

Cutting the umbilical cord – Letting go of the support

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South African
Pharmacy Council

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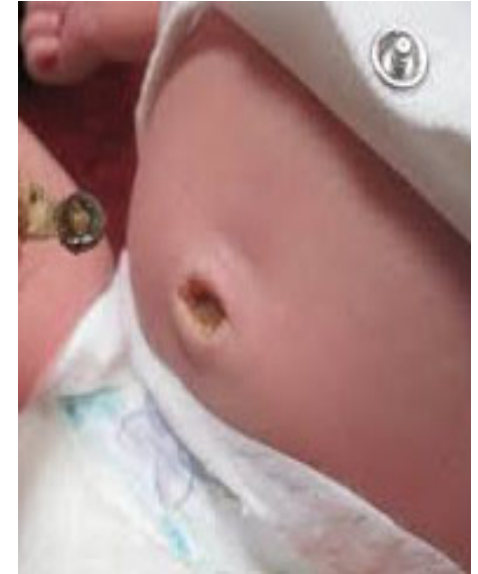
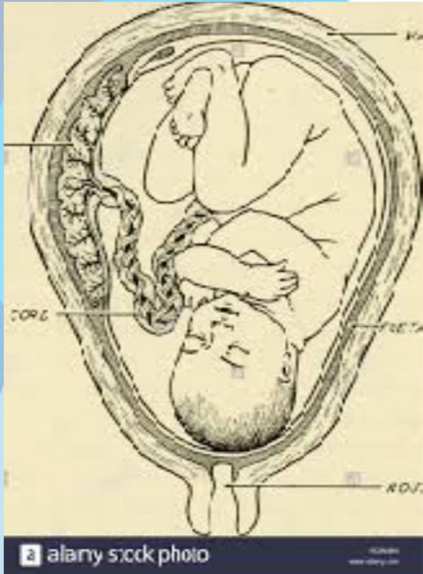
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Clinically cutting the umbilical cord



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Clinically cutting the umbilical cord (2)

- During pregnancy, the umbilical cord supplies the developing baby with nutrients and Oxygen, acting as a lifeline between the body and the placenta.
- Once the baby is born, she does not need the umbilical cord any longer. Cutting the umbilical cord at birth is a necessity for the child and mother to live freely.
- There are no nerves in the umbilical cord, so the cutting is not painful for either the mother or the baby. There is thus no reason to delay the cutting when the baby can painlessly support herself



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Cutting the umbilical cord: Application in community service

- The same is true for a student who has been supported by parents throughout his / her student years. Once qualified, the student has the necessary “equipment” to go and start an independent life. It is a painless, exciting exercise which should not bring any anxiety or stress.
- If many, many others have successfully walked this same journey, what would stop anyone else from doing the same? None of us here are lesser beings, the journey should be equally exciting to all, all things being equal.



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Reminder - Community Service Legislation

- The Health Professions Amendment Act No. 56 was signed into law by President Nelson Mandela in 1998, beginning a system of **mandatory community service in the public health sector for all health professionals in South Africa.**
- In terms of Section 14A of the Pharmacy Act, 53 of 1974, following the completion of the Bachelor of Pharmacy qualification and the internship-year,
 - **newly qualified pharmacists should perform one year of remunerated community service.**
 - Once interns have complied with all the pre-registration requirements they are released from the register of interns and become eligible for registration as pharmacists for the purpose of performing pharmaceutical community service (CSP).



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Delays in implementing Section 14 A

- A trend is developing – rejection of government offers to potential community service pharmacists. Various reasons are cited for the rejections.
- Although there may be some reasons which are beyond one's control, others could be **perceived** otherwise
- Questions:
 - Is it a wise decision to delay that which is legally compulsory?
 - Why would anyone want to delay personal development in a profession of one's own choice?



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Delays in implementing Section 14A (2)

- Could it be that the education system in SA has created dependence such that students are “scared” to let go of the support they have enjoyed throughout their journey as students – is there a “support addiction” in SA?
- If not the education system, is there a change in the value systems (societal norms and values)? Are we bringing up children who prefer clinging to parents even when they should be on their own ?
- Is the rate of crime in the country a deterrent – do our children not feel safe out there?



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Delays in implementing Section 14A (3)

- How should the country then correct this trend before it affects our children in other walks of life beyond community service?
- Is it just a case of over protective parents or do the children have genuine concerns?
- Are we dismissing the concerns of our children as “childish” and perhaps “unimportant” when we should be listening?
- Is safety of healthcare professionals at the workplace an agenda item or not?



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Consequences of not taking available Community Service positions

TO THE PROFESSION

- Pharmacy is perceived as a dying profession by the public. Those that are rejecting placements remain at home, erroneously creating a perception of non-employment for pharmacists.
- Discouragement of high school learners from choosing pharmacy as a career which may lead to an unintended confirmation of the perception of a dying profession
- Diminishing confidence in pharmacists as independent, professionals.



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Consequences of not taking available Community Service positions (2)

TO PATIENTS

- Reduction of the already limited pool of pharmacists at sites identified for community service, consequently
- Depriving patients of an important service which they deserve in accordance with Section 27 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa



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Consequences of not taking available Community Service positions (3)

TO SELF

- Delayed self-development and empowerment in the profession.
- Entertaining fear and having less confidence in self
- Fear may take over in one's life and become a life style.
- The next stage could be that of becoming a double minded person, never, ever sure of anything and unable to take firm decisions
- A double minded person achieves nothing in life. Who, in their right mind, plans to be a life time non-achiever?



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Refusal to cut the umbilical cord – what are the real causes?

- Let us analyse the trend. Let the real reasons for the rejection of offers for community service placements be known and dealt with.
- Let the umbilical cord be cut at the right time. Babies cannot be crawling or even grow to be children dragging umbilical cords tied to mothers.
- The serpent in Genesis became a dragon in the book of Revelation



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Recommendations

- Community service is legislated. It is compulsory. This is a fact which must be **accepted** by all.
- Those who have fears of being on their own in an unfamiliar environment are advised to **start practising independence earlier in life** – there are opportunities available even during student years.
- **Seek professional help** on how to let go of dependence and how to come out of “support addiction”
- The country must upscale **community safety strategies**



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