



FROM THE EDITOR

A NEW JOURNAL FOR A RAPIDLY EMERGING DISEASE



It will serve as a forum for the news and views of the Society and updates on its own activities, regional news and the activities of its international affiliates. Although the next issue of the *Journal* is scheduled for November of this year, it is hoped that a monthly edition will soon become a reality. This will of course depend on the future support that the *Journal* receives, and in this regard it would be appropriate for me to thank those who have contributed to making this launch edition possible.

DES MARTIN

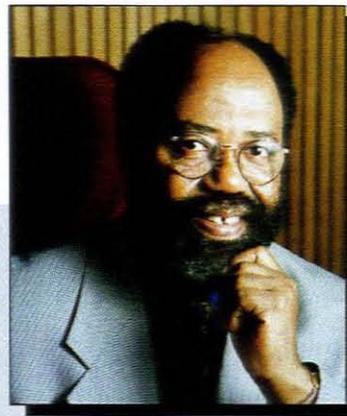
*Editor, Southern African Journal of HIV Medicine
President Elect, Southern African HIV Clinicians Society*

The 13th International Aids Conference takes place in Durban, South Africa, from 9 to 14 July 2000. This is noteworthy for a number of reasons: In the first instance, it is the first time that the conference is being held on the African continent, and notably, it is also the first time it is being held in a developing country. The host country is witnessing the fastest growing HIV epidemic in the world - it is estimated that 1 in 10 South Africans is infected with the virus. The scientific community, and indeed the population at large, has recently witnessed the re-emergence of the debate surrounding the link between HIV and AIDS. The sensationalism surrounding this has only served to deviate and diffuse the focus away from the prevention and management of the problem. The Southern African HIV Clinicians Society has played an active part during recent times in reassuring both the public and clinicians about the way forward in dealing with the epidemic.

Continuing medical education plays an important role in achieving this and is one of the key programmes of the Society.

This first issue of the *Southern African Journal of HIV Medicine* coincides with the conference in Durban and it is hoped that it will find a place in the reading of medical, scientific and allied professionals dealing with HIV disease in our region. It is also hoped that it will receive broader recognition amongst the international community, which is urged to engage actively in the discourse surrounding the epidemic in our region.

HIV-related research continues to flourish in South Africa and the scientific community is placed to answer important questions, particularly in the fields of vaccine research, mother-to-child transmission of HIV and co-infection with HIV and tuberculosis. In addition, increasing access to antiretroviral therapies is becoming a reality so that appropriate therapies now fall within the grasp of a wider treatable base of practitioners. The *Journal* will provide a home for original scientific articles, review articles and continuing medical education and will also provide a forum for debate and discussion on the topical issues of the day.



WELCOME, THE NEW HIV JOURNAL

It is my great pleasure to salute the launch of the *Southern African Journal of HIV Medicine*, and to congratulate the Southern African HIV Clinicians Society on their foresight in planning this venture, and their tenacity in seeing it through to fruition.

The pestilence of HIV/AIDS threatens to wreak havoc on the social and economic fabric of our country, and to disrupt the lives of all South Africans in almost unimaginable ways. Yet the available information on HIV/AIDS has often tended to be fragmentary, distorted and confusing. This journal will serve as one of the very few home-grown, dependable sources of information for the practising physician, backed as it is by the authority of the Southern African HIV Clinicians Society. President Mbeki has been much criticised for his perceived stand on HIV/AIDS, but one of his pronouncements is indisputable, namely that African solutions must be sought and found for AIDS in Africa. This new publication will help do just that.

I trust that the South African medical community will give this venture its wholehearted support, and that those in a position to do so will contribute regularly to the contents.

DANIEL J NCAYIYANA

Editor, South African Medical Journal