



11 May 2020

***Warm greetings SASOHN members.***

We are known as occupational health nurse practitioners at our places of work and now the world refers to us as the “frontline workers”. In May 2019, at the Academic Days, my opening presentation focused on the “Future of Work”. Never did I think or imagine this would happen with such haste, nor so soon would I have to address you on a virtual online platform and even more especially in this time of the Pandemic of COVID 19. So much has changed for us as occupational health nurses but it is important that we adapt and embrace this change and be there to support one another. It is time for us to reconnect, recreate, realize and we may have to rethink what the future of nursing will be.

Today I take this opportunity in wishing you **Happy NATIONAL NURSING WEEK: 11 – 17 May**. This occurs from the Monday to the Sunday of Florence Nightingale’s birthday. At the same time, and in the same breath, happy Nurses Day for the 12<sup>th</sup> of May. Once again the theme – **NURSES A VOICE TO LEAD – NURSING THE WORLD TO HEALTH**. Most importantly, let us also remember it is our year – the World Health Organization has announced and dedicated the year 2020 as the **“Year of the nurse and midwife”**.

When one reflects and think about our role as occupational health nurses, I am certain that this profession is not an easy one. Hence to be a nurse is a calling. It is one that requires us to be thinkers in times of crisis, to be a counsellor when an employee or employer is facing a dilemma, to give appropriate health education for a chronic illness or prevent an occupational disease from happening and most importantly advise and make the necessary recommendations to both employee and employer. Added to this, we are entrusted with confidential information which we must ensure that all the legal aspects are followed, to safeguard all stakeholders. As occupational health nurses, we nurse and care for all employees, we dedicate our time and give our best to make sure that all employees at a workplace are healthy and safe from risks. Occupational health nurses are empathetic, organized, emotionally stable, adaptable, and make good judgement.

But in this year of 2020, our year that is dedicated to nurses, let us value also ourselves for a change. We make a difference in so many lives, we leave home early, arrive late at home and have little or no time for families or even ourselves. Take note, for this to happen we need to be healthy, wear our personal protective equipment and work within our scope of practice. But in return for nurses’ week, I would like to see that we as occupational health nurse practitioners get noted for the following:

- **Respect** – I would like for us to be admired for our abilities, our long list of admirable qualities and for our professional status.



# SASOHN

SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY OF  
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH  
NURSING PRACTITIONERS  
Registered Public Benefit Organisation (Reg no 8571079163)



Professional societies celebrate  
Year of the Nurse and Midwife  
**2020**

- **Recognition** – employees, employers and other stakeholders need to understand what is the role of the occupational health nurse. Most importantly, in this time of the pandemic of COVID 19, the occupational health nurse is one of the key and vital role players in any organization in taking the lead to advise and make recommendations.
- **Realistic** – Lets ensure that as an occupational health nurse that our tasks and duties to abide and follow are realistic, safe and within the boundaries of what is expected of us. Remember just like anyone else, if we are overworked, have little time to rest and recover, we will become fatigued and the chances of us having a mental breakdown is high.
- **Remembered** – As an occupational health nurse who has a wealth of information, who gives so much of ourselves, and ask for very little in return, it is about time that we are acknowledged for all that we do. We make an impact and a difference in so many lives, some may not appreciate us but let us be remembered as *that* occupational health nurse that left a legacy.
- **Renew** – The year 2020 was meant to be one filled with much so much praise and joy for nurses, it was our celebration as it was specially dedicated to the nurse and midwife. Let us recall the day we took an oath to be of service to others and continue in lots of good faith.

Lastly, let us be there for one another. It takes a nurse to understand the plight of another nurse and what we experience and share on this journey of nursing. In nursing the world back to health, let us nurse our souls, our friendships and relationships to one another. Let us start taking better care of ourselves, and allow people to appreciate us. We are and will be the back bone to the health structure. Let us take pride in what we do, that the world will remember all nurses who made countless sacrifices and those who made an everlasting difference and left a lasting impression.

***Happy Nurse's Day, may it be filled with lots of love and gratitude and countless blessings. Be safe and may you have an awesome Nurse's Day.***

Regards

Denise Minnie  
**SASOHN President**

Updated May 2018

SASOHN National Office:  
P O Box 7182, Bonaero Park, Suite 5, 1622  
Tel: +27 (0)861 SASOHN [+27(0)861 727 646]  
Fax: +27 (0)86 263 8757  
Email: office@sasohn.co.za

Review: February 2020