

Management guidelines for common kidney disorders relevant to South Africa

To the Editor: World Kidney Day (WKD), an annual event, is celebrated on 8 March 2012. As a project for WKD, the National Kidney Foundation of South Africa (NKFSA) has arranged for a group of experienced senior nephrologists from around the country to contribute to a guideline booklet presenting the diagnosis and state-of-the-art management of renal disorders. Its main aim is to educate and update general practitioners, but it should also be useful for under- and postgraduate students, urologists and specialist physicians.

The guideline is being edited and will be sent to the South African Renal Society for their endorsement. We aim to publish the guideline as a supplement to the *South African Medical Journal*. We thank the contributors to and supporters of the project, and the National Lotteries Distribution Trust Fund for financial support towards the initial draft copy of the guideline.

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Medical Association released a Medigram reporting the resolution of the WMA,⁹ but has not taken any proactive steps to champion the cause of the persecuted doctors. Why has SAMA not been more active? Why have members of the medical profession not seen it as their ethical obligation to take action in solidarity with colleagues, if only to press our government, a member of the UN Security Council, to take diplomatic action? One of the consistent findings of research into complicity of health professionals in human rights abuses^{3,10,11} has been the effect of isolation and a failure to stand up for colleagues under threat, a finding echoed in the conclusions of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.^{3,11}

It appears that since the late 1970s we have not learnt sufficiently the importance of health professionals speaking truth to power. One of us (SS) wrote to the President of SAMA, urging SAMA to take action, to which there was not even an acknowledgement. South Africans deserve better.

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1. Physicians for Human Rights. Do no harm: A call for Bahrain to end systematic attacks on doctors and patients. Physicians for Human Rights, Cambridge. April 2011. https://s3.amazonaws.com/PHR.../bahrain-22April_4-45pm.pdf (accessed 12 January 2012).