



RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

CONNECTING RECs IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Newsletter

Issue 1/August 2021

REASA

IN THIS ISSUE

SECTION ONE: Webinar on the draft PoPIA Code of Conduct for Research setup by ASSAf. 1

SECTION TWO: Introduction of new members on the Executive Committee of REASA 2

SECTION THREE: Development of a webpage only accessible to REASA members 3

Upcoming Events

**Annual Steve Biko Bioethics Talk:
Reflecting on South Africa's response to the COVID-19 pandemic
13 September 2021 (12:00 – 13:00)
Webinar hosted on the Zoom platform
Enquiries: Samkelo.Nsibande@wits.ac.za**

**Information sharing on the newly formulated draft PoPIA Code of Conduct for Research
15 September 2021 (09:30 – 13:00)
REASA webinar hosted on the Zoom platform
Cost: R200
Registration: [Click here \(Ctrl+left click on mouse\)](#)**

**9th Annual ARESA Research Ethics Seminar:
Ethical challenges raised by COVID-19 in Southern Africa
16 – 17 September 2021
Cost: R500 (Institutional delegates) / R1000 (private delegates)
Registration: <https://forms.office.com/r/im9wpambag>**

SECTION ONE: Webinar on the draft PoPIA Code of Conduct for Research setup by ASSAf

On 26 July 2021, REASA held a webinar entitled, "The PoPIA Code of Conduct: general principles for researchers and research ethics

committees (RECs). The webinar was attended by 297 people. Our speakers were Prof Rachel Adams (Presentation entitled, "General Principles of the Newly Formulated PoPIA Code of Conduct for Research") and Dr Harriet Etheredge (Presentations entitled "Practical Implications for Researchers and RECs" and



“PoPIA and Cross-border Transfer of Data for Research Purposes”). During these discussion Prof Adams and Dr Etheredge highlighted the important aspects that have to be addressed by researchers and reviewed by REC members in an ethics application, in order for a research study to comply with PoPIA. The formal presentations were followed by a panel discussion, facilitated by Ms Tanya Coetzee, which included Prof Adams, Dr Etheredge and Ms Eleni Flack-Davidson, who are all members of the Academy of Sciences of South Africa (ASSAf) drafting committee of the aforementioned Code of Conduct. The webinar was well received. As indicated under “Upcoming events”, REASA will be organising a second webinar regarding the draft PoPIA Code of Conduct for Research. This is done in partnership with ASSAf and presented by members that were involved in the drafting.

SECTION TWO: Introduction of new members on the Executive Committee of REASA

We are very happy to announce that we have had three new members join the Executive Committee of REASA. We are very grateful to have them join REASA and as such, we would like to introduce them to our members.



Dr Gonasagrie (Lulu) Nair was recently appointed as a member of the REASA Education and Training Working Group. She is a senior lecturer in the Centre for Medical Ethics and Law at

University of Stellenbosch. Dr Nair is a medical doctor by training and has over 19 years of clinical trial implementation experience in the field of HIV and TB treatment and prevention. She has been a committee member of UKZN Biomedical Research Ethics Committee and

that of the Medical Research Council. She is currently a member of the Tygerberg Clinical Ethics Committee.



Dr. Chesa Gift Chauke is the Unit Director of the SAMRC animal research facility (PUDAC) since 2015. She holds a PhD in Molecular biology and continued to refine her

professional knowledge by completing a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree with Stellenbosch University Business School in 2018. With her expertise in the genetic/molecular field of medical primatology, Dr. Chauke has locally pioneered the establishment of the primate genomics research, an activity that is an essential part of lab animal science in many countries. Her research interest involves defining and validating primate models used for biomedical research; and has made a key contribution in generating new knowledge in this field. Her other interest lies in the development of pre-clinical drug and vaccine pipeline to support indigenous knowledge based-research, and currently, she participates in the DSI’s IK-based Bio-innovation Programme as well as the SA mRNA Research consortium spearheaded by WHO. In addition to research, Dr. Chauke is actively involved in the ethical aspect of animal use in medical and vaccine research. She was appointed as a member of the SAMRC Ethics Committee for Research on Animals (ECRA) in 2010 and became the vice chairperson of ECRA in 2019. She is currently a member of the National Health Research Ethics Council (NHREC) of the Department of Health and has recently joined REASA to serve as a member of the Education and Training Committee.



Petra Bester is a transdisciplinary health researcher and director of the African Unit for Transdisciplinary Health Research (AUTHeR) since 2016, at the North-West University. She obtained the BCur-degree (cum laude) in 1997 at the former Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education (PU for CHE). During 1997-2000 she gained extensive practice

experience as a professional nurse [General, Community, Psychiatry and Midwife] and lectured Anatomy and General Nursing Science. Whilst completing a MCur-degree in Community Psychiatric Nursing, Petra relocated to Gauteng and obtained extensive experience in managed healthcare. In 2008 Petra Bester obtained a PhD (Nursing), with a keen interest in qualitative, theory generating research methodology in addition to her interest in health service management and leadership. In 2010, Petra returned to her alma mater, the North-West University first as senior lecturer at the School of Nursing Science, then as the academic manager at the Unit for Open Distance Learning (2013), and later as a transdisciplinary researcher at AUTHeR. In her lecturing experience arsenal, Petra lectured fourteen different modules within undergraduate, post-basic and postgraduate nursing programmes. At the UODL, Petra pursued the continuous quality improvement of distance programmes coupled with a progressive direction towards technology-enhanced learning within Health Science education. Her research career includes the supervision of over 40 postgraduate students. Her research focus is transdisciplinary health promotion and the human interconnectedness in health systems, explored from a transdisciplinary approach and preferably through community-based participatory action. She co-established the community-integrated research office and a sustainable community innovation, known as the Social Greenhouse™. She became a member of the NWU's Health Research Ethics Committee from 2015 and chair from October 2019. She has joined REASA as part of the Marketing and Communication sub-committee.

In addition to this introduction, we would also like to indicate to our members, that due to the difficulties associated with COVID-19, the term of the current Executive Committee of REASA will be extended to 2023. We give a brief overview of the current members of the Executive Committee:

Chairperson: Prof Minrie Greeff
Vice-chairperson: Dr Lillian Omutoko
Treasurer: Ms Tanya Coetzee
Ex-officio: Prof Keymanthri Moodley
Prof Stuart Rennie

Education and Training sub-committee:

Prof Carolina Henn (Group leader)
Dr Toby Tobe P Nwachukwu
Dr Adetayo Emmanuel Obasa
Prof Yvonne Paul
Prof Marelize Schoeman

Marketing and Communication sub-committee:

A/Prof Wayne Towers (Group leader)
Dr Philani Nongogo
Dr Jillian Gardner
Ms Eleni Flack-Davison

SECTION THREE: Development of a webpage only accessible to REASA members

The Marketing and Communication Workgroup of REASA have proposed the development of a webpage on the REASA website, that will only be accessible to REASA members. This page will be structured similarly to other intranet pages found on various universities' websites and can only be accessed by REASA members. The current membership forum page will form part this space and members will be able to communicate on matters of interest. Documents and invitations relevant to REASA members will also be shared on this page. It was decided that although it is important for us to be visible, in the public, as an association, we also need a space where we could communicate more efficiently with our members.

Contact secretary.reasa@gmail.com for further details or phone (+27) 81 739 9429