

## FROM THE EDITOR



The *Journal* this quarter is, as usual, jam packed with relevant and valuable information. Among others, we have a description of the ethical and legal difficulties of involving adolescents in prevention research from Slack *et al.*, a timely consideration as we assimilate the implications of the newly promulgated Child Bill and Sexual Offences Bill. Meyer-Rath gives a hard-to-ignore cost-effectiveness argument for rolling out treatment and prevention. Wanless and the Secure the Future group again highlight the good work being done by this charitable funding and the importance of community involvement. The Society President alludes to the excellent quality of information disseminated at the recently held South African HIV Conference. I was impressed at how practitioners

and caregivers have progressed in terms of knowledge and understanding of the complexities of HIV care. In this issue we showcase a series of South African abstracts accepted and presented at the very competitive Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections held earlier this year in Los Angeles. In each case we have asked the authors to describe the relevance and implications for the South African epidemic. In the next issue we will highlight presentations from the South African Conference, and include a summary of Wood's state-of-the-art review of diagnostics for tuberculosis at a symposium hosted by Roche at this conference. Finally, as has become our tradition, we have guidelines for you in the centre pages. In this edition, Spencer and the Nutrition Focus Group have outlined the first two chapters of the nutritional guidelines – more to follow. In addition, Venter has summarised the National Strategic Plan and the exciting partnership between the Clinicians Society and Soul City is described.

Well done to Francois and the team who have also recently launched the new and exciting website. We are working hard to have articles from this journal online as soon as possible after the distribution of the hard copy. Finally, we are happy to announce that articles can now be submitted to the journal online: go to [www.sajhivmed.org.za](http://www.sajhivmed.org.za) and follow the instructions. You will be able to track the progress of your submission and we will be able to more efficiently keep track of all the incoming copy. Please get writing!

LINDA-GAIL BEKKER

*Editor*

## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE

The South African AIDS Conference has just finished as I'm writing this, amidst a new dawn for the rejuvenated South African National AIDS Council, the release of the ambitious National Strategic Plan, and a provocative World Health Organization document on provider-initiated HIV testing. The Conference, held every 2 years, had a very strong scientific programme with some excellent presentations. The Society had a strong presence, and we ran several highly successful skills workshops during the Conference as well as a hugely entertaining debate on circumcision. We were delighted that sponsorship from Cipla-Medpro enabled us to send a large number of rural doctors to the Conference, and hope that we can continue to support attendance in this way. I would like to congratulate Linda-Gail Bekker for two reasons – she is our new *Journal* editor, and she will be chair of the Conference in 2009. Moreover, her home town, Cape Town, will host the prestigious 2009 International AIDS Society Conference. Add to this the highly anticipated Botswana AIDS Conference next year, and no one need leave our shores in the near future to access the best scientific presentations and debates.

FRANCOIS VENTER

*President*



*Fatima Hassan of the AIDS Law Project and Francois Venter of the Society get tested at New Start, after debating provider-initiated HIV testing at the 3rd South African AIDS Conference.*



*Olive Shisana, head of the Human Sciences Research Council, takes an HIV test at the 3rd South African AIDS Conference as part of the Sunday Times campaign to get more people to do an HIV test.*