



case of actions having been taken, and concerns from interested parties (with vested interests in the outcomes) are irrelevant. Such interests would relate to patient care, professional reputations and the profession in general.

As colleagues of the aforementioned parties, and members of the same public health care system, should our concerns be ignored (one should not forget other incidents of a similar nature involving Drs Blaylock and von Mollendorf)? More specifically, if suggestions of impropriety are the basis of bureaucratic action, then surely it is in the best interests of all if the concerns are addressed rather than ignored. The lack of response is troubling as it seems to imply a lack of accountability or a lack of awareness of the seriousness and implications of such actions.

Clinicians are at the coalface, but to render an effective service it is essential that appropriate administrative structures and processes operate. Arbitrary actions create distrust and uncertainty and ultimately undermine morale. In any system, this is dangerous; in a resource-constrained environment, it is potentially catastrophic. If colleagues have conducted themselves in either an unprofessional or an unethical manner, no-one argues a need for action. So far, there is no convincing or objective evidence that this was the case in either instance. As a committee that deals with issues of professional and ethical standards, we would expect the relevant authorities to respond to concerns raised in a forthright and transparent manner, as a general principle. Certainly in Gauteng Province it is hoped that the recently signed Memorandum of

Agreement between the Gauteng Department of Health and the Universities of Limpopo Medunsa Campus, Pretoria and Witwatersrand will ensure a collaborative approach to issues of mutual interest.

While it could be anticipated that the authorities concerned may raise an objection to our approaching the 'media', it should be borne in mind that this communication – such as it is – is one directed at colleagues in the profession based on our choice of publication and, further, that it follows approaches to the respective authorities that appear to have been overlooked.

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Erratum

The editorial entitled 'Bread, baby shoes or blusher? Myths about social grants and "lazy" young mothers' by Marlise Richter (February *SAMJ*) contained several errors due to the working document being inadvertently replaced by an unrevised file close to sign-off. We apologise to the author. Readers are referred to the version on www.samj.org.za, which includes all corrections.