

**Report of the Vitiligo Society of South Africa
N Raboobee (President)**

The Vitiligo Society of South Africa has been in existence for 8 years now and continues to fulfill a vital role in the raising the profile of vitiligo in South Africa and to uplift the lives of many vitiligo sufferers.

June 25th 2016 saw the celebration of World Vitiligo Day which was commemorated throughout the world. In Durban, talks were given by Dr Imraan Jhetam, Dr Levashni Naidoo and Dr Noufal Raboobee. Dr Naidoo took videos of several patients in King Edward Hospital and vividly captured the anguish that patients with vitiligo suffer. Dr Raboobee conducted live interviews with patients who underwent depigmentation with monobenzyl ether of hydroquinone and treatment with excimer laser and needling.

In Cape Town, Dr Kannenberg gave a talk to vitiligo patients at the Netcare Kuils River Hospital. The meeting was well attended.

In Pretoria, the practice of Dr Peter du Plessis had an open day and patients had the opportunity to inspect treatment facilities and ask questions.

Despite a desperate attempt to get other provinces involved, apathy reigns and this was not possible. We hope that 2017 will be better and that more volunteers will participate to spread the word. The aim is to have a support group meeting in every province on 25 June 2017.

For the Cape Town Congress, unfortunately the overseas guests cancelled at the last minute. Dr Iltefat Hamzavi from USA had a commitment and could not attend. Dr Rao from USA similarly could not attend. Dr Nanja van Geel from Belgium had to attend another congress. Dr Somesh Gupta from India did not respond.

The congress will see a new surgical technique described for vitiligo viz the production of suction blisters, the injection of trypsin within the blisters, and the utilisation of the blister fluid to transplant melanocytes onto dermabraded vitiligo skin. The first two of these procedures were performed in Durban this year by Doctors N Raboobee and M Raboobee.

There will be live demos on various surgical techniques and talks by several speakers.

The Society has teamed up with a photographer, Baveesha Naran who has showcased her work on vitiligo. She has been invited to exhibit her work in the World Vitiligo Day meetings in all major provinces and possibly at the congress in Cape Town.

A school campaign has been planned for 2017. The format will be a photographic exhibition on vitiligo and a talk by a dermatologist. Dermatologists from each province are requested to volunteer their time to participate in these campaigns. In addition, school magazines are targeted for a write up on vitiligo.

A presentation was made by the Society's president in Teheran, Iran in April this year, on the new surgical technique in vitiligo described above. A closer working relationship was forged with this country.

Two meetings relating to vitiligo will be attended, one in Hyderabad and another in Kolata, India in September this year. These will be self-funded.

Dr Kannenberg is presenting her work on Vitiligo at the EADV this year.

The main vitiligo meeting for 2016 will be held in Rome on 5 December 2016. All interested parties are invited to attend and to submit abstracts for presentation. The details are on the VSSA website. The VSSA is participate actively in this meeting.

The new website is working well. Facebook continues to be a major and popular way in which vitiligo patients communicate with the Society and with each other. Twitter to a lesser extent. All questions by patients are answered timeously.

The names of all dermatologists interested in treating vitiligo, as supplied at the congress in 2015, are now included in the website, along with the facilities they offer. Any dermatologist wishing to be included is invited to send his/her name to the Society.

A VSSA newsletter will be distributed at the congress.

**Thank you
Noufal Raboobee**