

MARCH 2026 - ISSUE 33

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SCHOOL OF
CLINICAL MEDICINE
NEWSLETTER



Dear Colleagues and Students,

Welcome to the March 2026 edition of the School of Clinical Medicine Newsletter.

As we progress through the academic year, this issue celebrates the remarkable talent, dedication, and collaborative spirit that define our School. From leadership appointments and national awards to research milestones and academic symposia, the achievements featured here highlight the excellence of our staff and students in clinical care, teaching, and research.

Congratulations to all colleagues recognized in this edition. Your accomplishments bring pride to the School and inspire everyone around you. Whether advancing specialist training, strengthening public healthcare, leading impactful research, or fostering academic dialogue, your work contributes meaningfully to our shared mission.

We also extend our gratitude to everyone who contributed to this newsletter and the initiatives it represents. Your collective efforts across our clinical platforms, academic departments, and partner institutions ensure that the School remains innovative, responsive, and committed to service.

We are pleased to announce that the School now holds a two-year subscription with Gideon (please see further details in the newsletter for access links).

May 2026 be a year of continued growth, collaboration, and impact for our School.

Happy reading, and thank you for being part of our journey.
Prof Mboyo-Di-Tamba Willy Vangu
Acting Head of School

MARCH 2026

Staff Appointments and Promotions

Acting Assistant Head of School – Cluster Head C

Meet Adjunct Professor Ashraf Coovadia
Acting Assistant Head of School – Cluster Head C

Prof Ashraf Coovadia holds qualifications in MBChB, DCH (CMSA), Dip HIV Man (CMSA), FCP (Paed CMSA), and PG Dip HSE (Wits).

In 2025, he was grandfathered in as a Paediatric Emergency Medicine (PEM) subspecialist by the HPCSA.

He has served as Academic Head of the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health at the University of the Witwatersrand since October 2016, and as Head of Department of Paediatrics at Rahima Moosa Mother and Child Hospital, Johannesburg since January 2014.

Prof Coovadia completed his undergraduate medical training at the University of Zambia in 1990 and went on to complete his paediatric postgraduate training at the University of the Witwatersrand in 1998.

His current areas of interest include medical education, paediatric emergency medicine training, advocacy for South Africa's public healthcare system, and the use of artificial intelligence in medical education.



Head of Department Appointment

Congratulations to Dr Coceka Mnyani with her appointment as Head of Department - Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology from 1 January 2026.

Dr Mnyani is a Clinician Scientist and a Wits-trained Obstetrician and Gynaecologist with over two decades of experience working in maternal and women's health in various settings. She has worked in full-time clinical practice and as an academic in the public sector.

She has also worked in donor and donor-funded organisations, and in the pharmaceutical industry where



she gained extensive experience working in various healthcare settings in South Africa, and in several countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

Dr Mnyani also trained in maternal-fetal medicine and was the recipient of the Wits-Carnegie fellowship for both her PhD and post-doctoral studies. Her special interest is in HIV-related maternal health and was one of the lead clinicians in the Soweto PMTCT programme, one of the largest in the country.

She has published widely in both local and international peer-reviewed journals and is a reviewer for several local and international journals. Before her medical degree at the University of Cape Town, she obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in Archaeology.

Academic Head of Division Appointment/s

Congratulations to Dr Jacqui Bezuidenhout with her appointment as Academic Head of Division - Division of Paediatric Neurodevelopment from 1 January 2026.

Dr Bezuidenhout holds qualifications in MBCHB(UP); DCH(SA); FCPAED(SA); Cert of Development (2015); MSc Neurodevelopment.

She is a Pediatric Developmental specialist at the Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital (CMJAH) Neurodevelopmental Clinic, with a special interest in cerebral palsy, autism

spectrum disorder, and ADHD. She is a senior lecturer at the University of the Witwatersrand and the Wits MSc Neurodevelopment coordinator. Through collaborations with Toronto Sick Kids International, Dr Bezuidenhout was a co-developer of the novel MSc Child Life and Paediatric Psychosocial Care degree, offered in partnership with the School of Therapeutic Sciences and currently in its second cohort of students.

She is passionate about advancing education and advocating for children with disabilities. She serves as the secretary of the Global Professional Education Committee of the International Alliance of Academies of Childhood Disability (IAACD) and as the chairperson of the Southern African Alliance Academy of Childhood Disability (SA-Child). National activities include developing a South



African CP register with Dr Gillian Saloojee through the SA-Child platform and serving as a clinical director for Special Olympics (Healthy Young Athletes) for children with intellectual and physical disabilities. Her personal research is focused on establishing a person-centered cerebral palsy register for use in SA.

Congratulations to Prof Jennifer Geel with her appointment as Academic Head of Division - Division of Paediatric Haematology & Oncology from 1 January 2026.

Prof Geel is the Head of Paediatric Haematology-Oncology at the Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital.

She currently serves as the president of the Africa branch of the International Paediatric Oncology Society (SIOP Africa) and is the principal investigator of the South African National Hodgkin lymphoma group.

She is a founder member of SEARCH, which is the research arm of the South African Association of Paediatric Haematology-Oncology and has co-authored more than 45 peer-reviewed publications. She has a strong interest in stem cell transplantation and the GICC 6 focus cancers and supervises multiple PhDs and Masters' degrees.



Congratulations to Dr Kajaal Parbhoo with her appointment as Academic Head of Division - Division of Paediatric Neurology from 1 January 2026.

Dr Parbhoo is a full-time Paediatric Neurologist at Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital and serves as the GEMP 3 Coordinator for Paediatrics. Since joining the hospital in 2021, she has developed and expanded the paediatric neurology service, including establishing EEG training and a dedicated



Paediatric Neurology fellowship teaching programme for trainees at the University of the Witwatersrand. She is deeply passionate about medical education at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels and is committed to strengthening neurology services across the University clinical platform through teaching, support, and the development of effective referral pathways to optimise patient care.

Congratulations to Dr Fikile Mabena with her appointment as Academic Head of Division - Divisions of Paediatric Infectious Diseases from 1 March 2026.

Dr Mabena works as a paediatrician, infectious diseases specialist and a University of the Witwatersrand clinical lecturer at Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital. She is a clinician scientist who strives for dignified, evidence-based and compassionate patient care.

She is a part-time PhD student at the Vaccines & Infectious Diseases Analytics Research Unit (Wits-VIDA). Dr Mabena is an unabashed advocate for marginalised children and young people. She is the president of the Southern African Society for Paediatric Infectious Diseases (SASPID). She is grateful to raise their four children with her best friend and husband.



Congratulations to Dr Cecil Levy with his appointment as Academic Head of Division - Division of Paediatric Nephrology from 1 March 2026.

Dr Levy studied medicine at the University of Witwatersrand (Wits) and then specialized in Paediatrics on the Wits circuit. After serving as a registrar, Dr Levy worked as a general paediatrician at Rahima Moosa Mother and Child Hospital before moving to Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital to do nephrology. Dr Levy took over as the head of paediatric nephrology at CMJAH in 2010 and then, in 2017, moved to NMCH to head the unit here soon after the hospital admitted its first patients.

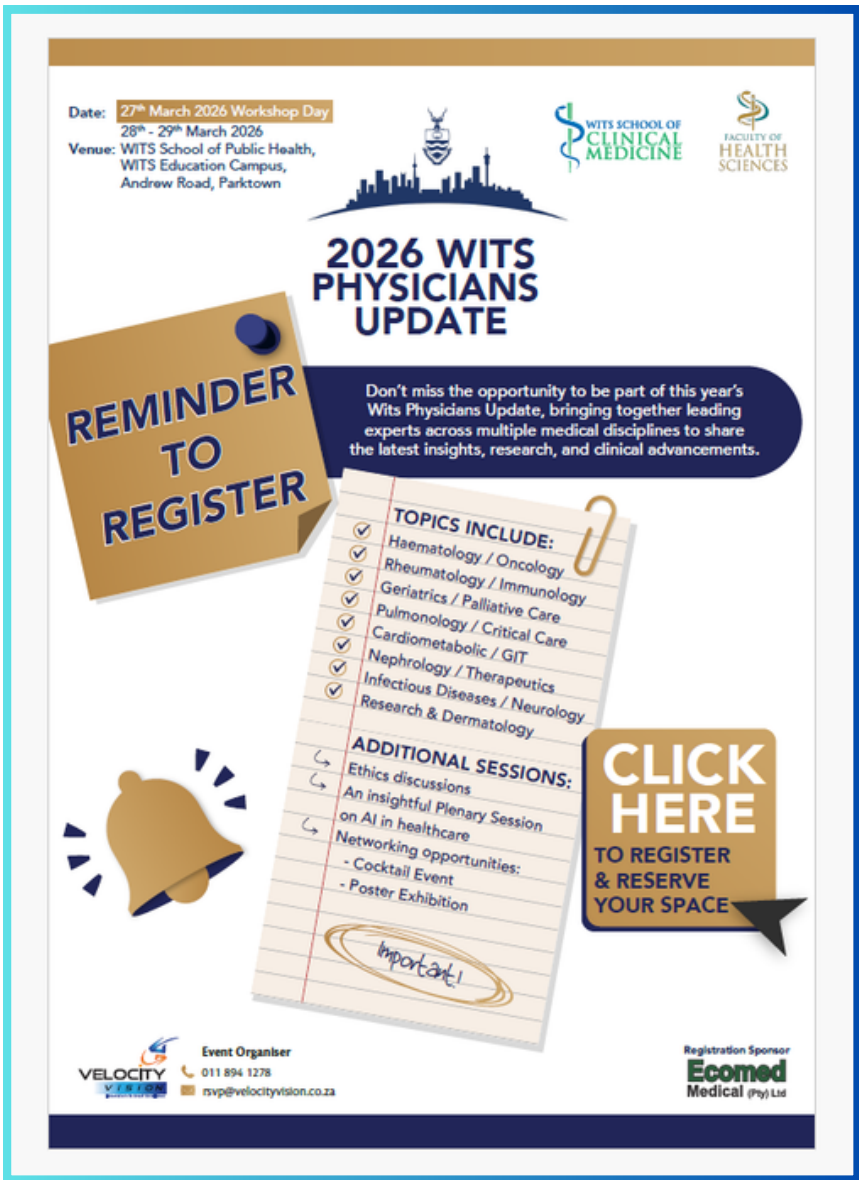


Dr Levy enjoys teaching and interacting with his patients and has a key interest in critical care nephrology. His research interests revolve mainly around the social aspects of paediatric kidney disease in South Africa and the inequities that prevent access to tertiary renal care in the country.

Department, Division, Unit and Research Entities News

Department of Internal Medicine

2026 Events



Date: 27th March 2026 Workshop Day
28th - 29th March 2026
Venue: WITS School of Public Health,
WITS Education Campus,
Andrew Road, Parktown

2026 WITS PHYSICIANS UPDATE

REMINDER TO REGISTER

Don't miss the opportunity to be part of this year's Wits Physicians Update, bringing together leading experts across multiple medical disciplines to share the latest insights, research, and clinical advancements.

TOPICS INCLUDE:

- ✓ Haematology / Oncology
- ✓ Rheumatology / Immunology
- ✓ Geriatrics / Palliative Care
- ✓ Pulmonology / Critical Care
- ✓ Cardiometaabolic / GIT
- ✓ Nephrology / Therapeutics
- ✓ Infectious Diseases / Neurology
- ✓ Research & Dermatology

ADDITIONAL SESSIONS:

- ↳ Ethics discussions
- ↳ An insightful Plenary Session on AI in healthcare
- ↳ Networking opportunities:
 - Cocktail Event
 - Poster Exhibition

CLICK HERE TO REGISTER & RESERVE YOUR SPACE

Important!

Event Organiser
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011 894 1278
rsvp@velocityvision.co.za

Registration Sponsor
Ecomed Medical (Pty) Ltd

Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology

Staff Achievements

Congratulations to Dr Haroun Rhemtula he was selected as the Second Runner-Up for the Clinical Excellence Award at the South African Health Excellence Awards 2025, which was hosted by the South African Clinicians Society and Clinix Health Group.



This is one of the most prestigious recognitions in healthcare, in our country selected by their peers. The finalists were distinguished Professors and Doctors representing diverse medical specialties across South Africa, and in the category “Clinical Excellence Award,” there were 10 nominees.

He noted that he is deeply honoured by the recognition, describing it as both humbling and inspiring. He expressed sincere appreciation for the confidence placed in him and emphasised that clinical excellence is never achieved alone, but is the result of shared commitment, collaboration, and a collective passion for improving patient care. He added that the recognition motivates him to continue striving for higher standards while remaining committed to learning, serving, and growing.

Department of Radiation Sciences

Division of Radiology (Diagnostic)

Staff Achievements

The Department of Radiology is pleased to share again the exciting news from Rahima Moosa Mother & Child Hospital and Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital.

Congratulations to Prof Nasreen Mahomed, the Academic Head of Radiology, University of Witwatersrand for achieving the CEO's 2025 Excellence Award at Rahima Moosa Mother and Child hospital.



Dr Lungile Gabuza for achieving the First Runner-up for the Best Head of Department (2024/2025) and Dr Eleni Wood for scooping two awards (2024/2025) for the Best Performing Doctor and the Best Registrar at CMJAH.

These outstanding accomplishments are a testament to their dedication, radiology expertise, and hard work. We are immensely proud of their achievements and wish them continued success in their professional journeys.



L to R: Dr Eleni Wood, Dr Lungile Gabuza

Events

Wits Radiology Breast Imaging Symposium

Prof Nasreen Mahomed chaired the Wits Radiology Breast Imaging Symposium that took place on 17 October 2025.

A 144 delegates were awarded HPCSA accredited CPD points and 198 delegates attended from across the provinces in South Africa and also included 3 Academic Heads of Radiology in South Africa.

Thank you to the speakers from both the public and private sector, including Radiographers, Nuclear Medicine and Breast Surgery listed in order of presentation: Mrs Igda Van De Berg, Mrs Yogeshnee Maistry, Dr Jenny Haberfield, Prof Jackie Smilg, Prof Willy Vangu, Dr Tamaiya Nair, Dr Nadia Jajbhay, Dr Peter Schoub, Dr Thandi Buthelezi, Prof Jenny Edge, Dr Anith Chacko and Prof Salome Maswime



The Wits Radiology Registrar Media Team were:

Dr John Joseph Muringathuparambil

Dr Shamiek Maharaj

Dr Russell Githinji



Our symposium team left to right: Dr Russell Githinji, Dr Shamiek Maharaj, Ms Tshidi Mokebe, Ms Renilwe Motjelele, Ms Zukiswa Malunga, Prof Nasreen Mahomed, Ms Busi Ngoyi, Ms Doris Lamola, Dr John Joseph Muringathuparambil

A heart felt appreciation to all our sponsors for their commitment to strengthening academic radiology in South Africa and for helping advance impactful, accessible medical education.

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Parklane Radiology
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School News

During December 2025 a constructive deliberation around the Scaffolding framework towards the envisaged Trilateral Agreement between NWU, Wits and the NWDOH took place. We are looking forward to the collaboration.



Inset photos, Left to right: Mr Polaki Mokatsane, Prof Richard Cooke, Prof Ashraf Coovadia, Prof Ugasvaree Subramaney, Ms Tasneem Wadvalla

Left to right: Prof Julia Blitz, Prof Daynia Ballot, Prof Petra Bester, Dr Madipuo Tihogane, Adv Thelvi Mmako, Mr Naseem Ebrahim, Prof Ismail Kalla, Prof Mboyo-Di-Tamba Vangu, Prof Beth Engelbrecht, Prof Lawrence Chauke, Mr Kobus Joubert, Prof Maeyane Moeng, Mr Thulane Madonsela, Prof Binu Luke

2026 School Funding Publication Funding



The School of Clinical Medicine is pleased to announce that funding is available to support publication costs for all staff and students within the School. This initiative aims to promote high-quality research outputs and ensure the broader dissemination of scholarly work.

Staff and students within the School are encouraged to apply using the link below.

1. Application deadline: Monday 30 November 2026

[🔗 \[Click here to apply for School publication funding\]](#)

2. Additionally, publication funding is also available at the University level.

[🔗 \[Click here for more information on University funding opportunities\]](#)

We encourage staff and students to make use of this valuable support.

MMed Funding

Boost your research. Present your work. Get the support you need.

The School of Clinical Medicine invites MMed students to apply for funding - please see the details below:

What's available?

Conference registration (for presenters only):

- Up to R10,000 for local conferences
- Up to R20,000 for international conferences

Research-related expenses:

- Up to R40,000 (negotiable, based on project needs)

Additional support:

- Remote study resources
- Catering (up to R1,000)
- Petrol (SARS rate - R4.76 per km)
- Data and airtime

Application Deadlines:

31 March | 29 May | 31 July | 30 September 2026

 Apply now:

 [SOCM MMed Fund Application](#)



School Resources



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or

FHS Library <https://libguides.wits.ac.za/c.php?g=145330&p=953318>

Wits Journal of Clinical Medicine

Volume 7 Number 3

The Wits Journal of Clinical Medicine (WJCM) is a peer-reviewed scientific research journal published tri-annually. It is a forum to showcase scientific research from Clinical Medicine Departments at institutions in South Africa and internationally. The journal is also a portal to highlight pressing health issues of our times and will publish opinion pieces or commentaries in this regard.

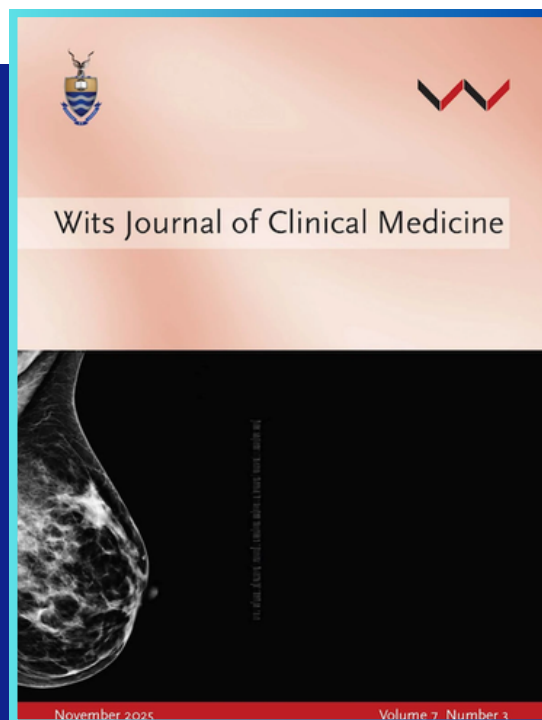
The journal aims to provide an opportunity for emerging researchers to publish their work as Open Access and sets out to be the primary dissemination portal for clinical medical scientists from southern Africa. The editorial

policy of the journal is guided by scientific quality, originality and integrity, and all publications are peer reviewed.

WJCM especially welcomes submissions from younger academics including registrars, fellows and junior consultants, who are encouraged to submit their research.

The Wits Journal of Clinical Medicine is hosted by [ScienceOpen](https://www.scienceopen.com/).

Kindly liaise with Pam Singh regarding submissions on pam@wjcm.co.za.



Please send news that you would like to be included in our next newsletter to Rita Kruger - rita.kruger@wits.ac.za

Deadline 30 April 2026