

FROM THE EDITOR



There is a strong feeling in the field that it is 'back to the drawing board' on prevention in HIV. Perhaps the most compelling possibilities going forward involve the use of antiretrovirals for prevention. Without doubt, next to prevention of vertical transmission the most emotive reasons for prevention include the immediate use of antivirals to prevent infection in those recently exposed. A large part of this spring edition is dedicated to post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP). The reduction of mother-to-child transmission is evidence that antiviral therapy at the time when infection is occurring can abort the establishment of that infection. The PEP guidelines as they appear in this edition may be thought of as controversial, and we welcome comments in this regard. There is an equally controversial legal take on the risks of HIV transmission in sport by Verrier and Tuson, and a short report on the importance of counselling and

support for rape victims who are taking antivirals after rape. The issue also includes an account of the local experience of engaging with traditional healers in HIV programmes by Wreford and Esser, and some recommendations for completing death notification forms in the HIV era by Smith. Woods *et al.* describe the challenges of training health professionals, in particular nurses, to manage HIV, and present an innovative methodology for training. Finally there are two instructive clinical case studies, one on rhabdomyolysis following a drug reaction in an infected patient by Ramogi and the other the all too common problem of concurrent treatment of tuberculosis and HIV by Conradie, with a second opinion from Meintjes.

It has been said that a week in politics is a lifetime, and this can seldom have been better illustrated than by the past few weeks in South Africa. The political turbulence in our country has also seen the closing of the 'Manto' era, and many, activists and practitioners alike, have voiced an array of sentiments about this in the last few days. Those of us (and thankfully there are many) committed to seeing the countrywide, successful roll-out of PMTCT, antiretrovirals, testing and a variety of prevention strategies, as well as solid operational research, wish Health Minister Barbara Hogan and her team strength, wisdom and tenacity in taking us forward with bold new steps.

LINDA-GAIL BEKKER

Editor

TRIBUTE

MICK GRAHAM

Several extraordinary people have been involved in taking the HIV Clinicians Society from a small group of interested clinicians to one of the largest medical interest groups in the world.

Mick Graham arrived in South Africa four years ago from drizzly London, and has made it his home. Originally deployed to help non-governmental organisations sort themselves out, through the British-based Volunteer Services Organisation (VSO), Mick joined the Society during a staffing crisis. On his first day he was tasked with getting the Society back on its feet, especially as we had just been given a major grant to help establish a range of new projects. Deftly negotiating the complex politics that bedevil everything around HIV, Mick efficiently improved on the organisational structures of the Society while building up the staff complement to the stage where it is now self-sufficient.

Mick's keen negotiation skills, honed while a justly feared trade union representative in his home country, were put

to good use in getting great deals from publishers, sponsors and advertisers, all for the good of the Society. In a very short time he established the Society as a viable operation, with the *Journal, Transcript*, the guidelines and much of our commercial communication rapidly gaining financial independence. Mick's attention to organisational process has ensured that today the Society is a much stronger and more robust organisation, well positioned for the challenges of the future.

Mick will always be the ideal dinnertime companion. Conversations are liberally sprinkled with 'As my good friend George Bernard Shaw said ...', when not regaling us with his lunches with Prime Minister Tony Blair and stories from Northern England's steelworks.

We owe Mick a large debt, and will miss his contribution to fighting HIV, less than efficient contractors, and bad white wine. The Society, the general manager and the Executive wish him well in his semi-retirement.

Francois, Fatima, Pat, Natalie, Jean, Chloe, Kerry, Linda-Gail

