



From the desk of the Women's Wing

Promoting gender equity, providing support and influencing policy

Dr Sisanda Mabude, SAMA Women's Wing

The recent SAMA Health Summit offered more than a platform for clinical dialogue; it created a timely opportunity to reflect on how health innovation, equity and leadership can advance the priorities of the SAMA Women's Wing. Under the summit theme, "Innovate to elevate: Transforming healthcare together", the discussions placed strong emphasis on practical solutions, ethical transformation and collaborative leadership. These priorities closely mirror the Women's Wing's mandate to promote gender equity, support women doctors and influence policy.

"We believe in taking up space, in shaping our own narrative, and in creating the opportunities we seek. We do not wait for a seat at the table, we build the table, and we bring others with us. If it is to be, it is up to us"

The SAMA Women's Wing has consistently positioned gender equity and parity as central to its purpose, particularly in relation to workplace participation, leadership opportunities and the experiences of women in medicine. By framing healthcare transformation as a collective responsibility, the summit reinforced the idea that equity is not an optional add-on, but a foundation for sustainable reform.



Dr Sisanda Mabude (SAMA WW) at the summit

The summit created a space where medical practitioners, researchers, policy thinkers and health system leaders could share expertise and challenge conventional thinking. Such platforms are essential for increasing the visibility of women professionals, expanding networks and encouraging mentorship across disciplines. When women doctors are included in shaping national health

conversations, their leadership strengthens both the profession and the communities it serves.

For the Women's Wing, the next step is to ensure that summit conversations translate into measurable progress: stronger workplace protections, better support for women doctors at different career stages, and empowerment and continued advocacy for women in the medical profession.

A prominent presence

The SAMA Women's Wing (WW) was a prominent presence at the SAMA Health Summit. A WW photo booth flanked the SAMA stand in the exhibition hall, providing an opportunity for delegates to have their photographs taken. Each female delegate received a WW-branded chocolate, information about the organisation and a lucky draw form.

The promotional pack read: "A small treat from the SAMA Women's Wing, a gentle reminder that you matter. We see YOU!"

The SAMA WW was established to further the interests of women doctors in SA.

"We are a special interest group of SAMA, committed to supporting and uplifting women in medicine. Our aim is to create a safe and supportive space where women can connect, share experiences and learn from one another, while also influencing policies that promote the interests of women doctors across the country.

"We are also passionate about the success of women in their careers in medicine and outside of medicine, and about empowering women to lead wherever we find ourselves.

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Dr Sharon Harbor, WW Chairperson



Tshepiso Mokoena (SAMA) presents a lucky draw prize to one of three winners



Diane Smith (SAMA Publishing)