

REPORT ON CONFERENCE: 1ST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON HEALTH SCIENCE EDUCATION, LEADERSHIP AND PRACTICE

L. A. Sehularo, M Cur, RN
North-West University
School of Nursing Science
Leepile.Sehularo@nwu.ac.za

The School of Nursing Science on the Mafikeng Campus of the North West University (NWU) hosted the first International Conference on Health Science Education, Leadership and Practice from the 15th to 17th April 2015 at the Birchwood Conference Centre, Boksburg, South Africa. The conference was funded by Atlantic Philanthropies. The purpose of the conference was to provide an opportunity for all health practitioners, educators, leaders, human and social scientists, other scientists and students from across the globe to share their knowledge, practical experiences, research and network with one another through concurrent abstract sessions, plenary, workshops and social functions.

This conference was officially opened by the North West University Campus Rector, Prof. Mashudu Davhana-Maselesele. ‘This conference afforded health practitioners, educators, leaders, human and social scientists, as well as other scientists and students across the globe the opportunity of sharing their knowledge, practical experiences, research and network with one another through concurrent abstract sessions, plenary sessions, workshops and social functions,’ she said.

Dignitaries attended were, among others, the MEC of Health in the Gauteng Province, Ms. Qedani Mahlangu, the MEC (Member of the Executive Committee or



provincial minister) for Health in the North West Province, Dr. Magome Masike, and the Executive Manager of Strategic Planning in the Department of Education of the North West Province, Ms. Daphney Mohube. The keynote speaker was Prof. Wendy Sword, RN, Ph.D., who is the Director of the School of Nursing and Associate Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa, Canada. Prof. Sword has a longstanding academic career, having been a professor at McMaster University for over 28 years before assuming her role at the University of Ottawa on 1 February 2015. She addressed conference delegates on trends in higher education and preparing practitioners of the future.

Furthermore, the conference featured a wide range of expert speakers in health science education, leadership and practice, including Dr. Nonhlanhla Jabulile Makhanya, Prof. Fhumulani Mavis Mulaudzi, Dr. Siphon Mkhize and many others who shared their expertise and experiences, support and motivations with regard to health science education, leadership and practice.

The conference addressed the following subthemes: human resource development, teaching and learning, safe health care practice and contemporary health issues. Topics such as trends in higher education, preparing practitioners of the future, mentoring for health care practitioners, and workshops such as writing for publication, proposal writing for funding, programme evaluation and issues in implementing problem-based and inquiry learning were shared.

Almost all colleagues in the School of Nursing Science on the Mafikeng Campus of the North West University presented their research work. My research topic was 'Stakeholders' perceptions of how illegal substance use can be prevented among adolescents by focusing on resilience as a protective factor'.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to extend my gratitude to the Mafikeng Campus of the North West University (NWU) as well as the Atlantic Philanthropy (AP) for the financial assistance that enabled me to attend this conference.