

A word of welcome



The Society for Endocrinology, Metabolism and Diabetes (SEMDSA) extends a warm welcome to all the delegates attending the 19th World Diabetes Congress in Cape Town. Members of the Society were honoured to be associated with organising this event, which has attracted the highest level of international expertise in diabetes to stimulate discussion and debate on recent scientific advances in the field. This congress will do much to provide greater awareness of diabetes in the broader South African community and will significantly improve the care of diabetes.

Media reports have quoted that over 60% of congresses held on the African continent take place in South Africa, which remains one of the world's top tourist destinations. It is hoped that many delegates will stay on after completion of the academic programme to enjoy the breathtaking beauty of Cape Town and its surrounds, enjoy its unique cuisine and savour the award-winning wines of the Western Cape.

A new arrival

SEMDSA is also honoured to announce the birth of its newest affiliate, the Paediatric and Adolescent Endocrine and Diabetes Society – South Africa (PAEDS-SA).

For many years it has been the desire of professionals working with children and adolescents with diabetes and endocrine disorders to form an organisation that could address special issues unique to that age group. Thanks to the enthusiasm of many people, and in particular the sterling efforts of Kuben Pillay, ably assisted by Kiran Parbhoo, the society was founded.

PAEDS-SA is an organisation of physicians, surgeons, scientists and allied professionals with an interest in the care and study of children and adolescents

with diabetes and endocrine disorders. Its mission is to improve the care of children and adolescents with diabetes and endocrine disorders by promoting education, training and research, and assisting the development of optimal health care policies and standards.

The Society held its inaugural meeting in Cape Town on 19 August 2006. At that meeting its constitution was adopted and its first Council elected. Special mention was made of Francois Bonnici's dedication and outstanding contribution to paediatric diabetes and endocrinology in South Africa. He was named the Honorary Life President of PAEDS-SA – an accolade well deserved.

The Executive Committee consists of Kuben Pillay (Durban) the Chairman, Kiran Parbhoo, Jennifer Whittal, David Segal (Johannesburg), Ariane Spitaels, Steve Delpoort (Cape Town) and Jacobus van Dyk (Pretoria).

Exciting times lie ahead for PAEDS-SA, as South Africa will host the International Society of Paediatric and Adolescent Diabetes Congress (ISPAD), which will be held in Durban in August 2008. The local organising committee is made up of PAEDS-SA council members.

SEMDSA wishes PAEDS-SA rapid growth and success in all its ventures, particularly with organising the ISPAD 2008 conference.

It is hoped that many of the current delegates will return to our shores to attend what is anticipated to be a stimulating conference with an excellent social programme in Durban in 2008.

Steve Delpoort

Chairman, SEMDSA