



TRANSFORMING TOXICOLOGY LANDSCAPE FOR SAFER AND SUSTAINABLE TOMORROW

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

[ID-P#084] Addressing Challenges in Poisoning Epidemiology and Communication Among Medical Toxicologists in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA)

Candace van Pletzen and Carine Marks
Tygerberg Poison Information Centre

Introduction: Research on the epidemiology of poisoning in SSA is limited, and communication among Medical Toxicologists across different countries remains inadequate. Despite significant investments by the WHO in exploring a Poison Information Model in Eastern Africa, this communication gap persists. Leveraging technology, we aim to initiate virtual meetings to foster communication and collaboration among these nations.

Aim/Prospective outcome: Facilitate collaboration and knowledge exchange among Poison Information Centre's (PIC) and Medical Toxicologists in SSA to enhance the understanding and management of poisoning incidents.

Objectives: Share information on new toxins and emerging poisoning trends. Discuss and develop effective treatment protocols. Collaborate on research projects related to poisoning epidemiology and prevention. Launch joint initiatives to combat poisoning across Africa. Standardize treatment protocols to ensure consistency and efficacy. Facilitate the timely reporting and discussion of poisoning outbreaks. Exchange educational resources to enhance professional development. Foster strong professional relationships among Toxicologists and Poison Information Centers across the region.

Methods: The Medical Toxicology Network of Sub-Saharan Africa (MTNSSA) was established by inviting interested participants via email, who voluntarily opted to join its inaugural meeting. These monthly gatherings, hosted on Microsoft Teams and led by the Tygerberg PIC, are scheduled for the first Wednesday of each month. The meetings are designed to be inclusive, welcoming anyone interested in Medical Toxicology. Additionally, the meetings are recorded, minuted, and distributed to participants and organizations interested in building Poison Centre capacity in SSA.

Discussion and Conclusion: The inaugural meeting of the MTNSSA on 3 July 2024 gathered 22 participants, marking a pivotal step towards achieving its goals. These meetings are imperative in fostering discussions on poisoning outbreaks, sharing educational resources, and building professional relationships among Toxicologists and PIC's across the region. Participants expressed appreciation for this vital network, positioned to enhance understanding of acute poisoning in SSA and improve public health outcomes through effective prevention and treatment strategies.