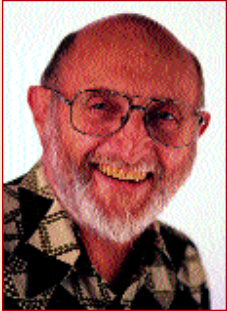


# Editor's comment

## Lehitraot\*



It is coincidental, but possibly appropriate, that I should be both editor and guest editor of this issue, because when it is published, it will be in the month of my retirement as editor of *CME*.

It is a rather frightening point in one's life, because of the implications. The grim reaper is already beginning to make his presence felt, even if it is only in one's imagination. One starts thinking about one's parents and their ages at death. One starts considering the theories of after-life, and conflicts between one's scientific training and the religious beliefs that have been inculcated into one's psyche from a young age. At times of introspection like these, I envy those who have an abiding faith in their religions. I envy them their sureness that once the earthly body reaches its finality, the 'soul', the essence, the mind and being of the person, will continue. My concern is that if it doesn't, what happens to all the knowledge, memories, emotions and feelings that beset us human beings? The thought that there is an eternal void stretching ahead of me after death, is perhaps the most frightening thought of all — that everything that I have been through on this earth will come to a sudden and definite STOP at the moment that my heart stops beating.

Hopefully, I still have a few years left in which I may be able to do some of the things that I enjoy, and maybe in the process earn a bit of money to pay for luxuries like travelling to see my children, eating out at my favourite restaurants and to buy my wife the occasional gift, not to show her that I love her — she is well aware of that — but to bring that smile to her face and to hear her tell me to stop spoiling her. What a thrill that gives me!!

Mainly, I hope that in my last few years, I'll be able to continue contributing to knowledge

and the betterment of the health of our nation. I hope I'll live to see an end to the controversies involving our State President and Minister of Health about HIV/AIDS. I hope I'll live to see peace descend on troubled areas like the DRC, Israel, Ireland and others beleaguered by internecine strife. I hope I'll live to see poverty and unemployment rooted out of our society, and equitable housing, clean water and medical care made available for our total population. I hope I'll live to see our country rid of the crime and violence so rampant in our society, so that South Africa becomes inviting enough that my children would want to return from their self-imposed exile.

I hope that in the 15 years and 4 months that I have been full-time editor of *CME*, I have made a bit of a difference, and that *CME* under my hand has helped the doctors of South Africa to provide a better level of health care to their patients.

Working for SAMA and doing the job of editor of *CME* has been the cherry on the top of my life. Although I was almost 50 years old when I started here, it rejuvenated me, and has left me with the satisfaction of having been in a job that I enjoyed to the fullest extent, and which has provided me with the opportunities of meeting and working with wonderful people.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone, too numerous to mention, from the young lady who cleans my office, to those experts and world-renowned luminaries in the medical field, who were so willing to share their knowledge and expertise, and everyone in between.

I especially want to thank, and here I must mention one name, my personal assistant who

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has worked so closely with me for the past 11 years: Elsa Lampropoulos. Thank you for your efficiency in administrating *CME*, for putting up with all my quirks, for seeing to my comfort, and that I always had a cup of tea when I needed it.

I will still be maintaining contact with SAMA and *CME* in other ways. I look forward to

assisting in any way I can, and furnishing whatever contributions I can to the furtherance of superb medical practice in South Africa.

**Fred N Sanders**

\*Hebrew: Till we meet again!



**RIDGET FARHAM**  
Sc(Hons), PhD, MB ChB

## Introducing our new editor – Dr Bridget Farham

It is a privilege and a pleasure to introduce Dr Bridget Farham who takes over the Editor's chair of *CME* from the May issue.

Dr Farham obtained a BSc (Hons) at Durham University in 1977 majoring in ecology. She went on to receive a PhD in seabird biology at the University of Aberdeen, in 1981. She moved to Cape Town the same year, where she completed a postdoctoral research fellowship at the Percy Fitzpatrick Institute of African Ornithology working on seabird-fisheries interactions in the Benguela Current.

She decided to change track and completed an MB ChB degree at UCT in 1989. Housejobs at Groote Schuur and Red Cross Children's Hospitals followed in 1990. After a brief sojourn in Radiotherapy at GSH, she moved to the UK as a GP trainee in Scotland for one year then spent a year in Labrado, Canada as a medical officer for the Grenfell Regional Health Services.

Dr Farham returned to South Africa in December 1994. Initially she worked as a registrar in the Casualty Department at GSH and then as a medical officer in the City of Cape Town clinics on the Cape Flats. During this time, she started editing and writing consumer medical web sites ([health.iafrica.com](http://health.iafrica.com)) and gave up clinical medical practice in 1997, specialising in editing, writing and research. She is currently also editor of *Perspective* magazine, consultant editor for the MRC's

AfroAIDSinfo portal, managing the research and health professions section, and she writes for the schoolbook publisher, Awareness Publishing in Johannesburg.

Bridget has been married to Craig for 19 years, and they have six cats.

We welcome Bridget to SAMA and to *CME*, and wish her success and fulfillment in her new position.

**Fred N Sanders**

### Reminder

The January 2003 issue of *CME* was accredited for 4 CPD ethics points. The accreditation number is A001/483/01/2003.