

## **Report from the Melanoma Society South Africa 2015/2016**

Compiled by Dr Dagmar Whitaker, President MSSA

Following the last melanoma day held in Cape Town, the work done on the melanoma registry has been tedious. Despite all efforts the data capturing is still flawed with incompleteness and far from being accurate.

The International guidelines however are progressing well indeed and the MSSA in collaboration with the World Melanoma Society has developed the backbone of the MM guidelines which will be live online to be adapted on an ongoing basis wherever necessary without the necessity to rewrite all the details which have not changed. There is a tidal-wave of new drugs becoming available overseas and locally and we as dermatologists need to be informed about registered drugs (i.e Immuno – or targeted therapy – Ipilimumab and Vemurafinib) as well as medication undergoing EAP (early access programme) or trials – to at least channel our patients to the correct oncology institution (as everywhere not all the oncologists have the same level of interest when it comes to Melanoma management). It seems obvious but it is absolutely essential to create a network of multidisciplinary centres of excellence.

The MSSA had a very successful screening project of South African Pilots following an article highlighting the increased risk of Melanoma in this target group. Some 60 pilots were screened in the Aviation Centre in Johannesburg – 54 of which needed a referral to their local dermatologist for sun related problems (Aktinic keratosis, Basal Cell Carcinomas and dysplastic nevi).

A big project is happening in 2017 with the MSSA together with the World Melanoma Society hosting the first International Skincancer Conference taking place in Cape Town, 3.-4.3.2017. We are expecting 5-6 international and many local speakers and a program of highest standard.

I am also pleased to report that I myself as the president of the MSSA am part of the “global task force for access of patients to cancer drugs” – a complex task to raise funds as well as negotiate pricing to make the new generation biological therapy more affordable especially in our country.