

The end of the beginning

In this issue of the journal, we are proud to publish work done by one of the Emergency Care Society of South Africa's Special Interest Groups.¹ The Critical Care Retrieval Special Interest Group has been working for some time to clarify the definition of Critical Care Retrieval Services in the South African context. As a first step in developing this area of out-of-hospital care it is crucial to delimit its scope of operations and related aspects such as staffing, training, equipment and governance processes. While critical care retrieval as a distinct part of out-of-hospital care operations has been steadily growing in the last few years, events of the last 14 months have underscored the importance of this specialised service and the impact that it can have on patient outcomes. Much work remains to be done in relation to the development of additional qualifications for personnel working in this space and in relation to the development of out-of-hospital care systems capable of supporting such specialised care and further improving outcomes of this very vulnerable patient population. We hope to publish more work from this Special Interest Group in the near future.

This issue also marks the end of the beginning, so to speak, for the journal as we move into its second volume. We are still committed to applying for accreditation from the South African Department of

Higher Education and Training – something that we will only be able to do with three completed volumes in place (i.e. in early 2023). In terms of this journey, we are more or less half-way with three out of six issues published and a minimum of three to come. In South Africa, accreditation is a significant event in the evolution of any peer-reviewed journal and something that impacts on longer term sustainability and impact. Undoubtedly, the most difficult three years of a new journal's life span are the first three. We are very grateful for the support that has been evident over the last year (and even before 2020) and urge active researchers, students and academics to continue considering the South African Journal of Pre-hospital Emergency Care as a vehicle for the dissemination of their important work.

Christopher Stein
Editor-in-Chief

References

1. Venter C, Conradie N, Venter M, et al. A proposed definition of Critical Care Retrieval Services in the South African context. South African Journal of Pre-hospital Emergency Care 2021;2:7-10.