South African first

Tessa van der Merwe

Local endocrinologist, Dr Tessa van der Merwe, recently became the first South African and the first woman to serve on two international obesity task forces.

She has been appointed to the International Association for the Study of Obesity (IASO) as Honorary Secretary for four years. She has also been invited to sit on the International Obesity Task Force (IOTF), a committee that serves the World Health Organisation by spreading global awareness.

Van der Merwe will be responsible for educating key stakeholders from government, the medical fraternity, the food industry and the public about the dangers and cost implications of obesity.

It is the first time that a developing country is represented on the Excom of IASO. Van der Merwe said that developing countries are lagging behind and aims to develop ties with Australasia and South America, and ultimately represent all developing countries at a global level. High on her list of priorities for the next two years is at least one big Africa/Middle-East conference in South Africa to address the obesity challenges in these regions.

Van der Merwe also serves on the SA Society for the Study of Obesity (SASSO). The recent release of the first South African obesity guidelines was a huge achievement for SASSO.

She will attend the upcoming Stock Conference on obesity and hopes to involve young African scientists.

Vitamins for all

The Health Department has pressurised local food producers to add vitamins and minerals to bread, maizemeal and sugar to prevent malnutrition and maternal and childhood diseases that can lead to death, mental retardation, blindness and birth defects.

Minister Tshabalala-Msimang said that essential nutrients could reduce child mortality by a quarter, measles mortality by half and diarrhoea-related mortality by a third in South Africa.

A 1994 survey found that 33% of preschool children suffered from vitamin A deficiency, 21% were anaemic and 10% were iron-deficient. In 1999, a national survey of children under age 10, found that a half were getting less than 50% of their daily requirements.

Tshabalala-Msimang envisages forcing milling and food-producing companies to add nutrients to food. A National Food Fortification Programme has been established with representatives from the milling and sugar industries, pharmaceutical companies, academics, consumer groups and nutritionists. After negotiation, the industry agreed to pay R2 per person a year, based on a formula of 200g raw maizemeal and 250g bread a day.

The task team has recommended that maizemeal and wheat flour be fortified with vitamin A, thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, vitamin B6, folic acid, iron and zinc. Consumer acceptability tests showed that people could not differentiate between fortified and unfortified samples.

Fortified maizemeal would provide a child of four to six years with 46% of daily vitamin A and 50% of folic acid requirements.

The proposed micronutrient and fortification levels were indicated in draft legislations of the Act on Foodstuffs, Cosmetics and Disinfectants, gazetted last year. Final regulations, stipulating the mandatory fortification of maizemeal and wheat flour, will come into effect six months after publication.

According to the minister, research in June in rural communities indicated that about 81% of respondents were in favour of fortification.

In Venezuela, the population's iron deficiency dropped from 37%-15% after iron fortification. Canada began adding vitamins B1 and B2 to bread back in the 1940s and reduced deficiencies from 19% then to less than 1% now.

Less salt for kids

British parents recently received official guidance for the first time on how much salt is safe in their children's diets.

The British Food Standards Agency advised that children under six should not eat more than 2g a day. However a single slice of pizza, for example, contains over 4g of salt. The watchdog's warning follows stronger evidence since the 1994 study that links salt to high blood pressure, heart disease and strokes. However the food industry, which relies on the cheap taste improver, criticised the latest guidelines.

The British agency is lobbying the food industry to reduce salt content as up to 75% is consumed through processed food.

The Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) said that the average daily consumption of 9-12g should be cut to 6g. The daily limit should be less than 1g for infants under six months and no more than a gram for those under a year. The limit for children younger than six years is 2g, while those aged up to 14 years should not eat more than 5g a day.

Peter Sherratt, general secretary of the Salt Manufacturer's Association, commented that the study was too shallow and not properly researched.

ARP Walker Award

Alex Walker

The winners of the ARP Walker Award were announced at a special symposium at the Biennial Nutrition Congress in Potchefstroom.

The Nutrition Manager of the SA Sugar Association

introduced the history of the award. He said the Association had financially supported hundreds of medical research projects since 1968. One of the crucial success factors had been the ongoing, voluntary contribution of time and expertise by a panel of scientific advisors.

Dr Alec Walker has been a member of this advisory panel since its inception. His insight into the literature, the research environment and his contribution to research had been invaluable. On his retirement as a panel member in 1999, SASA instituted the ARP Walker Award as a tribute. It presents the accolade every two years to a SASA research grant recipient who has completed a SASA sponsored project in that biennial cycle.

The winners of the Award in 2002 were Mieke Faber of the Medical Research Council and Salome Kruger of the University of Potchefstroom.

Mieke Faber: Dietary Practices of Normal Weight, Overweight and Obese Rural South African Women.

Mieke Faber in the field.

The dietary practices, perceptions and attitudes towards body weight and self-reported health status among women in a poor rural setting with different BMIs, were examined in this study.

Information was collected by means of a questionnaire, food frequency and 24-hour dietary recall from a convenience sample of 187 women.

No significant differences were observed in dietary patterns, portion sizes, food preparation methods or food preferences among the women of different BMI levels. There was also no difference in their attitude and perception towards weight control.

Nevertheless, the overall group provided useful information regarding dietary intakes and perceptions regarding overweight and obesity in this group. This will assist in planning future studies and intervention campaigns.

Salome Kruger: Thusa Bana - The prevalence, determinants and consequences of childhood obesity in North West Province.

Salame Kruger with fellow researchers.

The Thusa Bana study was done to determine the prevalence of overweight and obesity in 10-15 year old children in the NWP and to assess the determinants and consequences of being overweight.

The following methods were employed: anthropometry, 24-hour dietary recall, previous day physical activity recall and blood pressure measurements. About 22% of the boys and 15% of the girls were stunted. According to the IOTF cut-off points of BMI-for-age, 5.6% of the boys and 10% of the girls were overweight or obese. According to the Lohman cut-off points, 8% of boys and 18% of girls had a high percentage of body fat. There was a trend towards higher blood pressure with increasing percentage body fat.

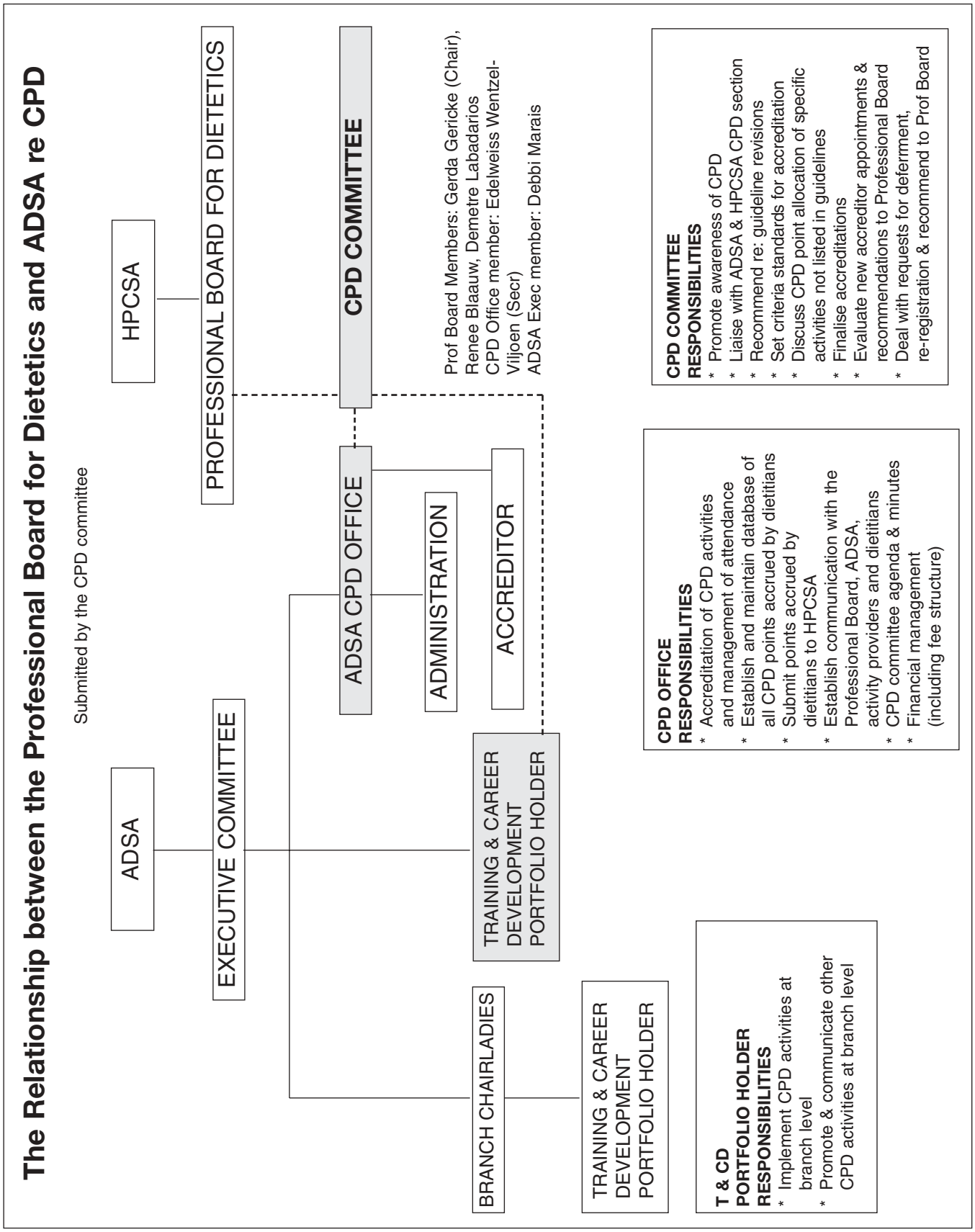
Although there was a low prevalence of overweight (6.3%) and obesity (1.6%) among all subjects, there was a higher overweight prevalence among white (14.1%) than non-white children (6.8%). There was a tendency towards a lower percentage body fat with an increase in physical activity among girls. Physical activity over weekends and number of persons in the household were associated with percentage body fat in boys. There was no significant association between dietary intakes and percentage body fat. Stunted children may be more prone to deposit body fat. Intervention early in life and targeting stunted children may help to reduce disease risk.

Three Ph D, twelve Masters and one B Sc Honours student completed their studies in the project.

JOHN KINNEY AWARDS

The International Journal of Applied and Basic Nutritional Sciences honoured three published authors with these awards in 2002 under the auspices of the Nestle Nutrition Institute USA during the ESPEN Clinical Congress in Glasgow.

Pictured from l-r: Dr K Furukawa (Award for General Nutrition for his paper 'Influences of Soybean Oil Emulsion on Stress Response and Cell-Mediated Immune Function in Moderately or Severely Stressed Patients'); Dr MM Meguid (Editor-in-Chief: Nutrition*); Dr NP Woodcock (Award for Nutrition and Metabolism for his paper 'Enteral versus Parenteral Nutrition'); Dr John M Kinney; Dr J Saavedra (Director: Nestle Nutrition Institute USA), and Dr G Melikian (Award for Paediatric Nutrition for his paper 'Relationship of Vitamin A and Carotenoid Status to Growth Failure and Mortality among Ugandan Infants with Human Immunodeficiency Virus').*


The Relationship between the Professional Board for Dietetics and ADSA re CPD
Submitted by the CPD committee
HPCSA
PROFESSIONAL BOARD FOR DIETETICS
CPD COMMITTEE
Prof Board Members: Gerda Gericke (Chair), Renee Blaauw, Demetre Labadarios
CPD Office member: Edelweiss Wentzel-Viljoen (Secr)
ADSA Exec member: Debbi Marais
ADSA
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
ADSA CPD OFFICE
ADMINISTRATION
ACCREDITOR
TRAINING & CAREER DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO HOLDER
BRANCH CHAIRLADIES
TRAINING & CAREER DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO HOLDER
CPD COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES
* Promote awareness of CPD
* Liaise with ADSA & HPCSA CPD section
* Recommend re: guideline revisions
* Set criteria standards for accreditation
* Discuss CPD point allocation of specific activities not listed in guidelines
* Finalise accreditations
* Evaluate new accreditor appointments & recommendations to Professional Board
* Deal with requests for deferment, re-registration & recommend to Prof Board
CPD OFFICE RESPONSIBILITIES
* Accreditation of CPD activities and management of attendance
* Establish and maintain database of all CPD points accrued by dietitians
* Submit points accrued by dietitians to HPCSA
* Establish communication with the Professional Board, ADSA, activity providers and dietitians
* CPD committee agenda & minutes
* Financial management (including fee structure)
T & CD PORTFOLIO HOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES
* Implement CPD activities at branch level
* Promote & communicate other CPD activities at branch level

ARVID WRETLIND

January 1919 - August 2002

Professor Wretlind received his medical degree at the Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, in 1949. From 1940 to 1949 he worked there as an Assistant and Associate Professor in the Departments of Biochemistry and Pharmacology.

In 1962 he was appointed Professor and Head of the Department of Nutrition and Food Hygiene at the Swedish National Institute of Public Health. From 1970 to 1977 he was Head of the Nutrition Unit at the Karolinska Institute and was appointed Professor of Human Nutrition in 1975.

From 1977 to 1979 he was Head of the Vitrum Institute for Human Nutrition in Stockholm and in 1979 was invited to become Head of the Cutter Vitrum Institute of Human Nutrition in California. In 1981, Professor Wretlind was appointed as Visiting Professor at the Institute of Human Nutrition and the Department of Surgery at Columbia University in New York. In 1982, he accepted a position as Scientific Adviser to KabiVitrum AB in Stockholm.

Professor Wretlind published 270 papers on nutrition, pharmacology and biochemistry in the peer-reviewed scientific literature, most of them related to intravenous nutrition. In 1943, he developed a method by which a safe amino acid preparation could be produced by dialysing an enzymatic casein hydrolysate. Later he was the first to show that animals could grow on a diet where all protein was exchanged for synthetic essential amino acids. Since 1954, he worked on the development and safe use of intravenous fat emulsions. These investigations proved it possible to produce an intravenous fat emulsion which could safely be used to cover the energy requirement during intravenous feeding. That fat emulsion, Intralipid, was made available in 1962 and is still in wide use today as a source of energy and essential fatty acids. This discovery added further impetus to the use of total parenteral nutrition to help patients unable to nourish themselves via the oral or enteral route.

During recent years, Professor Wretlind's main activities have been in experimental and clinical studies of parenteral nutrition as well as drug containing fat emulsions. He has investigated the cause(s) and mechanism(s) of 'creaming' that occurs when fat emulsion is mixed with serum or plasma from severely ill patients. The use of ethylesters of fatty acids in the form of emulsions was a new field of his studies as was the safe use of iodine containing fat emulsions, which are used to visualise the hepatic tissue by computerised tomography.

Professor Wretlind also studied Swedish dietary habits and was on various committees dedicated to improving these. He was Chair of the Swedish Food Law Committee that revised Swedish Food Law and proposed the new Swedish Food Administration.

Professor Wretlind was an Honorary Member of the American Society for Clinical Nutrition, the European Society of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition, the Sociedad Colombiana de Cirurgia, Sociedad Venezolana de Nutricion Parenteral y Enteral, the Swedish Society of Nutrition, the Scientific Nutrition Society of Bulgaria, the Deutsche Arbeitsgesellschaft für künstliche Ernährung and the American College of Nutrition. He was also a member of the Swedish Association of Physicians, the Swedish Society of Medical Sciences, the Swedish Royal Academy of Engineering Sciences, the New York Academy of Sciences and the International Rotary Club. He was also a member of the Editorial Boards of the *Journal of the American College of Nutrition* and the *Annals of Nutrition and Metabolism*.

In his pioneering and distinguished career, Professor Wretlind was awarded the Swedish Royal Order of Polar Star in 1965, the Commandership of the Swedish Royal Order of Vasa in 1972, the Annual Golden Prize Medal of the Swedish Royal Academy of Engineering Sciences in 1979 and the fourth WH Sebrell Jnr International Lecturership in Nutrition of Columbia University in 1979. He received an Honorary Doctorate of Science at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey and, in 1986, the sixth annual Bristol-Myers Award for Distinguished Achievement in Nutrition Research.

Demetre Labadarios

DENNIS PARKE

November 1922 - November 2002

Professor Dennis Parke was born in London and received his secondary education at the West Ham Municipal School. He subsequently trained at University College, London, where he obtained a 1st Class Honours Degree in chemistry, and then at St. Mary's Hospital Medical School where he was awarded a PhD in 1952. His University studies were interrupted by the war, and he served initially with the Royal Artillery and then as a pathologist with the Royal Army Medical Corps.

After a brief spell at Glaxo Laboratories in Greenford, he joined Professor R. Tecwyn Williams, a pioneer in the field of drug metabolism, initially as an Assistant and rapidly rose to the positions of Lecturer, Senior Lecturer and Reader. He was among the first to synthesise radiolabelled compounds and utilise these to investigate their pathways of metabolism. His studies particularly focused on benzene and aniline.

In 1967, he was appointed as the first Head and Professor of Biochemistry at the new University of Surrey in

Guildford. A visionary man, he recognised the increasing demand for toxicologists both nationally and internationally, and pioneered university courses to meet the needs of industry. His efforts were always directed at improving research facilities and integrating different disciplines. He loathed non-productive bureaucratic administration.

Moreover, he organised the first Workshops in Drug Metabolism held in Guildford. The importance of metabolism in xenobiotic toxicity was the principal thrust of his initial research and he wrote the first reviews linking diet and nutrition to chemical toxicity.

In a very short time, Dennis propelled the department to international prominence and his students were keenly sought by the pharmaceutical industry. He attracted a young gifted staff that he never failed to inspire and support. Dennis retired in 1987 and was Emeritus Professor since 1990.

Dennis published some 400 papers in leading journals and edited a number of books. He was never content with descriptional observations. In 1968, he wrote one of the first books dealing with the metabolism of drugs, entitled The Biochemistry of Foreign Compounds. He was the Founding Editor of the journal Xenobiotica concerned with the metabolism, pharmacokinetics and toxicity of drugs and other xenobiotics, the first of its genre. A very frequent speaker at scientific meetings, he enjoyed playing the 'devil's advocate'.

Many organisations sought his advice, including the Committee of Safety of Medicines (of which he was a member for more than a decade), the World Health Organisation, the US Environmental Protection Agency and the US Food and Drug Administration. He received a plethora of awards but he particularly cherished the Scheele medal, awarded to him in Sweden in 1989 for his contributions to drug metabolism and toxicology, and the MD (hc) awarded to him in 1995 by the University of Lodz, Poland.

Dennis Parke was a very generous person who would see only the good in people. An excellent raconteur of anecdotes and a polymath, there was never a dull moment in his presence. His many students appreciated him as the best mentor and he continued to follow and advise them on their careers.

Dennis died a week after his 80th birthday which is to be commemorated by a special issue of *Inflammopharmacology*, containing reviews written by his many colleagues. Five days before he died, his sharp mind was planning a large party to celebrate his 60th wedding anniversary with his wife Doreen.

We are privileged to have known and benefited from Professor Dennis Parke as a teacher, colleague and friend.

Costas Ioannides, University of Surrey, and Demetre Labadarios

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