



'Pharmacology for Africa' initiative Pharmacologie pour l'initiative de l'Afrique



SAFE AND EFFECTIVE MEDICINES FOR AFRICA:

Promoting training, research and medicines therapy towards attaining the millennium development goals

**5th All Africa Congress on Basic and Clinical Pharmacology (ACP2012) ,
Accra, Ghana, 11-13 July 2012**

**Pharmacovigilance Workshop: Communication and Crisis Management in
Public Health: A Focus on the Patient, Accra, Ghana 9-10 July 2012**

**Integrated Organs Systems Pharmacology (IOSP) Workshop,
Abuja, Nigeria, 5-7 July 2012**

Report

1. Introduction and Background:

The Pharmacology for Africa (PharfA) initiative has developed strategic training, structuring, and mobilizing plans for Pharmacology on the African continent. This strategy is focused on a long term sustainable development of Pharmacology that started in 2006 when the PharfA initiative was established as an initiative of the South Africa Society for Basic and Clinical Pharmacology, at its inaugural meeting during the 15th World Congress of Pharmacology in Beijing, China. Since this event, several strategic and implementation planning meetings were held in, Quebec, Canada (2008), Cairo, Egypt (2009), Copenhagen, Denmark (2010), Kumasi, Ghana (2011) and Accra, Ghana (July2012). The strategies and action plans developed during these meetings identified specific milestones that the initiative will work towards. These include, amongst others, the development of the Pharmacology for Africa website; an online pharmacologist expert database; training workshops in Integrative and Organ Systems Pharmacology and in Pharmacovigilance training workshops (starting in 2009 and planned until 2016 to ensure sustainability and legacy); hosting the Africa Congresses of

Pharmacology in Accra, Ghana (2012) (www.iuphar-africa2012.org) and Central Africa (2016), and the hosting the 17th World Congress of Basic and Clinical Pharmacology in Cape Town in 2014 (www.wcp2014.org). To date workshops have successfully been held in 2009, Potchefstroom South Africa; 2010, Cairo; Egypt, 2010; Nairobi, Kenya, 2012; Accra Ghana and 2012, Abuja, Nigeria. The International Council for Science (ISCU) supported these training workshops generously. IUPHAR, the International Union of Basic and Clinical Pharmacology, is in full support of the PharfA initiative, and PharfA reports annually to IUPHAR as an African Pharmacology vehicle for sustainable development on the continent. PharfA is also integral to the activities regarding the 17th World Congress of Basic and Clinical Pharmacology (WCP2014, www.wcp2014.org) to be hosted in Cape Town in 2014.

The ACP2012 Congress (Accra, Ghana) and the two workshops (Accra, Ghana, Abuja, Nigeria) were held under the auspices of the Pharmacology for Africa (PharfA) initiative.

2. ACP2012, Accra, Ghana:

The 5th All Africa Congress of Basic and Clinical Pharmacology (ACP2012) was attended by some 120 delegates from across the African continent, including representatives from as far as Egypt, Eastern, Western and Central Africa and South Africa. There were also several participants from outside Africa, e.g. from the USA, Netherland and Iran. South Africa (~30 delegates) and Nigeria (~60 delegates) were the two countries with the most delegates. The program was designed around the theme: **Safe and Effective Medicines for Africa with the sub-theme: Promoting training, research and medicine therapy towards attaining the millennium development goals.** The scientific program consisted of 10 plenary speakers and 10 sessions (some presented in parallel) with more than 40 individual podium presentations. More than 25 posters presentations were also presented. . The four presidents of Pharmacology Societies participating during ACP2012 included Prof Helen Kwanasie (WASP/SOAP – West Africa), Prof Anastasia Guantai (Kenya); Prof Mohamed Khayyal (Egypt) and Prof Tiaan Brink (South Africa). The WHO Collaboration Centre for Pharmacovigilance partnered with the congress and workshops.

The Congress presented topics including amongst others:

- Drug therapy in cardiovascular disease
- Advances in the Treatment of Malaria
- Promotion and Effective Medicines for Africa: Educational approaches
- Effective Management of Diabetes Mellitus
- Making Antiretroviral Drugs Safer
- Rational Use of Medicines
- Advances in Predictive, Preventive and Personalized Medicine: A Primer For Change
- Safety, Quality and Efficacy of Traditional Medicines in Africa

- Drugs for Neglected Parasitic Infections
- Pharmacology Education
- Advancing Effective Postgraduate Training in Pharmacology in Africa
- Therapeutic Challenges in Maternal and Pediatric Healthcare
- Drug Metabolism and Transport
- Challenges in the Treatment of Tuberculosis
- Advances in Management of STDs
- Pharmacology in Africa: The North African Chapter
- New Approach and Targets in Psychiatry
- In vitro Pharmacology

Young investigators were also given the opportunity to actively participate in the podium sessions and as presenters as part of the capacity building. Training and education sessions addressed both under- and post-graduate studies in pharmacy and medicine. The pharmaceutical industry's role in Africa was also debated. The PharfA strategic meeting supported the current strategy and endorsed the activities presented for the period 2013-2016. These activities included training workshops in IOSP and other critical areas (2013, Francophone countries; 2014 Kenya, South Africa; 2015 Egypt; 2016 South Africa); World Congress (2014, South Africa); Africa Congress 2016. The Congress was sponsored by amongst other the Unit for Drug Research Development, North-West University Potchefstroom Campus, Pharmaceutical Industry (Novatis, Basel), the Pharmacology Societies of Africa and funding from Ghana institutions. The National Research Foundation, the Department of Science and Technology and the Medical Research Council supported delegates from South African and from Africa to participate at the Congress. The congress was attended by about 120 delegates from across the African continent.

The delegates were as follows:

Benin	=	1
Cameroon	=	1
Congo	=	1
Egypt	=	1
Ghana	=	14
Iran	=	1
Kenya	=	2
Kenya	=	2
Mali	=	1
NEPAL	=	1
Netherlands	=	1
Nigeria	=	58

South Africa =	31
Uganda =	2
USA =	1
Zambia =	1
Total =	119

Indeed the Africa Pharmacology Congress held for the first time in 20 years was most successful and the enthusiasm amongst the delegates was excellent, clearly indicating a growing eagerness amongst pharmacologists from Africa to promote pharmacology and participate during the World Congress in Cape Town in 2014.

3. Integrated Organ Systems Pharmacology (IOSP) Workshop, Abuja, Nigeria, 5-7 July 2011

Presented through Adobe Connect – e-conferencing training to delegates from North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, to Abuja, Nigeria. This is a first ever training of this kind present from Potchefstroom to Nigeria, with this unique distance learning approach. The following presentations were given from Potchefstroom:

1. Introduction to safe, efficacious and quality medicines DW Oliver
2. Introduction to Integrated Organs Systems Pharmacology (DFW Oliver and CB Brink)
3. Experimental Protocol Planning when using Laboratory Animals: Practical Guidance (Brink CB and Mokoena ML, a PhD Student)
4. Ethics applications: When, why, what, how (Brink CB)

4 Pharmacovigilance Workshop: Communication and Crisis Management in Public Health: A Focus on the Patient, Accra, Ghana 9-10 July 2012

The workshop was interactive and informative, attended by 40+ young and established scientists and health professionals from across the continent of Africa. The learners indeed participated in lively discussions on drug safety in the practice clinical setting.

My role at the workshop was: participant – observer, quality assessment and also a learner

5. Business meetings

The General Assembly of the ‘Pharmacology for Africa’ (PharfA) initiative was held, with the election of the management. The assembly nominated and accepted the following executive committee:

- Representative of the International Union of Basic and Clinical Pharmacology – Prof Douglas Oliver)
- Presidents of the four national/regional learned societies on the continent, being the Egyptian Society for Applied Pharmacology and Therapeutics (Prof Mohamed Khayya), the Kenyan Society for Basic and Applied Pharmacology (Prof Anastasia Guantai), the South African Society for Basic and Clinical

Pharmacology (Prof Tiaan Brink), and the West-African Society of Pharmacology (Prof Helen Kwanashie),

- Elected members, being Prof Andrew Walubo (South Africa), Prof Eric Omogbai (Nigeria) and Dr Richard Glover (International Council of Science – Regional Office for Africa)

The Assembly also accepted Prof Douglas Oliver as to Chair PharfA for the next two years, when the next General Assembly meeting of PharfA will be held in Cape Town during the 17th World Congress of Pharmacology in July 2014. The next All Africa Congress of Basic and Clinical Pharmacology is scheduled for 2016.

6. Summary and Conclusion

It is clear that PharfA and the African Pharmacology Societies have achieved its objectives with Africa Congress of Basic and Clinical Pharmacology, in Accra, Ghana along with the 2 pre-congress workshops, in presenting an important platform for the first time in 20 years for pharmacology. This gave pharmacologists on the African continent the opportunity to engage with other researchers and educators as well as exchange research ideas and develop networks. The 30 delegates from South Africa had most memorable experiences not only scientifically but also socially with the delegates from several regions of Africa. All of us learned about the challenges of our continent but also the enormous opportunities we have to build Africa into a showcase continent.

Indeed a success story and milestone event for Africa.