



## SASPEN News

Thus far 2020 has been an exceptional year with unprecedented challenges. Like most sectors, including health care, SASPEN and its activities have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since the outbreak of this pandemic there have been many publications and webcasts put forward by multiple societies and companies to help guide the nutritional management of this disease and the practical challenges this poses. Based on international guidelines and adjusted to be practically appropriate to the South African environment, SASPEN has produced a set of guidelines for the nutritional management of patients affected by COVID-19. The document, alongside supportive information and practical tools, is available on the SASPEN website.

The yearly congress hosted by The Critical Care Society of Southern Africa (CCSSA) and SASPEN which was scheduled to take place in July 2020 in Johannesburg has unfortunately been cancelled due to COVID-19. We do however look forward to hosting a congress at the same venue in 2021.

This year the SASPEN PM Ward Round Club was planned to be expanded to include the start of a separate branch for the Gauteng region. We continue with the current format of the Cape Town SASPEN PM Ward Round with an option of a live Facebook feed for members residing more than 50 km from Cape Town. The SASPEN PM Ward Round Club is temporarily suspended during the lockdown period. More information regarding the re-commencing of the ward rounds will be communicated on our website and social media platforms; this will most likely be in the form of an online session. Please visit our social media platforms and the SASPEN website for more information on these clubs. If you are interested in presenting a case at one of these events please contact [Anna-Lena.duToit@westerncape.gov.za](mailto:Anna-Lena.duToit@westerncape.gov.za).

Dietitian's week is scheduled to take place from 1–5 June 2020. This year SASPEN will again join the British Dietetic Association (BDA) with local collaboration with The Association of Dietetics in South Africa (ADSA), the Enteral Nutrition Association of South Africa (ENASA), and The Hospital Dietitians Interest Group. More information on the theme and planned activities will be communicated through the social media platforms of the various societies.

SASPEN recently launched a new initiative aimed at providing a platform for dietitians and clinicians working in the specialised area of neonatal and paediatric care. The working group will function as a separate entity under SASPEN and will require membership in order to access information. The group consists of a board of experienced neonatal and paediatric dietitians. The advisory group will provide South African Neonatal and Paediatric Nutrition Network (SANPNN) members with the most recent evidence-based information on the current developments in neonatal and paediatric nutrition and access to SANPNN-endorsed guidelines on the SASPEN website. If you are interested in joining SANPNN please visit the SASPEN website or email [saspenservices@vdw.co.za](mailto:saspenservices@vdw.co.za) for more information.

SASPEN is happy to announce that the application process for the 2020 ENASA Research Grants is now open. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and that all information regarding nutritional management is internationally based, ENASA and SASPEN would like to promote research on COVID-19 in a South African context. In the light of the COVID-19 pandemic, preference will be given to research in the field of COVID-19. Non-COVID-19 research applications are also still welcome for consideration. SASPEN invites all potential candidates to apply for the research grants to the total value of R60 000. This amount can either be awarded in full to one applicant or can be divided between a number of applicants. Applicants must be fully paid-up members of SASPEN. Applications close 31 May 2020. All relevant information is available on the SASPEN website.

Lastly SASPEN would like to congratulate each and every healthcare worker that has shown tremendous innovation, courage and resilience in this new era of health care. We are encouraged by the sense of community in this time of rapid change and challenges.

We would like to hear about your initiatives and plans. Please 'like' us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and join us on LinkedIn to stay informed about events and opportunities. You can visit our webpage on [www.saspens.com](http://www.saspens.com).