

# SCHOOL OF NURSING SCIENCE FIRST LEADERSHIP CAMP

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The School of Nursing Science (SONS) at the Mafikeng Campus of the North-West University (NWU) hosted the first students' leadership camp from 20 to 23 November 2016. The camp was held at River Cottage, Parys, in the Free State province of the Republic of South Africa. The camp was attended by all student nurses from levels 1 to 4, nursing students from the post-basic programme, Indigenous Knowledge System undergraduate students, Nursing Parents Forum (NPF) representatives, SONS academic staff members, representatives from the South African Nursing Council (SANC) as well as the Vice Chancellor of the NWU, Professor Dan Kgwadi. The main objectives of the camp were:

- To foster collaboration between lecturers, parents, postgraduate and undergraduate students in creating leaders in the field of nursing by learning from each other
- To improve research and public speaking skills among undergraduate nursing students



Several speakers presented different topics on leadership, including Prof Dan Kgwadi (Vice Chancellor: NWU), Prof. Abel Pienaar (Director: SONS), Mr Benjamin Grobler (Legal Manager: SANC), Sister Mothupi (Operational Manager: Mahikeng Provincial Hospital), Mr Matsipane (Head of Teaching and Learning: SONS), Ms Nakedi (SONS NPF representative) and final-year nursing students (Mr Ntho, Mr Ditshwele, Ms Morulane and Mr Kgasu).

On the first day of the camp, various speakers shared their knowledge on leadership and on the progress of NWU SONS. Prof Kgwadi started by telling the students that he was from a rural area and obtained his first degree at the Mafikeng Campus of the North-West University. He further informed the students that a leader is a person who is straightforward and very honest, and as a leader you cannot please everybody because of competing and conflicting interests. Prof Pienaar gave a presentation entitled “Become a Leader in Nursing – Who Holds Your Future”. He explained that 50 to 70% of healthcare services are rendered by nurses in South Africa. There is a need for leadership in nursing. He said leadership is earned and nobody stands in anyone’s way except yourself. Sister Mothupi spoke about leadership in the clinical environment. She indicated that a leader has to be knowledgeable and encourage students to know and apply all healthcare policies and protocols at all times. Mr Grobler spoke about the Nursing Act, ethics and professional misconduct in nursing. He emphasised that nursing students need to keep a good record of everything and to empower themselves on understanding their scope of practice to avoid unnecessary litigation. Ms Nakedi gave a brief background on the inception of the forum and its purpose. She reported that the NPF members were impressed by the simulation laboratory they saw at the SONS. She wished the fourth-year students well in their endeavours and asked junior students to look at the footprints left by the fourth years. Fourth-year student representatives talked about clinical district placement and teaching and learning at SONS. They started by thanking Prof. Pienaar for transforming nursing in Mahikeng from a department to a school. They also reported that there was a difference between the public and private sector regarding how patients are admitted, diagnosed and managed. Lastly, the students thanked Prof. Pienaar for making sure that teaching and learning continued for Mafikeng Campus nursing students despite the 2016 Fees-Must-Fall protests.

On the second day of the leadership camp, final-year nursing students presented their qualitative, quantitative and systematic review research projects for the NRPM 422 module. Mr Leepile Alfred Sehularo, the programme director, is the NRPM 422 module manager. Research topics were as follows:

- Student nurses’ experiences regarding shortage of professional nurses in clinical teaching and learning environment
- Experiences of student midwives regarding clinical learning in Mahikeng sub-district
- Systematic review: Guidelines to support professional nurses to improve clinical learning and teaching

- Enhancing student nurses' attitude towards African indigenous mental healthcare practices
- Factors influencing clinical learning of student midwives in labour wards/units
- Nurses' attitudes towards geriatric residents attending PHC in NWP
- An indigenous medicinal plant register for a rural Khoisan community
- Enhancement of clinical assessment in mental health nursing
- The magnitudes and the perspectives of nursing students regarding HIV and TB in the clinical environment
- Experiences of nursing students regarding community assessment of the health status in Mafikeng
- Experiences of nursing students regarding clinical support in the management of TB/HIV in PHC settings
- Perceptions of student nurse mentees regarding the clinical mentoring programme in NWP
- Experiences of student nurses regarding management of TB and HIV in PHC
- African indigenous health promotion in life orientation teaching and learning in a rural primary school

Panel members for the presentations were Mr K Bonokoane (BNSc, BN candidate), Ms T Chandu (MPH, MSc, BSc) and Mr Watson (MA, BA Hons, BA). Mr Watson, who is a staff member from the Potchefstroom Campus of the NWU, was impressed with the final-year student nurses' presentations. He further indicated that these student nurses were ready for postgraduate programmes. SONS is aiming at publishing all 14 research projects in accredited journals in the 2017 academic year. After the presentations, Mr Lepedi and Ms Diphoko spoke on behalf of all final-year nursing students and cautioned that research was not child's play and that "one needs to work very hard in order to obtain the intended results".

On the same day after the research presentations, a gala dinner was held for the final-year nursing students. Interestingly, not all of the students knew that there would be such a gala dinner. Nursing students from different levels performed poems, songs, dramas, etc. for entertainment.

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