



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **SAHPRA invests in patient safety – announcing new graduates**

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**Pretoria, 04 April 2024** - The South Africa Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA), in collaboration with Pharmacometrics Africa and the Department of Pharmacy and Pharmacology at the University of Witwatersrand, is pleased to announce the third cohort of graduates who successfully completed the short course for Clinical Assessors within African Regulatory Agencies.

The objective of developing the 13-week course was to not only address the critical skills gaps in regulatory sciences on the African continent but also addressed an essential part of patient safety. The course, accredited by the University of Witwatersrand, included perspectives from patient organisations like the National Osteoporosis Foundation of South Africa (NOFSA) and private sector players. Participants from National Regulatory Authorities included [Botswana's Medicines Regulatory Authority](#), [Ghana's Food and Drugs Authority](#), [Kenya's Pharmacy and Poisons Board](#), [Ethiopia's Food and Drug Authority](#), SAHPRA, [Rwanda's Food and Drug Authority](#), [Tanzania's Medicines and Medical Devices Authority](#), [Namibia's Medicines Regulatory Council](#), and the [Medicines Control Agency of Zimbabwe](#).

"This course has evolved to addressing healthcare challenges and the critical skills gap on the continent. These graduates will certainly do us proud in paving the way for growth on the continent," indicates SAHPRA CEO, Dr Boitumelo Semete-Makokotlela.

“This third iteration of the training program has allowed for candid dialogue among Regulators, pharmaceutical industry players and academics in order to ultimately benefit patients with better therapeutic interventions, access and quality of care across the continent,” said Professor Colin Pillai, CEO of Pharmacometrics Africa.

“We, at the Department of Pharmacy and Pharmacology at the University of the Witwatersrand, are thrilled to continue this journey and our unwavering commitment to supporting regulatory sciences vocational training in South Africa, and throughout the continent. We are committed to supporting regulatory sciences' education across the continent and we are excited to have our staff in the Division of Pharmacy Practice actively engaged in this high-quality programme,” said Professor Yahya E. Choonara from Wits University.

“For students, the course has closed knowledge gaps in the medicine’s development process and the assessment of clinical data. It has also provided knowledge and technical expertise for the risk-benefit evaluation of medicines. These are skills that are crucial in ensuring the registration of safe, efficacious, and good quality medicines for the patient. The course has enhanced the evaluation competency of the clinical units and enabled the timeous evaluation of the clinical aspects of applications received for marketing authorisation,” explained one of SAHPRA’s graduates, Ntombi Mthembu, Medicines Registration Officer: Clinical Post-registrations, as she shared her experience.

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**About SAHPRA:**

SAHPRA is tasked with regulating (monitoring, evaluating, investigating, inspecting and registering) all health products. This includes clinical trials, complementary medicines, medical devices and in-vitro diagnostics (IVDs). Furthermore, SAHPRA has the added responsibility of overseeing radiation control in South Africa. SAHPRA's mandate is outlined in the Medicines and Related Substances Act (Act No 101 of 1965 as amended) as well as the Hazardous Substances Act (Act No 15 of 1973).

SAHPRA has three pillars to ensure that medicines, medical devices and IVDs meet the requisite standards to protect the health and well-being of all who reside in South Africa:

- Safety
- Efficacy
- Quality

It is these three pillars that define the ethos of SAHPRA.

**About Pharmacometrics Africa:**

Pharmacometrics Africa is a not-for-profit company registered in South Africa as a platform for interested groups to establish and run open access quantitative clinical pharmacology educational programs in partnership with local research organizations and academic groups.

**About the Department of Pharmacy and Pharmacology at the University of the Witwatersrand:**

The Department of Pharmacy and Pharmacology at the University of the Witwatersrand is home to a dynamic and innovative community of academic and support staff, postgraduates, undergraduates and postdoctoral fellows. As leaders of pharmacy education and research in South Africa, the key areas of pharmaceutical formulation and drug delivery technology, regulatory sciences, pharmaceutical entrepreneurship, management of drug therapy, counselling on the use of medication, monitoring drug therapy outcomes and pharmacology lie at the heart of our activities. We are dedicated to providing high-quality research-led teaching and supervision that can change the world we live in.