

EDITORIAL

This is the first issue of the newly named *Southern African Journal of Social Work and Social Development*, which has replaced *The Social Work Practitioner-Researcher*. The previous title of the journal has served the South African social work community well since it started in 1988. Under that title, the journal has made a particularly strong contribution to advance evidence-based practice and measurement in social work. Now, almost 30 years later, the journal has been rebranded as it embraces the shift in direction that has emerged over the past ten years or so, namely to develop the scientific basis of a developmental approach to welfare and social work in South Africa, and more broadly in the southern African region.

At the end of 2015, Prof. Jean Triegaardt retired as journal editor, and for the duration of 2016, I served as acting editor. I am delighted to report that the Board has appointed Prof. Ansie Fouché as the new editor, as of 1 January 2017, with me as co-editor. On behalf of the Board, I wish to welcome Ansie into this important role of leading one of only two social work journals in South Africa and one of very few in the wider region. We wish her great success.

Ansie is an Associate Professor of social work at the Vaal Triangle Campus of the North-West University, where she has been teaching for 11 years. Her postgraduate research focused on play therapy for and forensic assessments of sexually abused children. She has published more than a dozen articles in local and international journals, including the *British Journal of Social Work* and *Research on Social Work Practice*, and has presented papers at conferences in South Africa, France, Korea, Spain and Australia. She was a guest editor for *Research on Social Work Practice* on the theme of South African social work practice in 2017.

The articles published in this inaugural issue of *Southern African Journal of Social Work and Social Development* cluster around three themes: vulnerable adolescents, traumatised adults, and social work students.

Two articles focus on vulnerable adolescents. **Marinus, Van der Westhuizen and Alpaslan** present research on rural adolescents whose parents have a substance addiction. Their qualitative research explores these young people's experiences and coping methods, including the use of social support. **George's** research aims to identify the determinants of adolescent suicidal ideation. Using a large data set, George's quantitative analysis finds that both dispositional factors within the adolescents and

social factors in their families and social support networks influence their suicidal ideation.

Two articles deal with traumatised adults. **Boshoff, Strydom and Botha** used mixed methods to evaluate an intervention to empower police officials to deal with the aftermath of traumatic events. Using a range of measures, the study results show significant improvements in knowledge and skills for managing trauma. **Slabbert** used ecological theory to investigate the kinds of support systems that domestic violence survivors use, and found that abused women draw on a range of social support networks, including their significant others, the church and professionals.

The last two articles discuss the education of social work students. **Raniga and Seepamore** used interviews and community work reports of students to investigate their experiences of profiling communities in KwaZulu-Natal. They highlight the importance of critical reflexivity in this macro practice, in recognising the interface between their own context and those of the communities in which they work. Finally, **Frantz, Roman and De Jager** conducted a systematic literature review on the learning styles adopted by social work students, the results of which foreground a diverging learning style, centred on people, emotions and imagination.

In various ways, all six articles emphasise the importance of context in social work education and practice, lending support to the usefulness of the person-in-environment metaphor that has guided social work theory and practice for many decades.

Adrian D. van Breda

Assistant Editor