting the Chair of the Board informed PsySSA representatives of the mandate of the Professional Board and the aspects which fall under the Board's mandate. The Board explained that only matters that are within its mandate could be responded to. PsySSA requested that the Board communicate the issues that fall within its mandate more widely and the Board undertook to publish this and subsequent comment in the quarterly Bulletin of the HPCSA. Other issues raised with the Board at the meeting included the need for clarification on the scope of practice guidelines, training guidelines as well as clarity of the test classification and review processes. The issue of turnaround times and the lengthy waiting periods for responses were also raised. The Board provided feedback that these issues were already being addressed and communications would follow soon on each of the issues raised.

PsySSA representatives also attended the Stakeholder engagement meeting called by the Professional Board for Psychology for its annual engagement with Heads of Departments of Educational Institutions, Intern Co-ordinators, Intern Supervisors and Stakeholders on 15 April 2016.

PsySSA meetings with medical aid companies

PsySSA representatives met with Discovery on 4 March 2016 to discuss the communication sent to clinical psychologists re: reimbursement for certain private hospital inpatients only if referred by psychiatrists. Discovery assured PsySSA that there was no intent to undermine or isolate clinical psychologists, but this was rather an attempt to obtain more holistic and managed care for patients. PsySSA was assured that the potential lack of reimbursement had not been actioned and that Discovery would revisit the decision. A follow-up meeting with Discovery is planned in the next two months.

All other medical aids contacted have refrained from meeting with PsySSA representatives but a number of medical aid representatives have mentioned concern at the billing submitted by psychologists with

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some saying that codes were inappropriately used. It was also apparent from the PsySSA survey in December 2015 that it would be a benefit for PsySSA to identify a practice management system that could be offered to PsySSA members at a competitive rate. This would assist members in ensuring that the practice is professional but at an affordable cost. More on this to follow in future communications. PsySSA has issued an invitation to a roundtable discussion to all medical aids mentioned in this communication for the plenary day at the PsySSA Congress to be held in September 2016. This platform will allow medical aids and members to engage directly.

PsySSA Congress 2016 - #PsychologysResponse/ability

PsySSA has been busy with organising the Congress to be held 21–23 September 2016 and has an exciting programme in excess of 300 presentations that incorporate issues relating to all aspects of psychology (as always) as well as workshops and presentations tailored to building skills for psychology professionals (visit the Congress page).

Eight workshops are also on offer ranging from private practice issues and ethical considerations through to working with trauma and African-centred approaches to psychotherapy. Also on offer are workshops on ethics in online assessment, forensic assessment, working with youth in disadvantaged communities and career construction psychology (click to additional content).

PAPU Congress

Aside from the PsySSA Congress, PsySSA won the bid to host the first Pan African Psychology Union (PAPU) Congress. The Congress will be held from 17-23 September 2017 at the ICC in Durban.

ICCP 2016

PsySSA has been involved in co-hosting the 6th International Conference on Community Psychology (ICCP) in May 2016 where Prof Anthony Pillay (PsySSA President) and Prof Ronelle Carolissen (Chair: PsySSA Division on Community & Social Psychology) delivered opening addresses. Click here for conference highlights.

ICP 2016

After the success of the International Congress Psychology (ICP) 2012, PsySSA was invited to submit a symposium on the ICP2012 Congress to ICP2016 to be held in Japan in July. Accordingly, a symposium titled 'ICP 2012: Reflecting on the pains & gains', will be presented by PsySSA representatives at ICP2016.

Representatives will also attend the International Union of Psychological Science (IUPsyS) General Assembly at ICP 2016 under the auspices of the South African National Committee for IUPsyS, chaired by Prof Tholeni Sodi. In Japan PsySSA will also be signing more MOUs with international psychology associations.

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PsySSA contributes to public policy

PsySSA has been involved in drafting responses to the White Paper on National Health Insurance (click to view NHI response), as well as commenting on issues related to criminal capacity assessments and the Criminal Procedures Act.

PsySSA Strategic Plan 2014 - 2018

We are happy to report that the PsySSA Strategic Plan is progressing well. The PsySSA office has been monitoring the deliverables in relation to the objectives set in the plan and we are proud to announce that in advance of 2018, PsySSA has delivered on all of the areas in the plan. This resurgence of activity has led to a fast growing Society where to date PsySSA boasts the highest number of members ever for the Society.

Ke a leboga, Ngiyabonga, Thank you, Dankie...

This dynamic, vibrant and fast growing Society would not have been possible without the activities of the PsySSA Executive, the Divisional Executives and Standing Committee members who all give of their time voluntarily. So a huge thank you to all who contribute to making PsySSA representative of all psychology professionals in South Africa from every context.

There is still more exciting news and events to come for the Society in the year ahead. Mailers showcasing the many and varied contributions from the Congress will follow. Updates on communications with the Board and medical aids will also be disseminated as soon as possible.

We look forward to seeing all members at the Congress in September! Remember to register.