

WOULD YOU MANAGE WITHOUT YOUR SOCIETY?

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A recent editorial in the South African Medical Journal reads as follows —

“There isn’t an organization in the world from the local society for the study of African violets to the World Health Organization whose members haven’t at some time asked ‘what does this society do for me’. To answer that question, it may be worthwhile changing the wording to read: ‘If my society did not exist, what would it mean in my life?’ But to answer that question presupposes a knowledge of what the society has done and is doing, and alas many members of societies have little idea of what goes on.”

Alas, all too many physiotherapists have little idea of what goes on. Perhaps it is time to pause and take stock of all the problems and pitfalls which would confront the individual physiotherapist if the South African Society of Physiotherapy did not exist.

When would you find time to prepare lengthy memoranda concerning the future of physiotherapy in South Africa?

- Did you know that the Browne Commission of Enquiry into Health Services requested the South African Society of Physiotherapy to submit memoranda dealing with all facets of the physiotherapy profession in the Republic? This memorandum, representing weeks of work, was completed and submitted to the Commission by the due date.
- Did you know that, following two years of negotiations, the South African Medical and Dental Council has approved the Society’s request (via the Professional Board) for a change in the ethical ruling in order to allow physiotherapists primary contact? This amendment still has to be approved by the Minister of Health.

When would you find time to negotiate with the authorities on salaries and conditions of service?

- Did you know that the Society has an ongoing commitment to continuous negotiation for improved salaries and conditions of service?
- Did you know that the Society has been able to submit several memoranda to the Commission of Administration concerning the recent evaluation of the profession?
- Did you know that, because of its advance knowledge, the Society was able to brief groups of physiotherapists throughout the Republic in order that a sound and accurate reflection of the profession could be given to the members of the Commission of Administration during their interviews and assessments in the different parts of the country?
- Did you know that, largely as a result of pressure from the Society, parity has been achieved for all therapists excepting black senior and basic grade physiotherapists? — and that the Society is continuing to put pressure on the authorities for the abolition of these last, remaining threads of salary discrimination?
- Did you know that a special interdisciplinary committee has been formed to negotiate with the Department of National Education concerning the role of therapists in special schools?

When would you find time to ensure that infringement of the scope of physiotherapy by other professions does not become an established fact?

- Did you know that a memorandum was submitted to the Defence Force concerning the relative roles of the physiotherapist and the physical educationalist?
- Did you know that, at the request of the Human Sciences Research Council, a memorandum was submitted to them concerning the role of physiotherapists in education, both conventional and special, at all levels?
- Did you know that, following the submission of memoranda and discussion with a deputation from the Society, a challenge made by another health profession concerning the scope of physiotherapy has been dropped from the agenda of the South African Medical and Dental Council?
- Did you know that the Society has made representations to the S.A. Medical and Dental Council to prevent the registration of physical educationists as remedial gymnasts?

Where would you find time to analyse draft legislation which may affect the status of physiotherapy and the physiotherapist in the Republic?

- Did you know that the Society submitted a lengthy memorandum to the Minister of Health concerning the 1981 Draft Bill to provide for chiropractors and other associated health professions; a bill which was withdrawn in its original form?

Where would you find time to ensure a high standard of practice throughout the country?

- Did you know that the Society’s recommendations concerning minimal standards for basic degrees and additional qualifications were accepted by the Professional Board for Physiotherapy and the S.A. Medical and Dental Council?
- Did you know that a special standing committee of the Society screens foreign qualifications, as well as individual therapists, and makes the necessary recommendations to the Professional Board?
- Did you know that a special group of the Society is continually engaged in updating the undergraduate syllabus? At this moment, following a request from the Department of Health, they are looking into the role of the physiotherapist in psychiatric hospitals and are making recommendations for inclusion of courses in the undergraduate syllabus which would equip the physiotherapist more adequately for work in the psychiatric field.

When would you find time to prepare the argument for submission to the Tariff Committee to negotiate for adjustments to the Statutory Tariff of Fees?

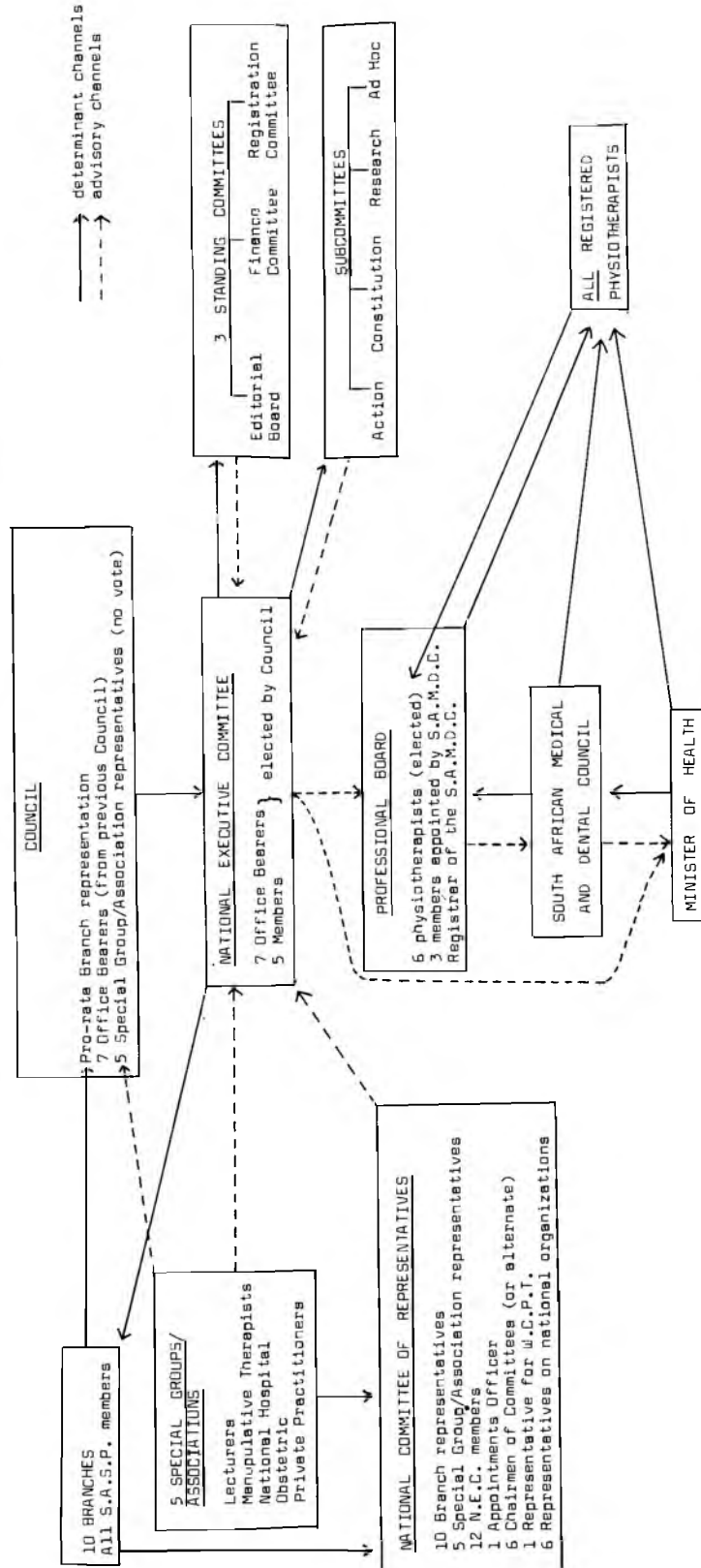
- Did you know that a deputation from the Society successfully negotiated the recent adjustment?
- Did you know that they are already engaged in negotiations for the next adjustment?

Where would you find time to lobby at international level against isolation of South Africa in the physiotherapy world?

- Did you know that it is largely as a result of the efforts of the President of the Society, backed by the Society’s policy, that South Africa remains a member of the World Confederation for Physiotherapy?
- Did you know that South Africa was, in fact, nominated

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STRUCTURE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY OF PHYSIOTHERAPY AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROFESSIONAL BOARD FOR PHYSIOTHERAPY



for election as Third Vice-President at the recent meeting of the W.C.P.T.

You wouldn't be able to find the time, would you? Nor, most probably, all the information required, nor the expense involved. Incidentally, did you know that, in terms of Notice No. R2028 of Government Gazette No. 5323 of 29 October 1976, the South African Society of Physiotherapy is the **only** association recognized by the Government as being representative of the profession of physiotherapy?

It is a sad fact that some physiotherapists seem prepared to pay exorbitant annual fees to their golf or yacht clubs but resist the much more moderate fee to their professional organisation.

Can you afford **not** to be a member of the South African Society of Physiotherapy?

Reference

S. Afr. Med J., **60**, 759 (editorial).

WHEELCHAIR SELF-DEFENCE

Wheelchair techniques of self-defence based on several forms of martial arts have been developed by two veteran police officers — Jim Bullard, self-defence instructor, and Steve Reddish, a paraplegic himself.

Further details available from: Steve Reddish, Para-Media Productions, 2080 Sharon Lane, Memphis, Tennessee 38127, U.S.A.

WORKING IN THE UNITED STATES

Health Professionals International is a firm willing to assist physiotherapists wishing to obtain employment in the U.S.A. For further particulars, contact The Appointments Secretary, S.A.S.P., P.O. Box 11151, Johannesburg, 2000.