

Update on the SASOM-MEDICHEM Joint Congress 2019



The South African Society of Occupational Medicine (SASOM), founded in 1948, is a professional society registered as an interest group with the South African Medical Association (SAMA), and is an affiliate member of the International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH). SASOM aims to protect and promote the health of workers through quality occupational health programmes and clinical excellence – to the benefit of employees, employers and occupational medical practitioners.

The International Scientific Association for Occupational and Environmental Health in the Production and Use of Chemicals (MEDICHEM), established in 1972, is also affiliated with ICOH; the MEDICHEM Board acts as the ICOH Scientific Committee on Occupational Health in the Chemical Industry. MEDICHEM promotes the exchange of information and ideas between all those concerned with occupational health in the production and use of chemicals, worldwide.

The SASOM-MEDICHEM Joint Congress will take place from Wednesday 31 July to Saturday 3 August 2019, at the Protea Hotel by Marriott (OR Tambo International Airport), Kempton Park, Gauteng, South Africa. MEDICHEM will hold pre-Congress activities on Tuesday 30 July 2019, including a workshop on the epidemiology of chemicals and the MEDICHEM Board Meeting.

The Congress theme is *Control of Substances Hazardous to Health: Old and Emerging Issues*, and the sub-themes over the four-day event are (i) *Setting the Scene: Chemical Exposure Perspectives – Global, Regional, In-Country*; (ii) *Chemical Hazards: Occupational Health Ethics and Emerging Issues*; (iii) *Chemical Hazards: Role of Professional Networks in Occupational Health*; and (iv) *Health and Chemicals: Learnings and Applications*.

The SASOM-MEDICHEM Organising Committee, led by Professor Daan Kocks (SASOM Chair) and Dr Murray Coombs (MEDICHEM Chair), has worked diligently over the past few months to develop a stimulating scientific programme of alternating SASOM and MEDICHEM

sessions, and has invited representation from a number of ICOH Scientific Committees that have overlapping work and research interests with those of both MEDICHEM and SASOM.

The Congress is directed at all members of occupational health teams, medical and nursing practitioners, risk and human resource managers, and professionals and practitioners interested in the broad field of occupational health. An application has been submitted to SAMA for Congress accreditation and award of CEUnits/CPD points for full or partial attendance of the programme.

More information can be obtained from the SASOM website (www.sasom.org), including the draft scientific programme, announcement, registration form, and hotel and transport information. An accommodation block booking has been made at the Congress venue – the Protea Hotel by Marriott (OR Tambo International Airport); participants are urged to make their accommodation bookings early, to avoid disappointment. Accommodation costs are additional to the Congress registration fees, and participants will need to make their own booking and payment arrangements directly with the hotel.

ICOH2021

Planning is underway for the ICOH2021 Congress in Melbourne, Australia. The four Officers of ICOH – Dr Jukka Takala (President), Professor Sergio Iavicoli (Secretary General), Ms Claudina Nogueira (Vice President: Scientific Committees), and Professor Seong-Kyu Kang (Vice President: National Secretaries), and two staff members of the ICOH Secretariat (Mr Pierluca Dionisi and Mr Antonio Valenti), participated in the first ICOH Officers' Meeting since the ICOH2018 Congress (Dublin, Ireland), on 15 January 2019 in Melbourne, Australia. On the agenda was the review of progress made, to date, by the ICOH Scientific Committees and National Secretaries, in terms of submissions of their work plans for the current triennium (2018-2021), a review



The climate, waterfront location, cultural and sports events, nightlife and the city's passion for coffee make Melbourne one of the most vibrant and tourist-friendly destinations in Australia. For seven years in a row (from 2011 to 2017) Melbourne was voted the world's most liveable city

Photograph: Claudina Nogueira



ICOH and ICOH2021 National Organising Committee (NOC) representatives met in Melbourne for a first face-to-face meeting and site visit. Left to right: Mr Antonio Valenti (ICOH Secretariat), Prof. Seong-Kyu Kang (ICOH Vice President), Ms Melinda Miller (President of ANZSOM), Dr Jukka Takala (ICOH President), Prof. Sergio Iavicoli (ICOH Secretary General), Ms Claudina Nogueira (ICOH Vice President), Dr Peter Connaughton (NOC), Ms Fiona Landgren (NOC), Ms Erin Giddings (Conferencing partner), Mr Desmond Gul (NOC Secretary), Prof. Malcolm Sim (President of ICOH2021, Chair of the NOC, and Director of the Monash Centre for Occupational and Environmental Health), Dr Deborah Glass (NOC), and Ms Kate Smith (Conferencing partner) Photograph: Pierluca Dionisi (ICOH Secretariat)

of the ICOH President's assignments and their associated work plans, and a number of other planning and operational issues.

The ICOH Officers met with the National Organising Committee (NOC) of the ICOH2021 Congress and conducted a site visit of the Congress venue – Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre – and associated hotels on 16 and 17 January 2019. The Melbourne meetings were hosted by Professor Malcolm Sim, President of ICOH2021 and Chair of the NOC, and Ms Melinda Miller, President of the Australian and New Zealand Society of Occupational Medicine (ANZSOM, the host organisation of ICOH2021), and other members of the NOC, at the Centre for Occupational and Environmental Health, School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine, Monash University. Special thanks are extended to Mr Desmond Gul, the Secretary of the NOC, for his efficient organisation of all the arrangements and logistics for the Melbourne meetings. On the meeting agenda were discussions around the Congress scientific programme, time frames and deadlines for the various tasks and deliverables that will need to be accomplished between now and the Congress dates (21 to 26 March, 2021), and various logistics and operational items.

With the theme *Sharing Solutions in Occupational Health: Locally, Regionally, Globally*, the ICOH2021 Congress (the 33rd International Congress on Occupational Health) aims to bring together occupational health researchers, practitioners and policy makers from around the world to share their collective knowledge about improving worker health and safety, at the largest occupational health congress in the world. To ensure

that you receive the latest information and regular updates about the ICOH2021 Congress, please register your interest at www.ich2021.org, the official Congress website.

REMINDER – SASOM MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR 2019

SASOM members are reminded that the renewal of their annual memberships (or the submission of new applications for membership) was due before 31 January 2019, to ensure receipt of all the *Occupational Health Southern Africa* Journal issues for the year. Access to the 'Members Area' on the SASOM website will also only be granted to paid-up members with effect from 1 February 2019. Members who have still not renewed their annual memberships are urged to do so as soon as possible to continue to have access to their SASOM benefits, including reduced registration fees for the SASOM-MEDICHEM Joint Congress 2019. Please access the SASOM website (www.sasom.org) for more information.

Report by:

Claudina Nogueira

SASOM ExCo Member and ICOH Vice President

e-mail: claudinanogueira@hotmail.com

Daan Kocks

SASOM Chair and ICOH National Secretary for South Africa

e-mail: info@sasom.org

Jaco Botha

Project Coordinator in the SASOM Office

e-mail: info@sasom.org