



From the desk of the Women's Wing

2025: Connecting, inspiring, motivational

Dr Sisanda Mabude

As the year concludes, let us reflect on the progress and activities of the SAMA Women's Wing (WW) in 2025. This year, we have intentionally focused on strategy, as the committee began it with an in-depth assessment of the previous year, and goal-setting for 2025.

The monthly feature "From the desk of the Women's Wing" in *SAMA Insider* has continued to spotlight the unique perspectives, challenges and triumphs of women in the medical profession. The desk curates content that resonates with the lived experiences of female practitioners, ensuring that their voices are both heard and celebrated.

Highlights of the year include a 4-week series of webinars in August, which focused on topics that empower and celebrate the achievements of female medical practitioners:

- Taking the leap into private practice – a conversation balancing inspiration with practical knowledge and experience from two speakers in private practice
- Navigating legal and labour realities – empowering members with a better understanding of their rights, advocacy and the need for systemic change in workplace policies that affect women
- Prioritising women's health and self-care – an honest conversation and reality check on the fact that our health is not a luxury but a necessity
- Mentorship and leadership in practice – the concluding session, which showcased an amazing panel of women we look up to, admire and can now access through WW community and networking opportunities. The WW has an accessible database of members.

Beyond these webinars, the WW has launched an online resource hub, giving members access to articles, toolkits and recorded content from past events. Regular newsletters keep the community engaged, highlighting upcoming events, sharing inspirational stories from members and offering guidance on navigating both personal and professional challenges. Importantly, the platform also encourages feedback and topic suggestions, maintaining a dynamic connection with its audience.

The flagship event of the year was held in October. The Women in Medicine Forum, in association with the SA Health Business Academy, hosted an event that presented a wide variety of topics within a beautiful networking setting, while celebrating all things women. Empowering and motivational



conversations started the day, followed by practical business discussions and a guide to financial independence.

Workshops during the forum included sessions on leadership development, negotiation skills and strategies for work-life integration. Panel discussions provided insight into overcoming barriers in career advancement, and fostering a culture of mentorship among women in medicine. Attendees also had one-on-one career coaching and financial planning consultations, reinforcing a commitment to holistic professional development.

The end of the year focuses nationally on 16 Days of Activism, with the WW not only strongly supporting the call for action against gender-based violence (GBV) and femicide, but also planning activities aligned with this national programme. We recognise that female doctors are both victims of this scourge facing our society, and also have a role to play in identifying and managing GBV cases.

To further this cause, the WW has partnered with local organisations to provide training workshops on recognising and responding to GBV in clinical settings. These sessions aim to equip practitioners with the tools needed to support victims and to advocate for systemic change.

The WW also actively participated in public campaigns, leveraging its platform to raise awareness and mobilise action within the healthcare community.

The work will continue in 2026, with a commitment to grow and expand our reach to members with programmes that are aligned to their needs.