

Editor's note

In 2018, SASPEN will be celebrating its 30th anniversary. In the thirty years of its existence SASPEN has grown to be an established scientific entity, supporting practitioners in the clinical nutrition domain and setting standards for clinical nutrition support service practices in the country and the region.

The New Year starts with anticipation of the implementation of the new Journal Publishing Practices and Standards (JPPS) framework¹ which has been slightly delayed. Once launched, it will appear live on all JOL platforms around the world. The framework defines "detailed assessment criteria for the quality of publishing practices of Southern journals and is initially being used to assess the journals hosted on JOL platforms". As an update to the Editor's Note in the June 2017 issue, SAJCN's manuscript authors would be interested to note that their published manuscripts in 2017 collectively attracted just over 53 000 pdf downloads worldwide.² Additional measures to further increase the SAJCN's visibility are currently being discussed for implementation by the new Editorial Board.

The Health Systems Trust (HST) released the 12th edition of the District Health Barometer (DHB) 2016/17.³ "The publication seeks to highlight health system performance, inequities in health outcomes, and health resource allocation and delivery, as well as to track the efficiency of healthcare delivery processes across all provinces and districts in South Africa". Findings of direct interest to the nutrition landscape in the country, among other indicators, include:

- Of the quadruple burden of disease in the country, as defined in the report, the non-communicable diseases burden is the highest (38%) followed by that of HIV and TB (27%).
- A decreasing trend in the maternal mortality in facility ratio (iMMR) from 132.9 in 2012–2013 to 116.9 maternal deaths per 100 000 live births has been reported, the latter having almost reached the national iMMR target of 115 per 100 000 live births.
- Child deaths in hospital due to diarrhoea, pneumonia and severe acute malnutrition has reached its lowest levels since 2010/11.
- The exclusive breastfeeding rate at 14 weeks (41.6%) has not met the set national target of 55%.

Whereas further attention is clearly needed in a number of other areas of health service at the district level, the improvements achieved should serve as a catalyst to further targets being achieved.

References

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2. South African Journal of Clinical Nutrition Dec 2017. Available from: <https://www.ajol.info/stats/c36de5dbc56e20ff39d1c96cfe4fa9400bf08ce>
3. Massyn N, Padarath A, Peer N, Day C (Eds). District Health Barometer 2016/17. Durban: Health Systems Trust. 2017. Available from: <http://www.hst.org.za/publications/District%20Health%20Barometers/District%20Health%20Barometer%202016-2017.pdf>

Prof Demetre Labadarios

Editor-in-Chief: SAJCN