SA HEART®

Newsletter of the
South African Heart Association®



25 YEARS OF SA HEART®

Ms Erika Dau SA Heart® General Manager with Elizabeth Schaafsma SHARE Registry Project Director

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25 YEARS OF HEART — A LEGACY OF LOYALTY AND GRACE

> “Ein wahres und seltenes Juwel – eine Säule der Hingabe, Anmut und Loyalität – mit dem SA Heart® seit einem Vierteljahrhundert gesegnet ist.”

(“A true and rare gem – a pillar of dedication, grace and loyalty, that SA Heart® has been blessed with for a quarter of a century.”) *Thobile Ziqubu*



Lauren Shiriyapeng and Erika Dau (at an SA Heart Congress)



Erika in younger years



Dr Charle Viljoen, Prof Blanche Cupido and Erika Dau (at an ESC Congress)

For a quarter of a century, Erika Dau has been the steady compass of the South African Heart Association®. From her earliest days as secretary, to her current role as General Manager, Erika has been described as the heartbeat, the glue, the right hand and the quiet force behind so much of our success.

As she marks 25 years of service and her 63rd birthday, the tributes gathered here reflect the depth of appreciation and respect across SA Heart® and beyond. They speak not only to her professionalism and tireless dedication, but also to her kindness, wisdom and humanity.

A FOUNDATION OF STRENGTH

“It is both a personal and professional honour to pay tribute to someone who has become inseparable from SA Heart®’s identity. Erika, your 25 years of service reflect not only endurance but deep commitment. You have been part of every milestone, supported every president, and shaped SA Heart® into the respected, unified organisation it is today. Your insight, loyalty, and warmth have guided countless professionals and policies, quietly shaping our progress and spirit. On behalf of the Board and the entire SA Heart® family — thank you for your remarkable legacy and for leading with both heart and precision.”

Dr Martin Mpe, President, SA Heart®

“Better than Erika will be near impossible to find SA Heart® is blessed by her devoted presence of these many years.”

Prof Adriaan Snyders

A RIGHT HAND AND A STEADY COMPASS

“I would like to thank Erika Dau, in particular, for the continuous help and support over the last 2 years – Erika has been my right hand and ensured manageable administration for a busy, time- poor clinician… Erika, thank you so much.”

Dr Blanche Cupido, Outgoing President 2022



Prof Liesl Zühlke SA Heart® past President and Ms Erika Dau



Board strategic planning meeting 2024

"Today, as SA Heart® celebrates its 25th anniversary, we also celebrate a remarkable constant: Erika Dau. Reliable, calm, and unwavering, she has been the pulse of our organisation for 25 years."
Dr Nico van der Merwe

"Thank you for your dedication to SA Heart® over all those years. We as presidents and past presidents very much relied on your experience and institutional knowledge!"
Prof Karen Sliwa

COLLEAGUES AND COLLABORATORS

"To work alongside Erika is to witness true professionalism. To know her as a friend is to experience generosity, integrity, and honesty." **Ilze de Kock**

"Erika's dedication is extraordinary. Her memory is remarkable—recalling details and f igures with ease, and always with grace and dignity under pressure."
Larna Jackson

"She is, quite simply, the glue that holds it all together."
Elouise Cloete, Congress Organiser

"Her remarkable way of turning daunting moments into manageable steps left an indelible example of what it means to lead with both heart and grace." **Thabo Ngaka**

GRATITUDE ACROSS THE SA HEART® COMMUNITY

"On behalf of the CAPSSA family, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Erika… She is not only a fantastic General Manager, but also a connector, a mentor, and a true heart behind the scenes." **Shauné Rajoo**

"Dealing with you has always been an absolute pleasure. No task is too big or too small, and you have efficiently and timeously dealt with all our requests."
Prof Derick Raal, on behalf of LASSA

"You truly are the heart of the organisation. It has been an absolute pleasure to work with such an efficient, friendly, helpful, and direct person." **Jens Hitzeroth**

"Her exceptional attention to detail and unwavering commitment ensured the success of the Check My Beat campaign." **Katie Andrews, Nahana Foundation**

> "Twenty-five years ago, Erika was the foundation of this organisation. Through countless Presidents, her consistent effort was our bedrock. She mastered every transition, making complex tasks look easy. Erika didn't just meet standards; she elevated us all."
>
> **Prof Eric Klug**

> “I again salute Erika Dau, who is the ‘heartbeat, the engine’ behind the running of SA Heart®. Her tireless dedication continues to sustain the society and its members.”
>
> *Prof Bongani Mayosi, President 2007–2009*





“Erika’s quiet strength and institutional memory have been the steady heartbeat of our organisation.
She has shaped a culture of integrity, collegiality and service that will echo far beyond her tenure.”
Prof Ruan Kruger, Acting CEO, SA Heart®

“Your ability to turn a simple request into a detailed map of the world is remarkable. Thank you for your passion, care, and resilience — and for creating an ecosystem that is both complex and deeply human.”
Amy Wolfe

“Thank you, Erika, for your tireless dedication, warmth, and unwavering presence. Your impact on SA Heart® and all of us who’ve worked with you is profound.”
Dr Blessing Muponda

“Erika’s superpower is her caring nature — always remembering birthdays, sending flowers, or a kind message. SA Heart® is so lucky to have her as its foundation, and my life is richer for calling her a friend.”
Robyn Hey

“Your 25 years reflect professionalism, passion, and resilience. You have strengthened the very foundation on which SA Heart® stands.”
Dr Naizihijwa Majani

“You are the heartbeat of our association. Your tenacity and attention to detail keep everything running smoothly — and your personal encouragement has meant more than you know.”
Dr David Jankelow

“Your professionalism, loyalty, and attention to detail have made you an indispensable part of the SA Heart® team. Thank you for 25 years of outstanding commitment.”
Prof Pravin Manga

“You’ve carried the SA Heart® torch with such passion — truly the heart of the association. May you be blessed with continued energy and joy in all you do.”
Kate Gershuni, Project Manager

“For as long as I’ve been in practice, Erika has been SA Heart®. Loyal, efficient, resilient — a steady hand at the helm. Her legacy will be impossible to replace.”
Dr Dave Kettles

“For 25 years, Erika has been the unfailing mainstay of SA Heart®’s administration — loyal, meticulous and industrious. Her guidance has steered every committee and member with care.”
Dr Tony Dalby, Founding Member & Board Chair

“Erika, your patience, professionalism and good humour have made collaboration effortless. You’ve strengthened the spirit of partnership between SA Heart® and CASSA — thank you.”
Glenda Nichols, on behalf of CASSA

"Your exceptional guidance, passion and commitment to CAPSSA are truly inspiring. Thank you for your tireless support and for making such a meaningful difference in our Allied community."

Selvan Govindsamy (CAPSSA)

"Over all these years, Erika has been SA Heart® — the quiet guiding light helping us steer through every project and congress. We owe her enormous gratitude for her loyalty and perseverance."

Tom Mabin



Erika, Thobile, Mandi, David

"Erika's efficiency, patience and encyclopaedic knowledge have elevated SA Heart® to new heights. Her kindness, integrity and willingness to assist at any hour are unparalleled. We celebrate her as one of the true cornerstones of our organisation."

Chevaan Hendrickse & the Western Cape Branch

"Erika has been a stalwart for SA Heart®, always helpful and composed. Her calm reliability has kept everything together through the years."

Dr Keir McCutcheon

"Erika's influence is deeply felt — she inspires by example and sets a high standard of integrity and resilience. True leadership, as she shows, is built on quiet strength."

Ruchika Meel

"Erika — you are the frame, the structure that holds us together. You've taught me the power of detail and the beauty of embracing difference. Through all the changes, you've kept the core firm — and it's remarkable to witness. Ngiyabonga."

Mandi Fine

"It is an absolute honour to pay tribute to Erika Dau — the heart and soul of SA Heart®. A more committed champion, advocate, and organiser for our members simply does not exist. Her work ethic, wisdom, and unwavering dedication have carried this association through countless milestones and challenges alike. Erika combines professionalism with warmth, often remembering the small things — a birthday, a kind note, even a shared picnic amid long work hours. Her guidance and grace helped steer SA Heart® through transitions, innovations, and moments of profound loss. Thank you, Erika, for your steadfast commitment, your compassion, and your extraordinary contribution to the SA Heart® community."

Prof. Liesl Zühlke, Past President (2016–2018)

Celebrating 25 years of SA Heart® is inseparable from celebrating Erika Dau — our first employee, steadfast guide, and the heartbeat of the association since day one. From those early days in the Tygerberg Hospital library to the thriving organisation we know today, her dedication shaped every milestone. Twenty-five years later, she continues to climb the mountain with grace, keeping the SA Heart® spirit strong."

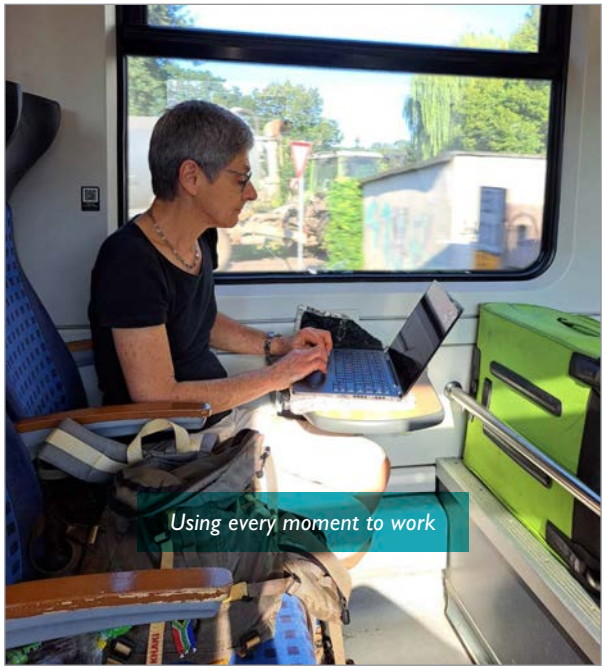
Prof Anton Doubell, Past President

From day one, Erika went above and beyond — guiding me through processes, championing my growth, and helping secure sponsorships that allowed me to contribute more fully to our mission. Her professionalism, warmth, and unwavering support have been a beacon for so many of us.
She is not only a fantastic General Manager, but also a connector, a mentor, and a true heart behind the scenes. The success of our projects and the vibrancy of our society are a reflection of her tireless efforts and genuine care for each person she serves.

Thank you, Erika, for believing in me, for making sure the details were always right, and for doing it all with grace and kindness. Your impact will be felt for years to come, and I'm so grateful to have shared this journey with you.

With Love Shauné Rajoo

THANK YOU SO MUCH ERIKA DAU



Using every moment to work



Erika with the Check My Beat Team

“Seit 25 Jahren begleitest Du uns mit Herz, Verlässlichkeit und bewundernswerter Hingabe – wir feiern Dich mit großer Dankbarkeit und Liebe.”

For 25 years, you've been with us – with heart, reliability, and admirable dedication. We celebrate you with deep gratitude and love.



Congress 2024

LETTER FROM SA HEART®'S ACTING INTERIM CEO

SA HEART®'S INTERIM CEO REPORT, PROF RUAN KRUGER OCTOBER 2025

Stepping into the role of Acting CEO of SA Heart® is both an honour and a responsibility I carry with deep appreciation. I'm grateful for the trust placed in me and mindful of the legacy of leadership that has shaped this organisation.

SA Heart® is built on the collective strength of its members – and I intend to lead with that spirit, grounded in continuity, collaboration and a shared commitment to advancing cardiovascular health across South Africa.

Having served on both the Executive Committee and the Stakeholder Relations Committee of SA Heart®, I've had the privilege of engaging deeply with the organisation's strategic pulse and its broader ecosystem.

These roles have given me insight into the heartbeat of SA Heart® – its values, its people and its enduring commitment to cardiovascular health. This perspective equips me to lead with continuity and stability, ensuring that our transitions are thoughtful and our momentum sustained.

During the initial weeks as Acting CEO, I've been encouraged by the energy, professionalism and dedication of our staff, committees and volunteers. Their commitment to SA Heart®'s mission, is evident in every interaction and initiative. At the same time, I remain mindful that transitions require careful listening and steady stewardship. Programmes like Check My Beat, our education platforms and advocacy efforts, continue to demonstrate impact – but they also call for ongoing refinement and alignment with member needs and more volunteerism. My focus is on ensuring that we build on this momentum with clarity and cohesion, keeping our shared purpose at the centre of every step forward.

During this transition, my commitment is clear – to listen attentively, strengthen relationships and support the President, Board and every member of SA Heart®. I believe that stability is built through trust and transparency, and I'm fully invested in ensuring that our organisation remains resilient, member-driven and impactful.

SA Heart® is not defined by any single moment or individual, but thrives because of its collective purpose and the dedication of everyone involved. My role is to safeguard continuity and positive change.

As we look towards the months ahead, I am optimistic about the milestones we want to reach – most notably, the



Prof Ruan Kruger

25th SA Heart® Congress and the 25-year Celebration of the organisation, the expansion of our outreach programmes, and the strengthening of strategic partnerships.

These are more than events on a calendar – they are opportunities to reaffirm our shared mission and deepen our impact. I warmly invite every member to stay engaged, contribute their voice and walk this journey together. Our strength lies in our collective energy, which can shape a future of bold, new possibilities.

As I take on this role, I do so with a clear sense of purpose and unwavering commitment to SA Heart®'s mission – advancing cardiovascular health for all South Africans. The trust placed in me is not taken lightly and I intend to lead with decisiveness, transparency and strategic focus. Our organisation stands on a strong foundation, built by those who came before and sustained by the passion of our members. My role is to ensure that this legacy continues to grow, adapt and inspire.

Together, we will navigate with confidence to strengthen our impact, deepen our partnerships and reaffirm our place as a leading voice in cardiovascular care.

Prof Ruan Kruger
SA Heart® Acting Interim CEO

MEET OUR NEW BOARD MEMBER

We are honoured to welcome Nomfundo Mabaso once again to the SA Heart® Board. An admitted attorney with over 12 years' experience in the insurance, private healthcare and regulatory sectors, she brings exceptional strength in governance, compliance and strategic advisory.

Nomfundo's leadership spans senior roles at Life Healthcare Group, academic and publishing contributions, and governance work with the Hospital Association of South Africa, where she chaired the Legal Subcommittee.

Passionate about ethical leadership and purposeful engagement, she is already contributing meaningfully to SA Heart®'s advocacy and governance initiatives, including Check My Beat, the BBC StoryWorks documentary, and the Nominations, Social & Ethics and Audit & Risk Committees.

Her insight and energy continue to enrich our mission of advancing equitable and innovative cardiovascular care in South Africa.

Thobile Ziqubu,
SA Heart® Stakeholder Relations Manager



Nomfundo Mabaso

THE SA HEART® ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

17th October | 17h00
Sandton Convention Centre
Bill Gallagher Room

We encourage all members to attend the upcoming AGM — your voice matters! This is your opportunity to stay informed, help shape the future of our association, and ensure your interests are represented. By participating, you contribute to transparency, strong governance, and a vibrant, engaged community. Let's build the future together — see you at the AGM!

CLICK HERE

to join the meeting
on Zoom

COMPREHENSIVE CARDIAC CARE



26 th Annual
SA Heart® Congress 2026
Cape Town International Convention Centre
30 October - 1 November 2026
www.saheart.org | Contact: saheartcongress@shiftideas.co.za

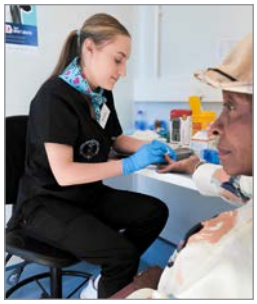
WORLD HEART DAY

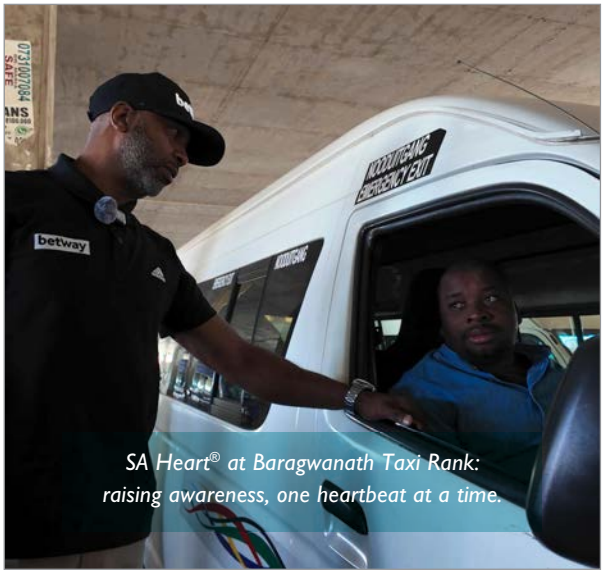
CHECK MY BEAT - WORLD HEART DAY 2025

On 17 September 2025, SA Heart® brought heart health directly to the people at the Baragwanath Taxi Rank in Soweto, in a vibrant World Heart Day initiative – Check My Beat. The day was a first-of-its-kind experience for Baragwanath.









SA Heart® at Baragwanath Taxi Rank: raising awareness, one heartbeat at a time.

Taxi drivers and commuters underwent instant, non-invasive screenings, measuring blood pressure, BMI, cholesterol, glucose, heart rate and other vital indicators. Results were then transformed into personalised "Heart Health Tracks" – songs blending maskandi rhythms with each driver's own heartbeat and lifestyle habits. In turning data into music, lifestyles became audible, memorable and deeply personal.

This was the second time SA Heart® brought the Check My Beat experience to a taxi rank, having first run the activation at Rosebank Taxi Rank in 2024. The expansion to Bara marks another milestone in taking heart health directly to communities where it matters most.

The event carried a festive energy, amplified by the presence of Betway ambassadors and South African soccer legends, Lucas Radebe and Oupa Manyisa, who inspired the crowd and encouraged drivers to prioritise their health.

Our heartfelt thanks go to the SA Heart® volunteers who made this possible – SA Heart® President, Dr Martin Mpe, Prof Ruchika Meel, Dr David Jankelow, Ms Mandi Fine and Ms Kate Gershuni, alongside our many student and intern volunteers.

This initiative was made possible through the generous support of our partners – Anglo American, Abby Health, Betway Cares Foundation, Cipla, JoziMyJozi, Nahana Communications Group, University of the Witwatersrand and the World Heart Federation.

Each brought resources, expertise and unwavering commitment, to advancing heart health for the taxi industry and the communities it serves. The winners will be announced at the network evening on the 18th of October during the Congress

Nationwide awareness will also continue through social media, digital billboards and press activations.

Every heartbeat matters – and the ones that keep South Africa moving, deserve to be heard the loudest.

Catch the 2024 instalment and keep a lookout for our most recent ones in our communications.
CLICK HERE

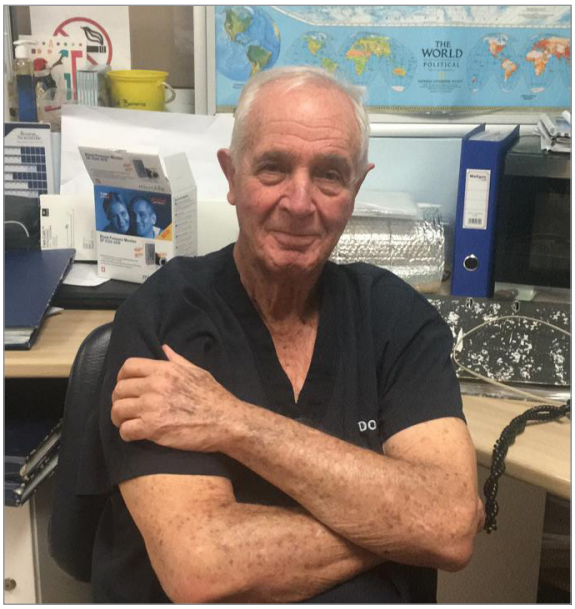
IN MEMORY OF THOSE WE LOST



IN LOVING MEMORY OF DR ONNICA KHOBO-MPE

We remain deeply saddened by the passing of Dr Onnica Khobo-Mpe, beloved wife of SA Heart®'s President, Dr. Martin Mpe, who passed away on 7 January 2025.

Dr Khobo-Mpe began her medical career in 1993 and went on to specialise in anaesthesiology. Over the course of her distinguished career, she held several key positions, including **Head of the ICU at 1 Military Hospital, Senior Specialist in Cardiothoracic Anaesthesia and Principal Specialist at Steve Biko Memorial Hospital.** She is remembered not only as an accomplished clinician and leader, but also for her unwavering commitment to service, compassion and excellence in healthcare. Her contributions to anaesthesiology and critical care leave an enduring legacy that continues to inspire colleagues, students and the broader medical community.



IN MEMORY OF DR "PRO" OBEL

The SA Heart® community continues to honour the life and legacy of **Dr "Pro" Obel**, who sadly passed away on 25 December 2024 after a short illness.

Dr Obel was a leader in the **Cardiac Arrhythmia Society of South Africa (CASSA)** and played a pivotal role in postgraduate education throughout his career. A prolific researcher, he published extensively, with many of his articles widely cited. He made substantial and lasting contributions to cardiology in South Africa and is remembered as a true doyen in the field of invasive electrophysiology. His influence and impact will be felt for many years to come.

IN MEMORIAM — PROFESSOR PATRICK COMMERFORD (1947–2025)

The full obituary has been included in the SA Heart Congress Journal issue 2025 from the 17th October.

SA Heart® mourns the passing of **Professor Patrick Commerford**, a pioneer of South African cardiology and the first Vice President of SA Heart® after its formation in 1997. A former **President of the SA Cardiac Society**, he led the Cardiac Clinic at Groote Schuur Hospital and served as **Helen and Morris Mauerberger Professor of Cardiology at UCT**, mentoring countless cardiologists.

His influence extended globally through leadership in major cardiovascular trials, editorship of The Cardiovascular Journal of Africa, and contributions to the **South African Medicines Formulary.**

Professor Commerford will be remembered for his wisdom, humility, and lifelong dedication to advancing heart health. He is survived by his wife, Anita, their four children, and seven grandchildren.

Prof Mpiko Ntsekhe

BBC STORYWORKS: BEATS OF CHANGE

Earlier this year, **SA Heart®** was invited to be part of the **BBC StoryWorks "Beats of Change"** series – a global campaign produced for the **World Heart Federation**. This series, launched in September 2025 on http://www.beatsofchange.com, tells powerful, human-centered stories about heart health from around the world – and SA Heart® is one of them.

Our journey to this moment began with the **Check My Beat** initiative, launched in partnership with the **World Heart Federation** in 2024. The campaign brought AI-powered heart screenings and music to South Africa's taxi ranks, highlighting prevention and awareness in a uniquely local and relatable way.

It was through this work that the **BBC** team picked up our story, seeing in it a powerful reflection of Africa's contribution to global heart health.



CLICK TO WATCH
Beats Of Change now

Follow us on social media for more!

Taxi driver, Madumetja Seema's, journey stands at the heart of the film – illustrating how small changes, awareness and community connection can spark life-saving conversations about cardiovascular health.











Through this global spotlight, SA Heart® represents Africa's voice in reimagining how heart health awareness can inspire real change – bringing science, culture and humanity together in one unforgettable rhythm.

SA HEART® PRESIDENT'S AND BOARD REPORTS

SA HEART® PRESIDENTIAL ANNUAL REPORT 2025 DR MARTIN MPE, PRESIDENT OCTOBER 2025

Dear Members, Colleagues and Stakeholders

As we bring 2025 to a close and prepare to convene at the annual SA Heart® Congress, it is with deep gratitude and pride that I reflect on a year marked by resilience, recalibration and renewed purpose. Across our community, we have witnessed a collective commitment to advancing clinical excellence, strengthening operational stability and building a more inclusive and responsive cardiovascular ecosystem.

This report offers a reflection on the key SA Heart® President achievements, transitions and lessons learned during this milestone year, culminating in the celebration of our 25th anniversary as a professional association.

Preserving Independence and Ethical Integrity

SA Heart® remained resolute in its role as an independent custodian of clinical and academic integrity. Our engagements with Discovery Health, particularly around the CAD programme, focused on clarifying the role of professional organisations in managed care. These efforts, led by MFD President, Dr David Jankelow, and supported by SASCI, affirmed our commitment to ethical advocacy and clinical autonomy in an evolving healthcare environment.

Public Engagement and Awareness

Our flagship public health initiative, Check My Beat, underwent significant expansion in 2025. With support from Betway Cares, CIPLA, Nahana Foundation, University of the Witwatersrand,

Anglo American, JozimyJozi, Abby and the World Heart Federation, the campaign provided cardiovascular screenings in high-traffic areas, including taxi ranks and community centres – while gaining visibility through digital and media outreach. These efforts contributed to broader national awareness around CVD prevention and aligned with global conversations on non-communicable diseases, particularly during World Heart Day. Oversight of this initiative remains a key strategic focus.

Scientific and Academic Growth

The 2025 Fellows Course in Cape Town, spearheaded by Professors Blanche Cupido and Sajidah Khan, delivered impactful clinical training across key domains – including



Dr Martin Mpe

CVD in pregnancy, pacing technologies, hemodynamic skills and exam preparation. We extend our sincere appreciation to our Sponsors – including Biotronik, Lechoba, Servier, Medtronic, Zydus, Vertice and SA Medical Services, for their generous support.

Meanwhile, the SA Heart® Journal, under the editorship of Prof Ruchika Meel, continues to grow as a vital platform for local cardiovascular research. Contributions from SIGs, including the newly established Cardiac Allied Professionals Society of South Africa (CAPSSA) and the SHARE registry, have further enriched our academic footprint.

Regional and Global Partnerships

2025 saw SA Heart® significantly expand its national and international leadership presence.

Nationally, the launch of the Multi-Stakeholder Forum, an alliance of internal medicine societies, creates a unified voice on pressing managed care issues. The Forum, coordinated by Dr David Jankelow and supported by IPASA, aims to address concerns regarding administrative overload, reimbursement transparency and clinical autonomy. A generous R300,000 IPASA grant supported this initiative, which will culminate in a landmark policy summit in November 2025 – co-hosted with SAHPRA, Discovery, Medscheme and the National Department of Health.

Internationally, SA Heart® participated in the ESC Global Stage session at the 2025 annual Congress in Madrid under the theme,

"South African Heartbeats: Training, Research and Artificial Intelligence Insights for a Healthier Nation".

This session, chaired by Prof. Meel and I , showcased the following:

- Training pipeline challenges, presented by Dr A. Pecoraro
- Research innovation, with a retrospective by Prof Liesl Zühlke
- AI-powered screening, led by Dr Jankelow, highlighting Check My Beat Broadcast live. This session positioned SA Heart® as a leader in cardiovascular innovation, public health advocacy and research translation.

Strategic Planning and Leadership Transition

Our March 2025 Strategic Planning Session revealed key challenges, inconsistent governance terminology, gaps in volunteer engagement and the need for more structured execution.

In response, the Board appointed Prof. Ruan Kruger as Interim Acting Executive (1 August 2025 - 31 January 2026), under a 6-month consulting agreement.

His mandate includes:

- Leading the Accelerated Turnaround Plan (ATP)
- Designing a business and volunteer re-engagement strategy
- Strengthening governance and risk oversight
- Delivering a transition blueprint for future leadership

Already, Prof Kruger's leadership is driving clarity, stakeholder confidence, and improved coordination.

Financial Overview and Risk

The financial outlook for 2025 is stable, with core revenue driven by the annual SA Heart® Congress, and supplemented by targeted fundraising and in-kind partnerships.

Key financial actions this year included:

- Exploring diversified revenue through digital education and hybrid events
- Enhancing sponsor engagement frameworks
- Initiating a financial model redesign, led by Prof Kruger

While challenges remain around equitable funding for SIGs and branches, work is underway to implement a performance-based, transparent allocation system.

Executive Committee (Exco)

The Executive Committee plays a crucial role in advancing key strategic priorities. A significant milestone was the initiation of dialogue with the Cardiac Society of Jordan, to explore academic partnerships and regional collaboration. Exco also approved the evaluation of logistics for establishing a **Fellow Training** Fund, aligned with our 25-Year Legacy Campaign, as a strategic response to the country's growing cardiology workforce deficit.

Furthermore, plans to integrate a cardiology fellow into Exco were advanced, to strengthen **succession planning** and governance renewal.

Stakeholder Committee Engagements

The Stakeholder Committee was instrumental in aligning national campaigns, sponsor visibility and congress planning. Oversight of Check My Beat included ensuring adequate volunteer resourcing and sponsor recognition.

I also participated in efforts to drive Congress 2025 registration and promote the academic programme. As part of the AGM preparation, strong emphasis was placed on timely portfolio reporting and robust documentation. These engagements continue to improve cohesion across our portfolios and build a more responsive stakeholder ecosystem.

Organisational Operations

Our operational core, Ms Erika Dau, Ms Elizabeth Schaafsma and Ms Thobile Ziqubu, delivered exceptional support across all programmes, communications and member engagement. Their dedication, adaptability and institutional knowledge have been invaluable to our success this year, which has been particularly high intensity.

SA HEART® PRESIDENT'S AND BOARD REPORTS

Celebrating 25 Years of SA Heart®

This anniversary year stands as a moment of reflection and pride.

We honour the foresight of our founding leaders and celebrate individuals like Ms Erika Dau and Dr Tony Dalby, whose contributions over the decades have shaped the Association's trajectory.

We also recognise the unwavering support of our long-standing industry partners, who are the backbone of our sustainability and outreach efforts.

Looking Ahead to 2026

We move into 2026 with a renewed sense of purpose and the following strategic priorities:

- Full delivery of the Accelerated Turnaround Plan
- Launch of the Patient Advocacy Group
- Institutionalisation of quarterly strategy reviews
- Expansion of revenue generation through new channels

In Closing

2025 was a year of introspection, action, and renewal. I extend heartfelt thanks to every member, volunteer, partner, and colleague who contributed to our momentum. As we gather under the theme

"Unifying Hearts and Minds"

At the SA Heart® Congress, I trust that you will feel a sense of pride in our shared journey and optimism for the future.

Together, we have preserved what matters and reimagined what's possible.

Warm regards,
Dr Martin Mpe
President: SA Heart® Association

DO YOU WANT TO GET MORE INVOLVED IN SA HEART®?



Thobile Ziqubu, Stakeholder Relations Manager

Reach out to the South African Heart Association.
Please contact **Thobile Ziqubu** at
thobile@saheart.org or **info@saheart.org**.

There is something for everyone.
We would love to have you on board.

MOTIVATION LETTER TOOLKIT

We thank the members of SA Heart® Ethics and Guidelines Committee who have put together **funder motivation** templates for certain conditions and medications, providing you with another SA Heart® member benefit.

Please log in to your member profile and navigate to the resource centre to find these helpful tools.

SA HEART® PRESIDENT'S AND BOARD REPORTS

SA HEART® BOARD

Overview of Activities since 31 May 2025

Along with other Board members, I have been engaged in the selection of an Interim Acting CEO, participation in the proposed Multi-Stakeholder Forum, negotiations surrounding the Discovery CAD programme and its ongoing interaction with SASCI, and contributed opinion on the Annual SA Heart® Meeting to be held this year. SA Heart® 25 will be celebrated, in conjunction with the Sandton meeting. Staff policies and financial policies have been reviewed, respectively by Ms Mabaso and Ms Thambiran.

Administrative items have included attendance at an Exco meeting, consideration of an upgrade of the SA Heart® website, submission of the annual PAIA report, receipt of the SASCI opinion on the proposed Competition Commission block exemption legislation, approval of the attendance of the Stakeholder Manager at the upcoming ESC, and items relating to banking registration and Directors' insurance.

A Personal View on Future Directions

To ensure the ongoing development of the Association, it is necessary to clarify the Terms of Reference of the Board and Association subcommittees, as well as those of the Special Interest Groups and the Regional Branches. Collaboration must be promoted between the various groupings and regular feedback to the Exco is encouraged. Recruiting younger members to become active participants in the activities of the Association has not yielded the expected response. The Board should consider the means of attracting younger professionals to contribute their talents – thus ensuring the ongoing health of the Association. Regarding the membership at large, we are still to establish a formal grievance procedure.

The missing funds in the KZN branch still need to be located. Discussions concerning a closer relationship with the Cardiothoracic Surgical Society have proved fruitless. I recommend that further efforts to incorporate that Society into the Association's activities be abandoned. While there are financial restrictions within the Association, it is no longer acceptable to operate without an up-to-date website and without state-of-the-art computer software. Adequate funds must be made available to enable this capacity.

The success of the Check My Beat project continues to attract sponsors and does much to promote the public image of the Association. Further development of the Patient Advocacy project and the Professional Development project needs to be supported.



Board Meeting, February 2025



Some of our Board members and Staff. From left: Ms Thobile Ziqubu, Dr Martin Mpe, Dr Anthony Dalby, Ms Mandi Fine, Ms Erika Dau, Ms Nomfundo Mabaso, Prof Eric Klug, Mrs Roanleigh Thambiran and Prof Nqoba Tsabedze

I look forward to hearing whether the Strategic Planning meeting held earlier this year yielded a meaningful result. The proposed Multi-Stakeholder Forum was enthusiastically welcomed by the 8 societies invited. A foundation document will be produced. Dr David Jankelow was nominated as the first Chairperson.

Quarterly meetings are planned. The Forum seeks to facilitate communication between medical professionals, insurers/medical aids and the pharmaceutical industry, to promote acceptance of optimal guideline-directed medical care.

The spectre of the NHI continues to haunt the darker corners of the profession's concerns. SA Heart® must urgently seek to fully understand the NDOH proposals and contribute to their further development.

Dr Anthony Dalby
SA Heart® Chair of the Board

SA HEART® PRESIDENT'S AND BOARD REPORTS

SA HEART® NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

PURPOSE OF THE COMMITTEE

The Nominations Committee is mandated to ensure transparent, inclusive and merit-based processes for the appointment of Board members, office bearers and committee representatives, in line with the Committee's Terms of Reference.

COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

Chairperson: Ms Nomfundo Mabaso
Members: Ms Mandi Fine, Mrs Roanleigh Thambiran, Dr Anthony Dalby
Secretariat Support: Ms Erika Dau

MEETINGS HELD

Number of meetings during the reporting period: None
Dates: Not applicable
Attendance: Not applicable

KEY ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES FOR REPORTING PERIOD

Office Bearer Elections

- Participated and contributed to the appointment process for Interim Executive Director.
- Outcome communicated to relevant stakeholders and recorded in governance documentation.

PROPOSED KEY ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES FOR THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

Board and Committee Nominations

- Review current Board composition against strategic needs, diversity targets and succession planning priorities.
- Facilitate nomination and vetting process for additional Board positions as recommended by the Committee and approved by the Board.
- Recommend appointments to be ratified at the relevant meeting or Annual General Meeting.

Governance and Policy Alignment

- Review and update, if necessary, Committee Terms of Reference.
- Propose amendments to nomination criteria, to enhance inclusivity and representation, if necessary.
- Align processes with applicable laws, King IV principles and SA Heart®'s strategic transformation goals.

Recommendations

- Compile and finalise succession planning framework for key leadership roles. Also, anticipate term expirations, to proactively manage transitions – especially for presidents, chairs and committee leads.
- Review onboarding and induction process, including appointment letters and accountability matrix.
- Collaborate with the Social and Ethics Committee and other relevant Board committees, working committees and ExCo, on interdependencies, shared activities and interests, including reviewing and updating the Board Charter and related policies and processes.
- Implement Board evaluation process, to recommend and provide work plans for improvements in Board, its composition and effectiveness.
- Support continuous improvement in governance practices.
- Conduct skills assessments, to match candidates with governance needs and to ensure that support or upskilling is provided, where required.

Ms Nomfundo Mabaso
Chairperson: Nominations Committee

SA HEART® PRESIDENT'S AND BOARD REPORTS

SA HEART® BOARD AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE ("BARC")

Committee Members

Mrs Roanleigh Thambiran (Chair), Ms Nomfundo Mabaso, Prof Nqoba Tsabedze, Dr Martin Mpe and Mr Todani Ramadolela (co-opted)

Executive Summary

- BARC has continued deliberating on Cyber Risk matters and our new interim CEO will look into it at a more detailed level, to determine the way forward.
- The excess funds were considered and also how to earn a better return. FNB was engaged to fixed monies, in order to get a better return.
- Audit 2025: Concerns have been raised by Chair of BARC on compilation report instead of audit report. This is being investigated with reference to the Constitution and necessary approvals.
- The Chair of BARC invited external auditors to the last BARC on 28 October 2024, to share feedback. No issues of concern were raised, except the lack of executive representation on the Board. This has been addressed with the appointment of Ruan Kruger.
- Auditors raised 3 findings:

  1. Payment on pro-forma invoices
  2. No agreements for scholarships
  3. No S18A certificates. This is being addressed.
- Insurance: Cover has been finalised.

Roanleigh Thambiran
Chair: Board Audit and Risk Committee

WEBSITE LINKS

SA Heart®	www.saheart.org
CASSA	www.cassa.co.za
CAPSSA	www.capssa.org.za
HeFSSA	www.hefssa.org
PASCAR	www.pascar.org
PCSSA	www.saheart.org/pcssa
SASCAR (Research)	www.sascar.org.za
SASCI	www.sasci.co.za
ACC	www.acc.org
ESC	www.escardio.org
World Heart	www.world-heart-federation.org



SA HEART® PRESIDENT'S AND BOARD REPORTS

BOARD AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE REPORT 2025

BARC Activities

- Appointment of Interim CEO, to assist with operational decision-making and to support overall strategy
- Cyber Risk/Insurance remains a high priority on the BARC agenda – i.e., to ensure the safeguarding of our Members' confidential information. We are in the process of investigating this further, in relation to the Membership portal.
- The excess funds were considered and also how to earn a better return. Longer-term accounts have been opened at FNB, to drive a better return.

External Auditor

- BARC has engaged with the external auditors, regarding the outcome of the 2025 audit.
- No going concern issues (considering SA Heart®'s strong cash flow position)
- The auditor advised that no control weaknesses were identified
- No matters concerning fraud were identified
- No material events occurred after year-end
- The audit opinion is an unqualified report – meaning the AFS presents fairly, in all material respect, the financial position of the SA Heart®
- BARC has considered and recommended the appointment of a new external auditor, considering length of time the existing auditor has spent with SA Heart®
- The auditor's ability to work cooperatively with management
- The level of independence, objectivity and professionalism reflected

SA Heart® Annual Financial Statements:

Balance sheet:

- Net equity position of R14m
- Mainly due to cash reserves of R15m

Statement of Finanical Position as at 28 February 2025			
ASSETS	2025	2024	2023
Non current Assets			
Property, plant & equipment	16,401	25,903	5,027
Intangible assets	56,458	62,958	1,500
	72,859	88,861	6,527
Current Assets			
Trade and other receivables	71,208	384,708	1,238,819
Cash & cash equivalents	15,073,296	13,473,843	11,370,307
	15,144,504	13,858,551	12,609,126
TOTAL ASSETS	15,217,363	13,947,412	12,615,653
EQUITY & LIABILITIES			
Equity			
Surplus funds	14,022,851	12,866,792	11,986,184
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Trade & other payables	1,188,525	1,057,327	624,515
Bank overdraft	5,987	23,293	4,954
	1,194,512	1,080,620	629,469
TOTAL EQUITY & LIABILITIES	15,217,363	13,947,412	12,615,653

BOARD AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE REPORT 2025 cont.

Income Statement:

- Good increase in revenue, due to an increase in membership numbers and fees, and additional new project related donations
- Increase in operating expenses is mainly due to congress expenses, new members of staff and new projects.

Congress Expenses

- Investment revenue is mainly due to interest earned on excess cash..

Statement of Comprehensive Income			
	2025	2024	2023
Revenue	12,013,019	10,469,270	10,873,392
Other income	208,790	29,522	120,975
Operating expenses	-12,012,094	-10,286,294	-8,448,559
Operating surplus	209,715	212,498	2,545,808
Investment revenue	946,356	885,147	490,185
Finance costs	-12	-28	
Surplus for the year	1,156,059	1,097,617	3,035,993

Roanleigh Thambiran
Chair: Audit & Risk Committee - SA Heart®

CELEBRATING MEMBERS THAT RECEIVED FESC STATUS AT THE ESC

We are proud to announce that Dr Jean Vorster and Dr André Dippenaar, were inaugurated as Fellows of the European Society of Cardiology (FESC) at the recent ESC Congress in Madrid. They join our President, Dr Martin Mpe, who received this honour in December 2024.

The FESC title is a mark of excellence, awarded to Health Care Professionals who have made significant contributions to cardiology. With more than 4,300 Fellows worldwide, it is recognised as a symbol of leadership, expertise and commitment to advancing cardiovascular care.

We congratulate our members who have achieved this distinction and invite others within SA Heart® who recently got the FESC title to share their achievements with our office, so we can celebrate them together.


Dr André Dippennar



Dr Jean Vorster

SA HEART® STANDING COMMITEES AND PROJECTS ANNUAL REPORTS

SA HEART® EDUCATION COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE MEMBERS
John Lawrenson, Suriah Salam who replaced Shaune' Rajoo, Philasande Mkoko, Demitri Constantinou, Anupa Patel, Gasnat Shaboodien, George Comitis, Jess John, Nene Mboweni, Sandrine Lecour, Vernice Peterson, Manie Hanekom, Lifa Dhlamini, Viwe Mtwesi, Rosaley Prakaschandra

NUMBER OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS IN THE YEAR
- 2

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT, OR PROGRESS MADE
Ethics Webinar organised on 30 July 2025

INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATIONAL EVENTS OR MEDIA PARTICIPATION
Single travel grant evaluation process to date. SA Heart®'s participation at the ESC Global stage facilitation, participated in SA Heart®'s Stakeholders meeting in March 2025, facilitation of ongoing participation in EECC examination process endorsement of 2 meetings.

CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED
Late appointment of Chairperson

GOAL FOR NEXT YEAR
Educational materials for "allied professionals"

Prof John Lawrenson

SA HEART® STANDING COMMITEES AND PROJECTS ANNUAL REPORTS

SA HEART® ETHICS AND GUIDELINES COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Jens Hitzeroth, John Lawrenson, Pumeshen Bisetty, Demitri Constantinou, Charle Viljoen, Blanche Cupido, Mamotabo Matshela, Dirk Blom, Rabia Johnson, Rosemary Lawrence, Selvan Govindsamy, Ruchika Meel

COMMITTEE MEETINGS IN THE YEAR
- 1st meeting held on 18 February 2025
- 2nd meeting held on 26 May 2025
- 2 further meetings planned for the 3rd and 4th quarters of 2025

INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATIONAL EVENTS OR MEDIA PARTICIPATION
There were none.

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT, OR PROGRESS MADE
- SA Heart® Position Statement on Valvular Heart Disease in progress expected journal submission before the end of 2025
- CASSA Position Statement on Left Bundle Area Pacing – under consideration and awaiting feedback from CASSA after comments by the Ethics & Guidelines Committee – expected journal submission before the end of 2025
- SA Heart® Position Statement on Management of ACS in planning – expected completion in 2026
- SA Heart® Guidelines on the use of Cardiopulmonary Exercise Testing in Cardiology in progress – expected completion in 2026
- 1-hour online ethics CPD points accredited seminar in the final stages of planning

QUERIES ADDRESSED
- Ethical considerations around electrophysiologists trained in paediatric cardiology, performing procedures in adults, were discussed and feedback was given to Medscheme (who made the enquiry). It was advised that the SA Heart® Journal becomes the primary publication for all South African Cardiology Guidelines.

GOALS FOR NEXT YEAR
- No specific goal(s) identified, other than what is described in the terms of reference.

CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED
- None at this stage

Dr Jens Hitzeroth
Chair: Ethics and Guidelines Committee

SA HEART® STANDING COMMITEES AND PROJECTS ANNUAL REPORTS

SA HEART® REGISTRY - SHARE COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Nqoba Tsabedze (Chair), Elizabeth Schaafsma, Jacques Scherman, Hellmuth Weich, Ashley Chin, Martin Mpe, Eric Klug, Andrew Thornton, Jens Hitzeroth

OVERVIEW:

- TAVI - 5,393 patients entered in the TAVI registry – 4,049 patients have had TAVIs.
- Presentation at ESC Congress 2025 on outcomes in female TAVI patients in SA.
- Boston Scientific has withdrawn its TAVI valve from the market, and with that, their sponsorship of the SHARE project – just before an invoice for this year was due. Baroque Medical has indicated that they are bringing the Navitor to market and have been approached to sponsor SHARE. Discussions with Meril and Baroque continue, but no funding has yet been guaranteed.
- Mitral registry has been implemented, and data capture has started at Groote Schuur and at CMJAH.
- Enquiries for new registries from PCSSA and CASSA – moving forward with the CASSA registry with Brian Vezi, Kavi Govender and Charl Viljoen as PIs.

SHARE strives to improve patient care, by collecting local data on various conditions and treatments and sharing this information with stakeholder communities. Having local data is important, as it can inform national healthcare policy development, when reviewed in conjunction with SA Heart®-supported international guidelines, such as those of our affiliate society, the ESC. The SHARE TAVI registry collects data from all centres implanting TAVIs in SA, and has been pressing for greater access to this technology for appropriately selected patients with aortic stenosis in all provinces and across both the State and Private sectors.

Geographic access is improving, with the establishment, or planning of TAVI sites in Shelley Beach, Richards Bay and Krugersdorp – but the lack of funding for the devices remains a barrier to access in both the private and public sectors. TAVI – as an effective and life-changing treatment for Aortic Stenosis – has proven to be successful in SA, with outcomes that benchmark comparably to international high-volume centres. Despite the positive quantifiable evidence of the local programme's successful outcomes from the SHARE TAVI registry, TAVI is underutilised in South Africa as an effective aortic stenosis treatment, and there is still much that can be done to support access to TAVI through the registry project.

The TAVI registry now has a total of 5,393 aortic stenosis patients' baseline clinical data entered. Of these, we have procedural and outcomes data of over 4,000 patients who have proceeded to have a TAVI implant, and we will continue to follow them up for 10 years, generating quality local data. The first 10-year data is now available for benchmarking and a manuscript is planned shortly.

Patients who exit the TAVI programme without an implant – for a variety of reasons, mostly unsuccessful funding or expected prosthesis mismatch – are also followed up for at least 1 year. This allows us to provide comparative local data on the life expectancy and outcomes for patients who do not have TAVIs, compared to those who have had TAVIs.

TAVI in SA shows high success rates, low complications and greatly increased life expectancy for all implanted patients, benchmarked on par with international best care standards. Developing relationships with a wider network of stakeholders, to encourage them to support access to implants for South Africans is a priority for the project in the short term.

As SHARE has collected data, oral and poster presentations from the registry data have highlighted some of the findings, and now the analysis and write-up for manuscripts planned around each presentation topic is going ahead, in consultation with the site investigators.

A new device registry for the MitraClip was proposed, to look at local outcomes and patient selection for this relatively new procedure, as it is rolled out in South Africa. Drs Jens Hitzeroth and Hellmuth Weich have played a major role in the development of the dataset and have taken on the roles of Principal Investigators for this registry, together with Prof Nqoba Tsabedze. The dataset has been approved, ethics approval has been given and development of the database has finished. The registry has been rolled out to Groote Schuur, Tygerberg and Charlotte Maxeke, and data entry has been started.

The registry projects continue to build on their solid and successful base, and we will continue to generate the type of local data and information that will influence and improve clinical practice, patient care and public policy in the future.

We are grateful to all our registry project sponsors – AstraZeneca, Baroque Medical, Boston Scientific, Edwards Lifesciences, Medtronic, Meril and Pfizer – who have all supported the registries through various research grants over the years and we thank them for their continued support. We hope that as further industry members expand their product offerings and look for insights from local data, that they too will support the SHARE registries.

The SHARE registry committee remains thankful to individual members of SA Heart®, the SA Heart® Executive, Industry partners, Funders and Hospital groups, for their continued interest and support of SHARE – and of course, most importantly, our very grateful thanks to the Investigators and participants at all our registry sites.

Ms Elizabeth Schaafsma

Prof Nqoba Tsabedze, Chair Committee



Ms Elizabeth Schaafsma presenting at the 2025 ESC, on the "Risk Profile and early outcomes of female TAVI patients in South Africa"

SA HEART® STANDING COMMITEES AND PROJECTS ANNUAL REPORTS

MEDIA, FUNDING & DIGITAL (MFD) COMMITTEE REPORT - 2025

Dr David Jankelow: Chair

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Media Subcommittee: Dr André Dippenaar (Chair), Dr Ahmad Tayob, Dr Thomas Aldersley, Dr Mamaila Lebea, Dr Abubakr Essa, Dr David Jankelow

Funder Relations Subcommittee: Dr David Jankelow (Chair), Dr Pieter vd Bijl, Mr Selvan Govindsamy, Dr Darshan Reddy, Dr Dineo Mpanya, Dr Andrew Thornton, Mr Human Nieuwenhuis, Dr Farouk Mamdoo

Digital innovation Subcommittee: Prof Pravin Manga (Chair), Dr André Dippenaar, Dr Charle Viljoen, Dr Raeesa Bhorat, Dr Marek Gebka, Dr David Jankelow

I would firstly like to sincerely thank Ms Mandi Fine, Ms Erika Dau and Ms Thobile Ziqubu for their expert assistance and guidance. I am also grateful to the MFD Committee Members, who are giving up their valuable time to contribute to our ongoing projects.

MEDIA COMMITTEE:

SA Heart® Beat - Members of Media arm of the MFD Committee, together with members of the Education Committee, provide input for this monthly members' circular on a roster basis established by Dr André Dippenaar and Ms Thobile Ziqubu, in conjunction with the Chair of the Education and Research Committee, Prof John Lawrenson. Additional society news is sourced by Thobile and Erika, who then put together the monthly circular in meticulous work. We have published 9 editions in this year thus far.

Social Media - André vets the content generated and proposed for posting by the service provider, DocLink, monthly. This process is not optimally streamlined yet, but has improved.

FUNDER COMMITTEE:

Issues with Funder are dealt with on an ongoing basis, addressing many coding queries.

Resolved an issue with TEE codes - Code for colour doppler 1239 was falsely stated, as per a SAMA rule that this could not be charged – resolved after engaging with SAMA and anaesthetic society. We sent a combined letter and this matter has been resolved.

I met recently with Discovery leadership – Adrian Gore, Ron Wheelan and Maurice Goodman. I approached this in a constructive way, but then expressed extreme frustration with ongoing complaints from SA Heart® members – worsening administrative burden, forms, motivations and telephone calls, and then denial of care.

In addition, it has been suggested their call centre is undermining our clinical integrity and implying that the clinician has done something wrong. The latter is communicated to the patients/Discovery members. We agreed for the Funder Committee to meet quarterly with Discovery, to bring up issues. They gave us assurance that our complaints will be urgently investigated, with a strict working timeline for a written response to the clinician/member and us (SA Heart®).

There will be acknowledgement of receipt within 8 hours, with interim feedback within 3 days via email, or ongoing feedback based on the specifics and nature of each query –final written feedback within 5 days to us and our members. I have received written feedback regarding recent complaints from our members – our link for these complaints/issues to Discovery is Pamela Njamela.

Our Funder Relations Committee met with Discovery on 18 July 2025 for a first meeting, which will take place from now on, every quarter – we appealed our pressing issues to Discovery, for them to reduce our administrative burden.

Multidisciplinary Lobbying Forum for Access to Innovative Care, in conjunction with all internal medicine specialties, Funders, IPASA, Government, patient advocacy groups for collective muscle to deal with the issues from Funders and regulators, is planned for 8 November 2025.

On 14 August 2025, SA Heart® held a precursor meeting with internal medicine societies. There was a unanimous agreement that we all require a collective/united front, to deal with the challenges that we clinicians are facing in healthcare. We have now formed the "Multistakeholder Forum" – we will prioritise the issues that we will deal with in the 2025-2026 year. David Jankelow was elected as the chair of this committee, which will meet quarterly.

The steering committee for arranging the encompassing meeting on 8 November, comprises members from IPASA and SA Heart®, and IPASA has kindly offered funding for the in-person meeting in Sandton on 8 November 2025. The agenda will include views from various stakeholders and a robust panel discussion and will ultimately lead to a consensus document underwritten by all stakeholders.

SA HEART® STANDING COMMITEES AND PROJECTS ANNUAL REPORTS

Discovery Audits of SA Heart® Members - We have been involved in a number of these and have tried to mediate and resolve the issues – some we have, and some we are unable to.

An ongoing current was an audit of an echocardiographer/ technician, who provides an echo service to physicians in hospitals, where there is no cardiac service. I have attended many meetings with Discovery, our member and her legal representative.

The issue is non-verification of claims for echocardiography services. At our last meeting with Discovery, I showed them redacted information for each of the cases cited by Discovery – I was able to demonstrate that in each, there is a referral letter/ motivation for echo by referring physicians, her comprehensive report with 2D, Mmode and doppler information. I once again, categorically state, that the interpretation of the imaging could not have been made with our analysis of colour doppler. In addition, Dr Herbst (CISSA) and I wrote previously to Discovery – we stated that a comprehensive echo report is sufficient evidence that the study was actually done. The fact that all the images could not be produced is irrelevant.

Medscheme - Eric Klug and I met last year with Medscheme (Dr W Riback) – we discussed our members in private practice having access to their medical officers (when we need help with Medscheme patient problems) and their CTCA programme. We strongly stated that we do not need an incentive to appropriately do CTCA – they are committed to protecting our clinical autonomy, in terms of our choice of ischaemic investigation. I also propose a quarterly meeting with us and Medscheme.

Check My Beat/Taxi Driver Screening Project - The 2024 initiative won awards at Pendoring and other design competitons for the creative team at the Nahana Foundation.

The 2025 initiative is supported generously by Betway Cares Foundation again, with monetary support also from CIPLA and the World Heart Federation. Other partners, Anglo American, University of the Witwatersrand and Nahana Foundation are vital for this project, and Abby Health joined the team with its screening technology. Other avenues like Dis-Chem and Bidwest were explored, but not fruitful.

We plan to formalise the data collection for incidence of Cardiovascular Disease in South Africa amongst the screening cohort. The project and data from 2024 will be presented at ESC by myself on 30 August 2025: "Technology to invoke a life-saving campaign."

Check my Beat made waves, when were selected to be part of the World Heart Federation commissioned "Beats of Change" BBC Storyworks commercial productions, concentrating on the day in the life of a taxi driver and how the Check my Beat initiative had an influence on his lifestyle, from movement to diet.

Digital Innovation - I will ask the Digital Subcommittee to explore such projects. Our intention once again, is to firstly bring an awareness as to the future role for disruptive technologies, and particularly, how Artificial Intelligence (AI) will influence cardiovascular medicine. We will have to again explore projects with Centre for Artificial Intelligence Research (CAIR), ESC and ACC.

Check My Beat is using an AI facial system (SyntroP in 2024) to measure pulse, blood pressure and BMI. The technology would, therefore, obviate the need for specialised medical personnel and equipment, which would be of value in remote underserviced areas.

We will contribute to an AI program for SA Heart® Congress 2025.

We are establishing firm links with the ESC Digital Committee, as well as the ACC and WHF, in this regard.

We look forward to exciting new projects and progress in each of the above areas.

Dr David Jankelow

PASCAR CONGRESS 2025

The 54th Nigerian Cardiac Society (NCS) and 17th Biennial **Pan-African Society of Cardiology (PASCAR) Congress** took place in Abuja, Nigeria, from 15 to 19 September 2025 and brought together leading cardiovascular experts, researchers and policymakers from across Africa and beyond. Under the theme:

"Cardiovascular Health in Africa: Innovation, Equity, and Implementation"

The event showcased a dynamic blend of plenary sessions, symposia, workshops and abstract presentations aimed at advancing cardiovascular care across the continent.

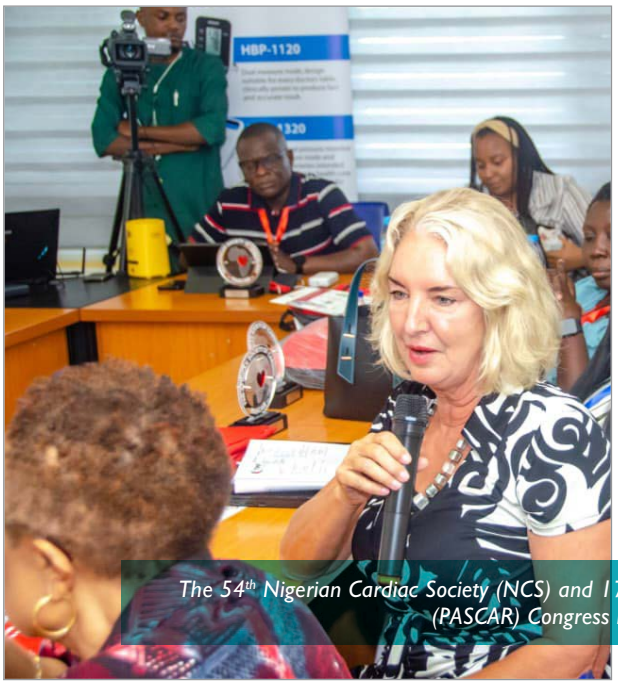
The congress opened with a powerful Call To Action for African-led solutions in cardiovascular health – emphasising equity, innovation and implementation science.

Plenary sessions covered topics from hypertension control strategies and rheumatic heart disease elimination to digital health innovations, and the role of genomics in African populations. A dedicated implementation science track focused on translating research into practice, with case studies from Nigeria, Kenya and South Africa.

Emerging researchers presented cutting-edge work, with several South African abstracts earning commendation. Hands-on pre- conference sessions covered echocardiography, heart failure management and cardiovascular risk assessment in primary care settings.

South African presenters played a prominent role throughout the congress, including SA Heart® members, such as Prof Karen Sliwa, Prof Mpiko Ntsekhe, Prof Ruan Kruger, Prof Ntobeko Ntusi and Prof Dirk Blom.

The Congress reinforced the importance of cross-country collaboration, with South African delegates engaging in strategic discussions around harmonising cardiovascular guidelines across Africa, strengthening training and mentorship networks, and joint research initiatives under the PASCAR umbrella.





The 54th Nigerian Cardiac Society (NCS) and 17th Biennial Pan-African Society of Cardiology (PASCAR) Congress in Abuja, Nigeria

SA HEART® BEAT

ONE YEAR ON

Launched in July 2024, SA Heart® Beat continues to keep our members informed and connected with the latest in cardiology and community updates.

This initiative – a collaboration between the Media, Funder and Digital Innovations (MFD) and Education & Research Committees – remains a valued source of knowledge and engagement.

A special thank you to Dr David Jankelow and Dr André Dippenaar for spearheading and sustaining this successful collaboration.

We encourage members to share their news and opt in via the Members' Portal, to stay up to date with future editions.

Stay tuned and stay informed with SA Heart® Beat!

PAST SA HEART® BEAT ISSUES

MESSAGES FROM PREVIOUS PRESIDENTS



MADRID - IMPRESSIONS



CHECK MY BEAT

SA Heart®s **Check my Beat** project for 2025 started with a pilot day on 26 August at Anglo American to train students, check systems and work flow in preparation for the big **activation at Baragwanath Taxi Rank on 17 September**.





Keep an eye on the press, taxi bill boards across the country and social media and **follow SA Heart®s flagship project and heart health awareness drive throughout September.**

(OTHER) EDUCATION PAST AND FUTURE



SA HEART® JOURNAL CLUBS 2025

The SA Heart® Journal Clubs are hosted on the first Wednesday of each month – offering a focused forum, where clinicians and allied professionals engage with the latest research and case discussions. We sincerely thank our Branches, Special Interest Groups (SIGs) and industry partners for their continued support. Members are encouraged to register in advance, to benefit from these collaborative member opportunities.

Recordings of all our Journal Clubs can be found in the Membership Portal for all SA Heart® members.

MARCH HOSTED BY SASCAR

March Journal Club: Spotlight on HEART The March session, chaired by Marguerite, featured the Hypertension in Africa Research Team (HEART) from North-West University.

Prof Carina Mels, outlined HEART's evolution into a Centre of Excellence with research spanning biomarkers, clinical trials and large-scale cohort studies, such as African-PREDICT, Precede Africa and the National BP in Children Initiative.

Dr Annemarie Wentzel presented on allostatic load – the cumulative burden of stress – showing its links to vascular ageing, impaired cardiac function and hidden risks, like prediabetes and masked hypertension in young adults. Her group is also exploring adrenergic stress-response profiles, with distinct metabolic and ischemic risk patterns.

Further contributions came from Dr Michel Strauss, Dr Yolanda Bridget and Dr Claire McConnell, who shared insights into metabolomics, paediatric BP measurement and device validation, reflecting the breadth of HEART's work.

Thank you SASCAR for an insightful evening!

APRIL JOURNAL CLUB (HEART FAILURE FOCUS) – HEFSSA

Hosted by the Heart Failure Society of South Africa and sponsored by Lechoba Medical Technologies.

Speakers: Dr Hanneke Dannheimer, Dr Uma Damu, Dr Nico van der Merwe.

The session reviewed 2024 high-impact papers:

- HFrEF optimisation (HF-OPT): In de novo HFrEF, meaningful LVEF recovery often continues beyond 90 days of GDMT – by 180 days, ~77% crossed >35% LVEF. Higher achieved doses of BB/ACEi-ARB/MRA tracked with better recovery, yet target doses were rare (~9%). Use WCD early for arrhythmic protection – defer ICD decisions until ~180 days were feasible.
- Secondary MR & amp – MitraClip (SHIP II): MitraClip + GDMT reduced HF hospitalisations and improved quality of life vs GDMT alone in appropriately selected, symptomatic HF patients not for surgery.
- Next-gen MRAs: Emerging agents showoutcome benefits with lower hyperkalaemia risk, potentially widening uptake where MRA underuse persists.

Bottom line: Push early, aggressive GDMT titration, consider WCD in the high-risk early phase, evaluate transcatheter mitral repair in selected secondary MR and watch for new MRAs, to overcome safety barriers.

MAY JOURNAL CLUB: RARE CASES, GLOBAL PROGRESS

The May SA Heart® Journal Club, hosted by the Pretoria branch, featured two insightfulcase-based presentations.

Dr Musa Mayayisa highlighted Spontaneous Coronary Artery Dissection (SCAD) – a rare, but important cause of heart attacks in younger women without traditional risk factors.

He stressed the value of early recognition and conservative treatment, as many cases heal naturally, without the risks of stenting.

Prof Rowena Delport presented findings from an international study on the impact of COVID-19 on STEMI and access to primary PCI – showing how disrupted care pathways affected outcomes, but also how collaborative guidelines reduced mortality significantly in some settings.

The session, supported by Zydus Lifesciences, underscored both the importance of vigilance in rare cardiac emergencies and the power of global cooperation, to improve cardiovascular care.

JUNE JOURNAL CLUB

The June Journal Club, chaired by Suriah Salama and supported by Lechoba Medical, opened with a showcase of new medical technologies – from biodegradable polymer coatings for safer drug delivery, to heart monitoring wristbands and temporary mechanical circulatory support devices.

SA HEART® JOURNAL CLUBS 2025 cont.

The main clinical focus was on transcatheter valve interventions – particularly TAVI (Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation).
A recent state-of-the-art article guided discussion around complications and their prevention:

- Stroke remains one of the most feared risks post-TAVI (about 2.3% incidence), with studies underway on cerebral embolic protection devices.
- Conduction disturbances may necessitate pacemakers – especially with balloon-expandable valves.
- Vascular and valve-related complications can often be avoided with meticulous CT-based planning, imaging and device selection.
- Acute kidney injury requires proactive strategies, such as hydration and contrast sparing techniques. Real-world cases illustrated both the challenges (heart block, valve enfolding) and the value of prompt, team-basedmanagement.

Adding to the evening, Justin Naidu presented on Left Bundle Branch Area Pacing (LBBAP), highlighting how this newer pacing approach more closely mimics the heart's natural electrical activation, compared to traditional RV pacing.

He showed how allied professionals play a crucial role in ECG interpretation, lead placement and follow-up programming, to ensure optimal outcomes.

Thank you to CAPSSA for hosting, Ms Suriah Salam for chairing and to the following speakers for presenting: Drs P Bisetty, M Matshela, J Ragadoo and F Mamdoo.

JULY JOURNAL CLUB: MULTIMODALITY APPROACH TO CARDIAC AMYLOIDOSIS HOSTED BY CISSA

The July SA Heart® Journal Club, chaired by Dr Arlene Mazaza, focused on the increasingly recognised challenge of cardiac amyloidosis.

Presentations were delivered by our junior doctors, who were outstanding – namely Drs Amori Engelbrecht, Bradley Naidu and Ahmed Ismail, with expert input from Dr Phillip Herbst and an industry update from Dr Mantha Makhume (GE Healthcare).

CASE-BASED DISCUSSION

TThe session centred around a 44-year-old male with heart failure and atrial flutter. Echocardiography revealed concentric hypertrophy, atrial enlargement and pericardial effusion, prompting consideration of infiltrative cardiomyopathy.

The speakers highlighted the diagnostic sequence:

- ECG often demonstrates pseudo-infarct Q waves, or low voltages but lacks sensitivity.
- Echocardiography with strain imaging provides a pivotal clue, particularly the apical sparing "cherry on top" pattern.
- Bone scintigraphy with technetium tracers can non-invasively diagnose ATTR amyloidosis in the absence of monoclonal gammopathy.
- Biopsy with Congo-red staining remains the gold standard when imaging and serology are inconclusive.
- Laboratory evaluation is critical to distinguish AL from ATTR – given their vastly different management strategies.

ROLE OF MRI

Dr Bradley Naidu presented on the utility of cardiac MRI, which characterises myocardial hypertrophy, identifies late gadolinium enhancement patterns, and quantifies extracellular volume via T1/T2 mapping.

While MRI cannot differentiate AL from ATTR, it provides strong diagnostic and prognostic Information – particularly in monitoring disease progression.

KEY INSIGHTS

- No single modality is definitive – accurate diagnosis requires multimodality integration.
- Early recognition is essential, as targeted therapies for ATTR are now available, while AL amyloidosis requires urgent haematological management.
- Multidisciplinary collaboration is central to optimising patient outcomes.

AUGUST JOURNAL CLUB: CORONARY ANOMALIES IN FOCUS

The August SA Heart® Journal Club, hosted by the Johannesburg branch and chaired by Dr Farouk Mamdoo, combined editorial updates with compelling case-based learning. The evening was sponsored by Zydus Lifesciences.

SA HEART® JOURNAL UPDATE

Prof Ruchika Meel, Editor of the SA Heart® Journal, reflected on the journal's history and reaffirmed its mission as the voice of African cardiology.

Since October 2024, 4 successful issues have been

SA HEART® JOURNAL CLUBS 2025 cont.

published, introducing new features, such as imaging quizzes and research support.

The editorial team continues to call for contributions – from case reports to original research – to ensure the journal grows into a globally recognised platform, representing African cardiovascular science.

CASE PRESENTATIONS

The clinical segment opened with Dr Farouk Mamdoo presenting a 61-year-old woman with unstable angina. Angiography revealed an anomalous right coronary artery arising from the left coronary cusp, with a critical ostial stenosis. Intravascular ultrasound demonstrated a slit-like orifice and CT confirmed an inter-arterial course between the aorta and pulmonary artery. The patient was referred for surgical management, highlighting the importance of recognising high-risk coronary anomalies.

Dr Anupa Patel followed with a case of acute myocardial infarction in a 41-year-old male with multiple risk factors. Angiography revealed an anomalous left coronary artery from the right coronary cusp with a hypoplastic LAD, alongside thrombotic RCA disease.

The case emphasised the diagnostic complexity of anomalous coronary anatomy and the role of multimodality imaging (angiography, CT, 3D reconstruction) in guiding intervention. Ultimately, the patient underwent successful PCI to the RCA.

SURGICAL PERSPECTIVE

The surgical viewpoint was provided by Dr M Manogaran, who discussed operative strategies for anomalous coronary arteries – including bypass grafting and "unroofing" techniques – underscoring that anatomical course and ischemic risk dictate management.

KEY LEARNING POINTS

- Coronary anomalies can present as acute coronary syndromes and must be recognised promptly.
- Multimodality imaging (IVUS, CT, 3D reconstruction) is central to defining anatomy and risk.
- Collaboration across interventional, imaging and surgical teams remains essential for optimal outcomes.

SEPTEMBER JOURNAL CLUB: LIPID DISORDERS AND EMERGING THERAPIES

Hosted by LASSA

The September SA Heart® Journal Club was sponsored by Zydus Lifesciences.

The event featured 2 leading experts – Prof Dirk Blom and Prof David Marais. Prof Blom addressed the management of severe hypertriglyceridaemia (TG>10 mmol/L), emphasising its major complication – acute pancreatitis. Standard care remains very low-fat diets, fibrates, high-dose omega-3 and management of secondary causes.

He reviewed novel therapies:

- ApoC3 inhibitors (volanesorsen, olezarsen) – RNA-based, reducing TG by up to 80% and lowering pancreatitis risk.
- ANGPTL3 inhibitors (evinacumab) – effective in selected patients.
- MTP inhibitors (lomitapide) – potent but limited by GI side effects. While these therapies are highly effective, they remain extremely costly (e.g., ~$600k/year), making lifestyle measures indispensable.

Prof Marais explored gene therapy and gene editing in dyslipidaemia – reviewing antisense oligonucleotides and siRNA targeting PCSK9, ApoC3 and Lp(a), as well as CRISPR-based approaches for potential permanent correction. These strategies offer infrequent dosing (every 3-6 months or longer) and improved adherence – but challenges include cost, access and long-term safety data.

Key insight: Advanced RNA- and gene-editing therapies are redefining lipid management, but strict dietary control and current pharmacotherapy remain the backbone of care until these innovations become broadly accessible.

GE HealthCare

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Thank you to our generous sponsors for their support.

MEMBER/COMMITTEE APPRECIATION

Spotlight on the SA Heart® Funder Committee:

A MEMBER'S GRATITUDE FOR EXCEPTIONAL SUPPORT

The SA Heart® Funder Committee, under the dedicated leadership of Dr David Jankelow, continues to play a vital role in supporting our members through complex, and often stressful, interactions with funders. A recent case has underscored just how impactful this work can be – not only professionally, but personally. One of our members, who recently underwent an intensive audit by Discovery Medical Scheme, has shared her deep appreciation for the support she received:

"I would like to express a heartfelt note of thanks and bring to your attention Dr Jankelow's tireless efforts and commitment in assisting and guiding me through an immensely stressful ordeal. He invested hours of his time – often after hours and over weekends – liaising with my lawyer and I and even adjusted his own practice schedule, to attend meetings with Discovery on our behalf. His expertise, strategic thinking and compassion, made an immeasurable difference in helping us navigate this audit successfully."

Over a period of more than 6 months, Dr Jankelow served, not only as a source of professional guidance, but also as a steadfast ally – working collaboratively with legal counsel and serving as a liaison between various medical organisations.

His selfless commitment played a crucial role in the successful resolution of the matter. The member also extended her thanks to Dr Philip Herbst, whose contributions added valuable support during this process. This testimony is a powerful reminder of the value of collegiality and the meaningful impact that our committees can have on the lives of individual members.

SA Heart® extends its sincere thanks to Dr Jankelow and Dr Herbst, for exemplifying the spirit of service and solidarity that lies at the heart of our organisation.



SA Heart® proudly acknowledges Prof Dirk Blom, SA Heart® member and long-standing leader within the Lipid and Atherosclerosis Society of Southern Africa (LASSA), on his appointment earlier this year as President of the International Atherosclerosis Society (IAS).

This achievement stands as a testament to his exceptional leadership and to South Africa's growing contribution to global cardiovascular science.

CONGRESS OF EUROPEAN SOCIETY OF CARDIOLOGY, MADRID 2025

SA HEART® AT ESC 2025 – SHOWCASING SOUTH AFRICAN EXPERTISE ON THE GLOBAL STAGE

As an affiliated member of the European Society of Cardiology (ESC), SA Heart® is proud to have once again been represented at the ESC Congress 2025 in Madrid – the largest cardiology meeting in Europe.

This year saw strong South African participation, with SA Heart® members contributing across plenary sessions, poster presentations and panel discussions. Highlights included Prof. Karen Sliwa chairing and presenting on global heart failure and pregnancy, Prof Liesl Zühlke speaking on rheumatic heart disease and cardiovascular training, Prof Ruchika Meel chairing sessions on valvular disease and aortic imaging,

Prof Ntobeko Ntusi contributing to fireside discussions and advances in data science, Emerging researchers and trainees, including Dr Megan Rajah, Julia Hähnle, Ms Elizabeth Schaafsma, Prof Mamotabo Matshela and others, also made their mark with original research on heart failure, TAVI and imaging.

The official SA Heart® session on the Global Stage, "South African heartbeats: training, research, and artificial intelligence insights for a healthier nation" saw Prof Alfonso Pecoraro presenting on Creating opportunities for ardiovascular training in South Africa, Prof Liesl Zühlke talking to cardiovascular research in South Africa: past, present, and future, while Dr David Jankelow showcased SA Heart's® Check My Beat campaign and the use of AI in cardiovascular screening.

Beyond showcasing South African science, ESC shared information with us, on how to become an ESC member and the benefits of joining. Membership offers discounted ESC Congress registration, access to ESC 365 and journals, CME-accredited webinars, exclusive guidelines, networking opportunities across 150 countries and eligibility for the prestigious Fellow of the ESC (FESC) designation.







Together, this reflects both the depth of expertise within SA Heart® and the opportunities available through our international partnerships.





Thobile Ziqubu,
Stakeholder Relations Manager SA Heart®

ESC 2026 SAVE THE DATES



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Dr Raj Khiani, UK
Consultant Cardiologist, ESC Professional Member

	ESC Professional	Combined	FESC
Standard fee	€150	From €160 to €250	€450
Reduced fee*	€75	From €105 to €125	-

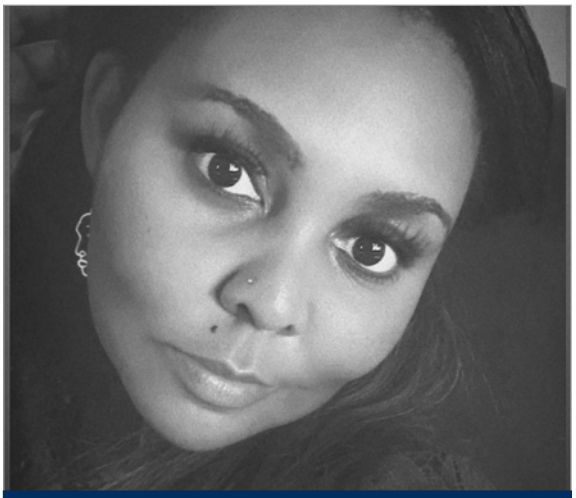
ESC Subspecialty Association Memberships

	ACVC	EACVI	EHRA	HFA	EAPC	ACNAP	EAPCI
Standard fee	€150	€156	€100	€150	€150	€60	€150
Reduced fee*	€85	€78	€45	€75	€75	n/a	€75
Fellow of a subspecialty association	€300	€300	€308	€288	n/a	n/a	n/a

Become a member, renew, or extend your membership at any time, visit **www.escardio.org/The-ESC/Membership**

For more information visit www.escardio.org/The-ESC/Membership

GRADUATES



Dr Rosalia Shivute

CARDIOLOGY REGISTRARS GRADUATE

Meet **Dr Rosalia Shivute**, who completed her training at Groote Schuur Hospital under the mentorship of Prof Mpiko Ntseke.

We asked her a few questions about her journey and experiences:

WHY CARDIOLOGY? Why not? Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of non-communicable death worldwide.

It provides an intersection of internal medicine, imaging, surgery and critical care – making it one of the most dynamic specialties. Combine that with cutting-edge diagnostics and interventions and rapidly advancing technologies, and it is at the forefront of medicine.

IF NOT MEDICINE, WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING? If I were not in medicine, I would imagine myself teaching high school pupils history part-time, exploring the fascinating tapestry of societies, while also apprenticing in the craft of winemaking – bringing a Merlot or sparkling Riesling to life. In quieter moments, I would be perfecting sourdough recipes with a century-old starter, carrying on a tradition that feels timeless.

ONE THING PEOPLE WOULD BE SURPRISED TO KNOW ABOUT YOU? I enjoy deep-sea shark diving. It deepens respect for the ocean and the planet, reminding you how vast and mysterious Earth truly is. You truly are a drop in the ocean.

BIGGEST LESSON YOU'VE LEARNED IN YOUR TRAINING? One of the most important lessons I have learned from my consultants is appreciating that therapeutic restraint can be as powerful as intervention – realising that sometimes, the best treatment is the most conservative.
Dr Rosalia Shivute



Dr Arlene Mazaza

CARDIOLOGY REGISTRARS GRADUATE

Meet **Dr Arlene Mazaza** – a proud graduate from Stellenbosch University and Tygerberg Hospital's Department of Medicine, mentored by Prof Alfonso Pecoraro.

We asked her a few questions, to hear more about her journey and the path ahead.

WHY CARDIOLOGY? It's the perfect blend of intellectual challenge and hands-on action. I thrive on the constant mental stimulation of academics and evidence-based practice, combined with the immediate impact of procedural interventions. There's nothing like making a tangible difference in a patient's life.

COFFEE OR TEA? Coffee is the fuel that starts my engine in the morning, but tea is my ritual to decompress and wind down after a hard day's work.

DREAM HOLIDAY DESTINATION (WHEN YOU FINALLY GET TIME OFF)? Anywhere with lots of sun, fresh air and the ocean. Basically, any destination that is the complete opposite of a busy hospital! I'm chasing stunning views and silence.

BEST PIECE OF ADVICE YOU'VE RECEIVED DURING TRAINING? "Treat the patient, not the test result." It's a simple mantra that has never steered me wrong. Combining empathy with sound clinical judgement, will always lead you to the right decision for the person in front of you.
Dr Arlene Mazaza

GRADUATES



Dr Taahir Asmal

CARDIOLOGY REGISTRARS GRADUATE

Meet **Dr Taahir Asmal** – a proud cardiology graduate.

We asked him a few questions, to hear more about his journey and the path ahead.

WHY CARDIOLOGY? Ever since I was young, I was fascinated by helping people and the heart exposed to my grandfather's cardiologist – I was convinced that this is what I'd like to do.

FAVOURITE PROCEDURE OR AREA OF INTEREST? Interventional and structural interventions.

YOUR "GO-TO" STRESS RELIEVER? Playing with my kids – I've got 3 monsters who keep me busy when I'm not at work.

ONE THING PEOPLE WOULD BE SURPRISED TO KNOW ABOUT YOU? I'm an avid gamer.

WHAT EXCITES YOU MOST ABOUT THE FUTURE OF CARDIOLOGY? Integration of AI into lesion assessment and management – structural interventions are becoming easier and more accessible.

A MENTOR WHO HAS INSPIRED YOU?
Early career - Prof EM Makotoko taught me how to face challenges with grace and empathy and to hold a catheter!

Late career - Dr ND Van Der Merwe taught me to be confident in my ability, to know my worth and assisted me to refine my skills – enabling me to be confident and safe.
Dr Taahir Asmal

PAEDIATRIC CARDIOLOGIST GRADUATE

Meet **Dr Zoleka Mbhele**, a proud Paediatric Cardiology graduate.

We asked her a few questions, to hear more about her journey and the path ahead.

WHY CARDIOLOGY? It has always felt like home – even during my undergraduate studies in UKZN, in the Cardiology Ward at Albert Luthuli (my classmates called me the heart whisperer). The love grew when I was a medical officer. I was made for it through and through.

IF NOT MEDICINE, WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING? Then it would be construction (home architectural design) and interior design.

TEA OR COFFEE? I'm a tea girl. I've become that mom who annoys her children by calling for a cup of tea every hour.



Dr Zoleka Mbhele

WHAT EXCITED YOU ABOUT THE FUTURE OF CARDIOLOGY? It is wonderful to watch that cardiology services are expanding to all corners of South Africa and Africa, which means it's reaching a whole lot more people. The collaboration with 1st world countries is also bridging the gap in knowledge and skill transfer. Knowing that world-class care for our people is on the horizon, is just beautiful to see in our lifetime. Cardiac care should not be for the wealthy and for those that can afford it, but for everyone who will benefit from it.
Dr Zoleka Mbhele

ANNUAL REPORTS SA HEART® SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

CAPSSA REPORT - AUGUST 2025

- Introduction: CAPSSA is the new Allied Professional Society formed in February 2025, representing all the Allied Professionals in the Cath labs, vascular labs, relevant ICUs, and the Clinical Physiologists in Cardiology. We are a SIG, directly under SA Heart®.
- Membership: Our membership is growing rapidly and we are helping members who are experiencing difficulties navigating the website.
- Face-to-face meetings: We had a phenomenally successful first meeting in KZN on 17 May 2025, organised by Suriah Salam (CAPSSA Vice President), one in Cape Town organised by Shaune Rajoo (CAPSSA Vice President) and currently one on 16 August 2025 in JHB, organised by Janee Naidoo (co-opted VP, due to Shaune stepping down).
- We hosted a successful Journal Club on 7 June 2025.
- We have an interesting parallel session planned for the SA Heart® Congress this year.
- We have started discussions with different hospital groups about CAPSSA and are negotiating with them for free BLS training for the Allieds (the Rads and Techs). We have confirmation from Life Entabeni, Life Westville and Capital Hospital – they have agreed to provide BLS for 2 Cath lab staff per year, effective on their next programme this year.
- We again have partnered with Biotronik, to offer VCL training, planned for 6 September 2025, to cater to 15 delegates.
- Our finances are ringfenced with SA Heart®.
- CAPSSA has started with a resounding success – and over the past few months, have already achieved so much, creating our footprint in the field.

Mr Selvan Govindsamy
CAPSSA President









ANNUAL REPORTS SA HEART® SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

CARDIAC ARRHYTHMIA SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA (CASSA)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Dr K Govender (President), Dr A Greyling (Treasurer), Prof A Chin (Public Sector), Dr J Moses (Public Sector & Education), Dr C Viljoen (Ethics and Guidelines), Dr A Thornton (Private Sector), Prof R Scott Millar (Accreditation), Mr M Raulana (Allied Professionals) Mr M van Den Berg (Industry), Mr G Van Der Merwe (Industry)

NUMBER OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS THIS YEAR
- 2

INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATIONAL EVENTS OR MEDIA PARTICIPATION
- Annual symposium in Cape Town, Feb 2025
- 12-week pacing Training Programme for Cardiac Registrars - Dr K Govender
- CSP online training for cardiac technologists - Dr Guram Imnadze
- CASSA Pacing tracing quiz - Dr C Viljoen, Oct 2025
- ECG masterclass - Prof Scott Millar and Prof A Chin
- ECG 3-part series for GPs in November - Prof Scott Millar and Prof A Chin
- Ongoing social media arrhythmia and cardiac awareness campaigns - weekly engagement on several platforms

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT OR PROGRESS MADE
- As above

CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED
- Accreditation discontinuation – cannot get legal advice, Sotalol Discontinuations

GOALS FOR NEXT YEAR
- Increase in sponsorship
- Training more cardiology fellows in the field of EP

Dr Adele Greyling
President: CASSA



CASSA Symposium 2025

CARDIAC IMAGING SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA (CISSA)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Dr Philip Herbst (Chair), Prof Blanche Cupido (Treasurer), Prof Alfonso Pecoraro, Prof Anton Doubell, Prof Ruchika Meel, Dr Anupa Patel, Mr Jan Steyn, Dr Farouk Mamdoo

NEXT AGM
17 October 2025

LAST AGM
2023

EDUCATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS 2025
- CISSA successfully hosted the SA Heart® Journal Club on 5 July 2025, focusing on "Cardiac amyloidosis: diagnostic approaches and pitfalls." The case-based discussion highlighted complex presentations from Tygerberg Hospital, with contributions from cardiology fellows and expert input from Dr Philip Herbst.
- CISSA will also host a pre-congress workshop during the 2025 SA Heart® Congress and successfully organised SUNECHO 2025 in May, attended by 145 delegates.

LEADERSHIP & PLANS
Dr Philip Herbst will continue as Chair into 2026. Educational activities and new initiatives are being planned for the coming year.

ANNUAL REPORTS SA HEART® SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

HEART FAILURE SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA (HeFSSA)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (TO 2027):

Nqoba Tsabedze (President), Martin Mpe (Ex-Officio President), Mpiko Ntsekhe, Eric Klug, Karen Sliwa, Ntobeko Ntusi, Sarah Kraus, Rohan Lutchman, Arlene Mazaza, Nompumelelo Gogo, Themba Maluleke.

The **Annual General Meeting** took place on 6 June 2025 at the HeFSSA Specialist Symposium and saw a new leadership election. The newly elected members welcomed with appreciation are Sarah Kraus, Rohan Lutchman, Arlene Mazaza, Nompumelelo Gogo and Themba Maluleke. We also thanked Prof Nash Ranjith and Dr Tony Lachman, who stepped down, for their substantial leadership service to HeFSSA over many years and wish them all the best for the future.

SUCCESSION PLAN AND PROCESS

We actively engage recently qualified Cardiologists to join society and participate in programmes and projects, to cultivate our future leaders.

EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

SA Heart® 2024 (8-10 Nov, Sandton CC)

- Heart Failure Track
  - Focus Areas: Diabetes in HF, Renal Disease & HF, Diagnosing & Treating HFpEF
  - Convenors: Martin Mpe and Nqoba Tsabedze
  - Faculty: Roy Gardner (UK) with Brian Rayner and Ntobeko Ntusi
- Cardio Update for Non-Cardiologists
  - Attendance: 180 GPs and Allied HCP
  - Focus Areas: Managing Diabetes in HF, Management of Hypertension in HF, Atrial Fibrillation, Obesity & Heart Failure
  - Navigating Resource Constrained Environments
  - Convenors: Prof Pindile Mntla, Dr Hanneke Dannheimer, Dr Darryl Smith
  - Faculty: Roy Gardner (UK) and Thomas Alexander (India) with Zaheer Bayat, Bryan Rayner, Philasande Mkoko, Rob Leibbrandt, Pravin Manga, Anupa Patel, Khulile Moeketsi

4th Annual HeFSSA Specialist Heart Failure Symposium

- The HeFSSA Specialist Treatment and Device Therapy Symposium was held in person on 6 and 7 June 2025 at the Vineyard Hotel, Newlands, Cape Town.
- The symposium saw attendance of more than 120 Health Care Professionals – primarily Cardiologists, Senior Cardiology Fellows and Physicians with a special interest in Heart Failure. Sub-Saharan Africa HCP also attended from Mozambique, Namibia, Botswana, Kenya, Uganda, Senegal and Ethiopia.
- The programme was developed by Karen Sliwa as the convenor, with support from Exco, focusing on the efficacy and outcomes of Heart Failure treatment and device therapies, covering topics such as diagnosis, imaging, pharmaceutical and device-based interventions, and lifestyle modifications.
- The international faculty included Albertino Damasceno (Mozambique), Ana Mocumbi (Mozambique) and Simon Stewart (Australia), with able local support from Amori Engelbrecht, Ashley Chin, Blanche Cupido, Mohammed Essop, Freek Bester, Jens Hitzeroth, Edson Jasse, Sajidah Khan, Eric Klug, Sarah Kraus, Tony Lachman, Basil Levetan, Theleshni Mannaru, Wayne May, Carol Musemwa, Mashudu Nethononda, Mpiko Ntsekhe, Tim Pennel, Karen Sliwa, Kagisho Thomas, Nqoba Tsabedze, Edwin Turton, Charle Viljoen, Nico van der Merwe.

HEFSSA HEART FAILURE ACADEMY FOR GPS, PHARMACISTS, NURSES & ALLIEDS

- This is a free online course that offers 5 accredited self-study modules (25 CPD total points) with automated online assessments. Each module is individually completed and receives a CPD certificate, with a HeFSSA Certificate of Completion awarded upon finishing all 5 modules.
- Module:
  1. Heart Failure overview (Prof Nash Ranjith)
  2. Diagnosis (Dr Martin Mpe)
  3. Treatment (Prof Nqoba Tsabedze)
  4. Prevention (Dr Tony Lachman)
  5. Patient-centred care (Prof Mpiko Ntsekhe)
- To date, there have been 719 total enrolments, 90 Health Care Professionals completed all 5 modules and earned their Certificate.

SA HEART JOURNAL CLUB HOSTED BY HEFSSA

- Date: 2 April 2025 (Webinar): 18:00 - 19:15 with Nqoba Tsabedze as Moderator
- Theme: Top 10 publications in Heart Failure from the European Heart Journal
- Hanneke Dannheimer presented Therapy Duration and

Improvement of Ventricular Function in De Novo Heart Failure: the Heart Failure Optimisation study.

- Umar Adamu presented Transcatheter Valve Repair in Heart Failure, with Moderate to Severe Mitral Regurgitation.
- Nico van der Merwe presented Finerenone in Heart Failure, with Mildly Reduced or Preserved Ejection Fraction.

GP AND ALLIED HCPS IN-PERSON MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2024 WAS COMPLETED IN APRIL 2025:

- Witbank (9 April 2025): Faculty, Themba Maluleke, saw 30 attendees at this Zydus-supported meeting.
- Durban (12 April 2025): The Zydus-sponsored event, with 40 attendees, took place at Musgrave Coastlands Hotel, with Rohan Lutchman and Nash Ranjith as Faculties.
- Johannesburg (12 April 2025): The Zydus-sponsored event, with over 150 attendees, was held at Capital on the Park Hotel, with Eric Klug and Nqoba Tsabedze as Faculties.

GP AND ALLIED HCPS IN-PERSON MEETING PROGRAMME 2025:

- 18 regional meetings are planned for 2025 and should reach +700 HCPs.
- Supported by Zydus and Pharma Dynamics.
- The theme for the 2025 programme is Heart Failure with Preserved Ejection Fraction
  - Content was developed by Nqoba Tsabedze, Martin Mpe, Eric Klug and Ntobeko Ntusi.
  - Covering Epidemiology and Disease Burden vs HFrEF, Pathophysiology and HFpEF Phenotypes, How to Make a Clinical Diagnosis of HFpEF and Treatment of HFpEF in 2025.

Schedule for 2025:

- 12 April 2025 - Durban and Johannesburg
- Durban: Musgrave Coastlands Hotel, 60 pax, Faculties: Rohan Lutchman & Nash Ranjith Sponsor: Zydus
- Johannesburg: Capital on the Park, 100 pax, Faculties: Prof Eric Klug & Prof Tsabedze Sponsor: Zydus
- 2 August 2025 - Cape Town & George
  - Cape Town: Crystal Towers Marriott Hotel, Century City, 80 pax, Faculties: Dr. Tony Lachman & Sarah Kraus
    Sponsor: Zydus
  - George: Fancourt Hotel, 35 pax, Faculties: HW Snyman & HR Du Toit
    Sponsor: Pharma Dynamics
- 16 August 2025 - Somerset West (Cape Winelands), East London & Windhoek, Namibia
- 6 September 2025 - East Rand
- 3 September 2025 - Polokwane, Gqeberha & Mbombela
- 25 October 2025 - Hermanus & Krugersdorp
- 8 November 2025 - Pretoria, Mossel Bay & Bloemfontein

HEFSSA @ SA HEART® CONGRESS 2025, 17 - 19 OCTOBER

- Heart Failure Track is being convened by Nqoba Tsabedze
- Cardio Update for Non-Cardiologists Workshop @ SA Heart® Congress will take place on Sunday, 19 October and see 200 GPs in attendance. Convenor is Prof Pindile Mntla

ACHIEVEMENTS:

- The growth of our flagship Annual Specialist Heart Failure Symposium surpassed previous attendance numbers and featured various Sub-Saharan African delegates, which is key to foster diversity and continental collaboration.
- We are also positive at the continued success of the Heart Failure Academy, which has awarded Certificates of Completion to 90 Health Care Professionals, reflecting continued support for this programme.

CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED

- To maximise the attendance of private and public sector HCP attendance at various face- to-face meetings.
- Expanding research in HF in South Africa.

GRANTS, SPONSORSHIPS AND MENTORSHIP PROGRAMMES

- HeFSSA facilitated the attendance (waived registration and accommodation, travel if needed) of more than 150 Cardiologists, Fellows and allied professionals, through educational grants to various educational initiatives.
- Travel Scholarships Awarded – AstraZeneca SSA has made it possible for 7 Sub-Saharan African Cardiologists to attend the HeFSSA Specialist Symposium with full travel grants managed through HeFSSA.

ANNUAL REPORTS SA HEART® SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

PAEDIATRIC CARDIAC SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA (PCSSA)

Reporting Period: November 2024 - August 2025

INTRODUCTION

The Paediatric Cardiac Society of South Africa (PCSSA) remains committed to advancing paediatric and congenital cardiac care across the country. Over the past year, we have prioritised promoting awareness, strengthening training and research, expanding collaborative partnerships, advocating for children's rights and supporting professional development.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND HIGHLIGHTS (NOV 2024 - AUG 2025)

- Celebrated World Congenital Heart Week (Feb 2025) with national campaigns and awareness drives.
- Expanded Facebook & Instagram CHD awareness campaigns, patient stories and event promotions.
- Curated Paediatric Track for SA Heart® Congress 2025 (Dr John Lawrenson).
- Engaged in SAPA Unity Meeting to advocate for children's health rights.
- Hosted a symposium with the Global Inclusion Foundation, to improve surgical access for children with genetic disorders.



Past and present students alongside colleagues in the Paediatric Cardiology Fraternity, bidding farewell to "the mother of Paediatric Cardiology in SA, Prof Cilliers".

FELLOWSHIPS, SCHOLARSHIPS AND EDUCATIONAL GRANTS

- Awarded 2 travel scholarships for SCAI Miami Interventional Training (Dec 2025).
- Awarding 10 travel scholarships for the 9th World Congress (Hong Kong, Dec 2025).
- Secured R45,000 in educational funding from HLC, with an additional grant under negotiation with SA Medical Services.

TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Following the success of last year's inaugural course with over 100 participants, PCSSA will host its second Basic Echocardiography Training Course in November 2025, in partnership with SAPA – aiming to improve CHD screening nationwide.

PCSSA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EXCO) 2024-2025

Chairperson	Prof Jayneel Joshi
Secretary	Dr V. Mamen
Social Media Liaison	Dr M. Lebea
Private Practice Portfolio	Dr S. Jiyana
Treasurer	Dr A. Greyling
Surgical Representative	Dr D. Reddy
Ex-Officio	Prof L. Mitchell

2025 ELECTION YEAR

This year marks the PCSSA Executive Committee elections. Nominations and voting will be conducted online, with results announced at the AGM, to be held during the SA Heart® Congress 2025.

SA HEART® MULTI-STAKEHOLDER FORUM PARTICIPATION

PCSSA will participate in the SA Heart® Multi-Stakeholder Forum, to improve congenital cardiac surgical services, basic CHD care and structured specialist training programmes.

STRATEGIC OUTLOOK FOR 2025 AND BEYOND

PCSSA remains committed to expanding training, strengthening congenital surgical capacity, advocating for improved access to care, and fostering local and global collaborations to improve paediatric cardiac outcomes.

CONCLUSION

The Paediatric Cardiac Society of South Africa continues to grow as a collaborative platform for professionals, patients and families. Through advocacy, innovation and partnerships, PCSSA strives to ensure that every child with congenital, or acquired heart disease in South Africa, has access to timely, equitable and effective care.

Prof Jayneel A. Joshi
Chairperson: Paediatric Cardiac Society of South Africa

ANNUAL REPORTS SA HEART® SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY FOR CARDIOVASCULAR RESEARCH (SASCAR)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Rabia Johnson (President) SAMRC, Sandrine Lecour (Accounts) UCT, Angelique Lewis (Secretary) UFS, Dirk Bester (Outreach) CPUT, Marguerite Blignaut (PR) SU, Lebogang Moketedi SMU, Annemarie Wentzel NWU, Neil Davis (Education)

LAST AGM OF GROUP/PROPOSED DATE OF NEXT AGM

- 17 February 2025 - AGM meeting
- Next AGM: February 2026

SUCCESSION PLAN AND PROCESS

- Newly appointed: Leboganag Moketedi
- Newly appointed: Annemarie Wentzel

EDUCATIONAL EVENTS HELD, OR INVOLVED WITH THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

- SASCAR Journal Club: >35 Attendees. Great success with good feedback. Topics discussed include:
- Advancing Cardiovascular Research: The People, Projects and Purpose of HART - Prof Carina Mels
- Physiological stress – A multi-disciplinary approach to the Allostatic load - Dr Annemarie Wentzel
- Attended vs unattended automated office blood pressure measurements in adults of African ancestry - Prof Yolandi Breet
- Exploring the potential of metabolomics in the African-PREDICT study - Dr Michel Strauss- Kruger

SASCAR Social Page: MB, together with Thobile, developed a SASCAR social page. MB showcases the work of the Scientist monthly.

- MB used Wix to create a webpage for SASCAR, including a welcome with sections related to publications and upcoming events. The link to the website is shared on the SA Heart® webpage under SASCAR's page.

WORKSHOPS - NOVEMBER 2025

SASCAR workshop on Cardio Oncology: November 2025

Special Achievements

- Membership n = 50

CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED

- Integrating scientists and clinicians

GRANTS, SPONSORSHIPS AND MENTORSHIP PROGRAMMES

- Sandrine Lecour successfully obtained KIC funding for the workshop

GOAL FOR NEXT YEAR

- Increase membership reach

GRANTS, SPONSORSHIPS AND MENTORSHIP PROGRAMMES

- Yes

Rabia Johnson
President: SASCAR

ANNUAL REPORTS SA HEART® SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

LIPID AND ATHEROSCLEROSIS SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA (LASSA)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Prof David Marais (Chairman), Prof Derick Raal (Secretary & Finance), Prof Dirk Blom, Dr Dee Blackhurst

LAST AGM OF GROUP / OR PROPOSED DATE OF NEXT AGM

- AGM set for 2025.09.01

SUCCESSION PLAN AND PROCESS

Attempts to consolidate lipidology expertise at health science faculties and teaching hospitals in Cape Town and Johannesburg were unsuccessful. No response from the committee of deans nor from the minister of health.

EDUCATIONAL EVENTS HELD OR INVOLVED WITH THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

- Journal club for faculties and SA Heart®
- Under- and postgraduate lectures and tutorials
- Pharmaceutical-sponsored educational events
- Lipidology courses (Marais). Ethiopia, July 2024, Netherlands, June 2025, course planned for Ghana in October
- Participation in LIPRA (Marais, Raal)

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENTS

- Prof. Blom became president of the International Atherosclerosis Society
- Assisted in establishing a lipid clinic in Harare, Zimbabwe
- Assisted with dyslipidaemia problems in Botswana

CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED

- Lack of posts to secure lipidology expertise
- Unavailability of special investigations in lipid disorders despite the NHLS Act.
- No exposure to lipidology in the training of internists, paediatricians, cardiologists, and endocrinologists
- National guidelines for dyslipidaemia are not respected in private and public healthcare.
- Waning membership
- Increasing administrative duties

GRANTS, SPONSORSHIPS AND MENTORSHIP PROGRAMMES

- None

GOAL FOR NEXT YEAR

Provide clinical and laboratory expertise for disorders of lipoprotein and lipid metabolism as well as atherosclerosis in South Africa and neighbouring countries.

David Marais President,

LASSA

SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY OF CARDIOVASCULAR INTERVENTION (SASCI)

1. SASCI EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

(until AGM 2026) is S Khan (President), H Weich (Ex-Officio President), J Vorster (Vice-President), F Dube (Treasurer), D Kettles (Secretary), A Vachiat (STEMI SA), C Hendrickse (PPC), C Zambakides, JP Theron, S Pandie, J Hitzeroth, A Mutyaba, Keir McCutcheon, T- J John and B Griffiths

2. SASCI ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- Held on 14 February 2025 at the Century City Conference Centre, Cape Town. The AGM took place during the SASCI-AfricaPCR Course and was well attended by 92 people.
- Continued expert services are rendered by Dr Tom Mabin (clinical opinions and funder engagement), Klinck and Samuels (legal expertise and submissions), Karen van der Westhuizen (coding) and George Nel (CEO).
- Mr Selvan Govinsamy officially resigned as Chair of the SASCI Associate Members Group (ISCAP) to establish a new special interest group, CAPSSA, under the umbrella of the SA Heart® Association. As the ISCAP Chair is a non-statutory role, there is no requirement for an immediate replacement. SASCI will continue to assess the needs of its members and provide support when needed.

3. SUCCESSION PLAN AND PROCESS:

In addition to the constitutional process, SASCI engages proactively with early-career Cardiologists, to involve them in the society's programmes.

4. EDUCATION AND INTERVENTIONAL TRAINING REMAIN AT THE FOREFRONT OF OUR ACTIVITIES:

- 4.1 **SCAI Fall Fellows Course** held in Miami, Florida, USA from 11 to 15 December 2024. SCAI once again offered support to 2 fellows from South Africa, to attend this premier fellows- only course in the USA. The recipients for 2024 were Dr Kgomotso Baliki from Groote Schuur Hospital and Dr Arlene Mazaza from Tygerberg Hospital.
- 4.2 **SASCI-AfricaPCR Course 2025,** held on 14 & 15 February, saw the successful hosting of the 2nd SASCI-AfricaPCR Course as a face-to-face meeting. The course accommodated more than 180 attendees, including Cardiologists, fellows and allied professionals. The SASCI Executive developed the academic content under the convenorship of Prof Sajidah Khan, Prof Hellmuth Weich and Dr Jean Vorster, as well as AfricaPCR Directors, Prof Farrel Hellig, Prof Mpiko Ntsekhe and Prof William Wijns. This is a collaborative effort between SASCI and AfricaPCR, with a focus on live case demonstrations and toolbox sessions – in addition to case presentations and didactic lectures. The international faculty included Abdul Mozid (UK), Andrew Sharp (UK), Evald Christiansen (Denmark), Phillip Freeman (Denmark), Mohamed Jeilan (Kenya), Habib Gamra (Tunisia), Hassan Elzain (Sudan) and Taariq Nuckchady (Mauritius). Local faculty included Adekunle Adeyemo, Adie Horak, Ahmad Tayob, Ahmed Vachiat, Arthur Mutyaba, Basil Levetan, Blanche Cupido, Brad Griffiths, Chevaan Hendrickse, Dave Kettles, Farouk Mamdoo, Farrel Hellig, George Harris, Hellmuth Weich, Jacques van Wyk, Jean Vorster, Jens Hitzeroth, Justiaan Swanevelder, Keir McCutcheon, Lloyd Joubert, Luyanda Mbanga, Martin Mpe, Martin Sussman, Mpiko Ntsekhe, Nico van der Merwe, Pieter van Wyk, Pumeshen Bisetty, Raeesa Bhorat, René Jansen van Rensburg, Sajidah Khan, Tom Mabin, Yuvashnee Govender, Zimasa Jama.
- 4.3 **The SASCI-Mayo Clinic Cardio Fellows Summit Webinar Series** has continued since late 2020, as part of an ongoing collaboration between the Mayo Clinic, Rochester, USA and represented by Gregory Barsness and David Holmes – with local convenors, Hellmuth Weich and Sajidah Khan. This partnership also allows our fellows access to the Mayo Online Educational material free of charge.
- 4.4 **The 11th SASCI Mayo Fellows Summit Webinar** took place on 24 March 2025. The topic discussed was The Lifetime Management of a Patient with Tetralogy of Fallot. Moderators for the session were Sajidah Khan, Hellmuth Weich and Greg Barsness, with the Mayo subject expert Jason Anderson.
- A clinical case was presented by Amori Engelbrecht, and fellows on the discussion panel were Bradley Naidoo and Wanda Tshabalala. 60 delegates from mostly South Africa, but also Zambia, Uganda, Ethiopia, Nigeria, US, Rwanda, Kenya and Gambia, participated in the webinar.
- 4.5 **Publications on the Proceedings of the SASCI Mayo Fellows Webinar Series** have been planned for inclusion in the SA Heart® Journal. A first submission following the webinar, Managing bleeding complications in Acute Coronary Syndromes, submitted by Hellmuth Weich et al has been accepted for publication. It is intended that such publications become a regular extension of the webinars.
- 4.6 **SASCI @ EuroPCR 2025** involved a joint session with the National Interventional Societies of Kazakhstan, South Africa and Switzerland, on the topic Stable CAD

and Multivessel Disease. SASCI was represented by Sajidah Khan as convenor, Brad Griffiths as the case presenter and Pieter van Wyk as discussant. The session was well attended and involved insightful discussions amongst the audience and panel members.

- 4.7 **The 13th Annual Medical and Mechanical Management Meeting** was held on 25 & 26 July at Irene Country Lodge with support from Medtronic, GE and Pharma Dynamics. This meeting saw a record attendance of 140 Cardiologists and fellows. Attendance, as well as travel and accommodation, if required, was free of charge for Health Care Professionals. Adie Horak and Nqoba Tsabedze were the programme convenors. The distinguished International Faculty members were Prof Flavio Ribichini (Italy) and Dr Ahmed Aljizeeri (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia). Faculty members included more than 30 national and regional experts.
- 4.8 **The 21st Annual SASCI Fellows Workshop** will take place on 22 & 23 August 2025 at the Vineyard Hotel, Cape Town. The expected attendance of at least 60 HCPs includes recently qualified Cardiologists and more than 80% of South Africa's cardiology fellows. The attendance will be free of charge for HCPs and includes travel and accommodation, as needed. Jean Vorster is the convenor.
- 4.9 **The next SASCI Mayo Fellows Summit Webinar for 2025** is planned for 22 August, on the topic "Lesion Assessment by OCT", which will be embedded in the SASCI Fellows Workshop. Our international faculty from the Mayo Clinic includes convenors Greg Barsness and David Holmes, and the subject expert Abhiram Prasad. In-room SASCI convenors include Hellmuth Weich and Sajidah Khan. As part of the collaboration with SASCI, the Mayo Clinic Rochester continues to offer access to their substantial online training platform to all local fellows.

1.1 The SA Heart® Congress 2025 is scheduled to take place mid-October at the Sandton Convention Centre. Ahmed Vachiat (SASCI Exco member) is the congress convenor and the SASCI track has been developed by Jean Vorster, with support from Sajidah Khan. The session will also focus on developments in STEMI Care in South Africa.

1.2 SCAI Fall Fellows Course 2025 is to be held in Miami, Florida, USA from 10 to 15 December. SCAI offered to support one fellow from South Africa to attend this premier fellows-only course. The call for nominations has been issued to HODs.

2. Challenges experienced - Executive Committee Members are all volunteers with severe time constraints.

3. Grants, sponsorships, mentorship programmes - SASCI facilitated the attendance (waived registration and travel costs) of more than 300 Cardiologists, fellows and allied professionals through educational grants to various educational initiatives.

4. NOTEWORTHY:

4.1. Regulatory Monitoring and Input: SASCI, supported by Klinck & Samuels, continuously monitors statutory and regulatory developments (e.g., NHI) and submits formal input relevant to cardiology.

4.2 A substantial SASCI submission was made on 22 December 2024, regarding the National Health Technology Systems, which can be viewed on the SASCI website. The conclusion of the SASCI submission was: "The implementation of National Health Technology systems will greatly improve patient care, if all parties utilise the same platform. Funding, coding, technological training and regulatory resources will have to be coordinated in a clear and transparent manner."

SASCI would like to extend a request that medical societies be included in the National Health Information Systems Committee. In offering the collaborative expertise of interventional Cardiologists in South Africa, a smooth and transparent implementation of the National Health Technology Systems will be to the benefit of all parties involved.

4.3. A substantial SASCI submission was made on 16 May 2025 regarding the Proposed Block Exemption, which can be viewed on the SASCI website. The conclusion of the SASCI submission was: "SASCI is of the firm view that the PBE is unlawful and unconstitutional. It is also unworkable and tainted by political objectives to price-regulated provider tariffs in view of the NHI (which, incidentally, is 3 years from 2025, with phase 2 ending in 2028). As drafted, the PBE is vague, contradictory and confusing. Even if the PBE were possible, any savings would be minimal and would not lead to a reduction in medical scheme premiums. It may lead to the opposite – i.e., increased costs for funders and providers, as well as the costs to the NDoH and CMS in setting up the various bodies and roles required to implement the PBE. SASCI respectfully requested the Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition to withdraw the PBE.

A proper, carefully considered exemption, to allow for collective bargaining by professionals, who are at an information and negotiation disadvantage towards much larger and more powerful entities, such as medical scheme administrators, is required. In conjunction with this, the unimplemented reforms in the medical schemes environment, as well as the provisions in the National Health Act, must be fulfilled, to effect meaningful change in the health sector."

4.4. An additional perspective by Dr Chevaan Hendricks, as SASCI Chair of Private Practice Committee, is as follows:

i. A standardised tariff model, while administratively attractive, risks over-simplifying the economic and clinical diversity of specialised practices. High-CAPEX disciplines, such as cardiology, are underpinned by significant infrastructural investments as discussed above and should be factored into tariff discussions.

ii. Autonomy, independence and evidence-based practice must remain the cornerstone of healthcare delivery, tariff regulations and system reforms. Tariffs should reflect, not only economic models, but should also be constructed with professional oversight, a deep understanding of the medical expertise involved, and acknowledging the risk and cost structure that underpins specialist care in SA.

iii. While the block exemption and proposed tariff reforms are a necessary evolution in healthcare financing, they must be grounded in real-world data, transparent dialogue and inclusive participation. Practices of all sizes should be encouraged to submit operational data and similar narratives, to ensure that policymakers fully grasp the complexity and cost of delivering high-level, patient-centred care.

iv. The South African Society of Interventional Cardiology and similar bodies, should lead this advocacy on behalf of Cardiologists, ensuring that the voice of the specialist remains central – not peripheral – to tariff reform.

4.5. Coding and Billing Guidance:

i. SASCI, on a day-to-day basis, advises on coding and billing for interventional cardiology, including the annual publication of the SASCI Coding Manual.

ii. Ongoing work includes clarification on drug-coated balloons vs stent codes and a proposed tiered Modifier 5 approach reducing reimbursement values for interventional procedures.

iii. Karen van der Westhuizen, with guidance from the TAVI operators, will prepare an assessment of the current Global Fees vs FFS. A dedicated Operators' Forum will be formed, with an initial focus on TAVI procedural coding and reimbursement issues.

iv. The current ambiguity between "per vessel" and "per lesion" coding affects key procedural codes, such as atherectomy (code 1284) and stenting (code 1286). A detailed assessment is required, to understand how any change in interpretation may influence billing guidelines and reimbursement structures.

v. Clarification is needed regarding the definition of a viable coronary artery – whether based on clinical criteria, or functional assessment – as this has direct implications for coding practices in interventional cardiology.

vi. Additional areas of focus are micro-catheters (3570), rule G, FFR/iFR/IVUS/OCT, LAA devices (1360), and codes related to first and second operators in interventional procedures.

vii. The CPT Cardiology Coding Project, led by SAMA, is ongoing with SASCI's input coordinated through Karen van der Westhuizen. SAMA is, however, currently undergoing severe resource constraints.

4.6. New Technology Evaluation and Reimbursement:

Typically, SASCI is approached by industry representatives or funding bodies, seeking an expert opinion as part of a funding submission, or evaluation process of a new technology. To ensure a rigorous and objective evaluation, SASCI appoints a suitably experienced interventional Cardiologist, to conduct a thorough review of the new technology. This review considers current clinical evidence, operator needs and best practices. The appointed Cardiologist is responsible for preparing a comprehensive, evidence-based guidance document – including relevant references. This draft guidance is then submitted for review, ratification and eventual publication by SASCI, ensuring that all recommendations reflect consensus opinion, and uphold the society's standards of clinical integrity and scientific rigour.

4.7. SASCI Position on the Discovery CAD Programme and Impact on Clinical Decision-Making

i. SASCI continues to actively emphasise the critical importance of physician autonomy in clinical decision-making and proposes selecting the most significant cases, to drive meaningful improvements within the DH CAD programme. Various meetings have taken place with Discovery, to facilitate open discussions and alignment of perspectives. During our next meeting, available data will be critically evaluated, and interpretations reviewed for consistency and clinical accuracy.

ii. SASCI maintains a strong preference for immediate approval of both invasive and non-invasive imaging, based on the Cardiologist's comprehensive assessment of each patient's total risk. The group underscores the need to trust the treating clinician's judgement, advocating for a process that proceeds without

unnecessary administrative delays, or back-and-forth communication.

iii. The ideal operational model proposed by SASCI, is that a Cardiologist initiates a patient's entry into the CAD programme, by submitting the designated CAD code – which in turn, should unlock CT Angiography access without patient co-payment. Concerns are raised about the current funder approval system, which relies on ICD-10 codes, to automatically trigger CT Angiography as the default imaging modality (and potentially excludes funding for invasive angiography). This approach is problematic, as it overrides the Cardiologist's clinical judgement and does not consider the complexities and nuances of individual patient presentations – which may not always be easily or accurately codified.

iv. Despite these challenges, practitioners have reported positive experiences, confirming that the DH CAD programme functions well in their practices, in facilitating appropriate and timely patient care.

v. A programme, through Medscheme, facilitates access to CT Angio for low-risk patients without the need for co-payment, and the cardiologist may claim an episode fee and revert to fee-for-service if the patient requires further invasive coronary angiography (and possible intervention).

4.8. Member Support: SASCI continues to actively provide peer support to members on regulatory, coding and funding challenges, as needed. The SASCI expert support team is activated, as required.

4.9. Promoting and Developing Improved Clinical Standards: SASCI helps improve the quality of care in interventional cardiology, by supporting the development of clinical guidelines and treatment standards. This includes working with local partners to promote consistent, evidence-based care. As an example, SASCI Exco member, Jens Hitzeroth, is chairing the writing committee for SA Heart® on New Guidelines for Acute Coronary Syndromes.

5. ADVISORY TO MEMBERS ON PROCTORSHIP REQUIREMENTS AND OVERSIGHT:

i. HPCSA Registration: International (non-RSA) proctors must be registered with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) under Section 21, which allows for temporary registration for the purpose of clinical teaching or demonstration.

ii. Programme Sponsorship: Most proctorship programmes are industry-supported and initiated, often with minimal external oversight or independent review.

iii. Governance and Vigilance: SASCI advises its members to exercise caution and due diligence when engaging in proctorship opportunities. It is essential to ensure that such engagements adhere to appropriate clinical governance frameworks and maintain the highest professional and ethical standards.

6. STEMI SA

i. SASCI continues to support STEMI SA under the leadership of Ahmed Vachiat.

ii. Tygerberg Hospital (Alfonso Pecoraro) remains the principal unit capturing data, with some data entry at St Dominics' (Dave Kettles) and Milpark Hospital (Ahmed Vachiat).

iii. Resources for data capturing remain a major constraint. Inkosi Albert Luthuli Hospital (Sajidah Khan) identified an MO to assist with data capture, but found that the extensive dataset required would need to be minimised to what is practical and clinically relevant. UCT Groote Schuur has secured ethics approval, but does not currently have the resources to capture the data.

iv. A complete study pack is available through SASCI for any site that wishes to secure ethics and local approval, and STEMI India will provide training and access to the STEMI SA-tailored database.

v. Positive developments with STEMI SA are that Alfonso Pecoraro's unit plans an in-depth review of their data for publication later in the year, and that local emergency services will soon be able to initiate thrombolysis en route to the hospital. An additional positive market development is that generic Tenecteplase may soon be available, at a cost that is affordable to both the public and private sectors.

Sajidah Khan
President: SASCI

ANNUAL REPORTS SA HEART® BRANCHES

JOHANNESBURG BRANCH

Branch members Farouk Mamdoo (President), Ahmed Vachiat (Immediate Past President), Riaz Dawood (Secretary) and David Jankelow (Treasurer).

The Johannesburg branch of SA Heart® has had a busy 2025 year thus far.

Fellows' Educational Social - 12 April 2025

Recognising the need to continue to support the fellows in Johannesburg and Pretoria, an "educational social" event was held for the fellows on 12 April 2025. The Wanderers Club in Illovo formed the setting for the event and the academic programme was organised by Dr Don Zacharia. The programme aimed to deliver content that the fellows requested more input on.

We wish to thank the generous contributions from the veteran Cardiologists:

- Prof C Libhaber on nuclear imaging
- Dr V Mammen on GUCH haemodynamics
- Dr V Mtwesi on ECGs
- Dr A Becker on bifurcation lesions

As well as the generous sponsorship from SA Medical, a scrumptious breakfast, tea and much was enjoyed by all the participants, and a light game of padel was enjoyed by a few thereafter, but was cut short by the inclement weather.

CPD Accredited Programme - 5 May 2025

The Johannesburg branch once again held a successful in-person CPD-accredited programme on Monday, 5 May, where it hosted a close friend of South African cardiology, an emeritus professor from the United States of America, Prof B Gersh, who provided meaningful insight on renal denervation. The keynote lecture and dinner were held at The Terrace Restaurant at The Wanderers Club and were generously sponsored by Servier. Many thanks to Dr R Dawood for chairing the meeting.

National Journal Club - 6 August 2025

The Johannesburg branch successfully hosted the monthly National Journal Club on 6 August. Prof Meel, the current SA Heart® Journal Editor, presented the importance of reinvigorating the journal and invited contributions from all attendees.

Dr Farouk Mamdoo, Dr Anupa Patel, Dr Manogran Moopanar and Dr Kaveer Sohan presented interesting cases of anomalous coronary artery conundrums, and academic inputs on management strategies were discussed.

Membership and Participation

While the branch continues to retain membership, active participation by younger members remains slow and hopefully, with more activities centred around the fellows, there may be more enthusiasm in branch activities in the future. Contribution to SA Heart® Grant Pool - the Johannesburg branch has committed to donating R70,000 towards the SA Heart® Grant Pool, in support of this year's Annual Congress.

Future Plans

Plans are underway to host a few seminars with a visiting professor involved in ECMO support of cardiac patients, and arrangements are underway to have CPD-accredited events organised around the time of the 2025 Congress in Johannesburg.

Farouk Mamdoo
President: Johannesburg Branch

KWAZULU-NATAL BRANCH

The KZN Branch of SA Heart® has undergone a process of gradual revitalisation since the appointment of a new leadership team in 2023. At that time, the branch was largely inactive, with minimal engagement from members and little academic activity being undertaken. The Executive Committee embarked on what has proven to be a challenging, but rewarding, journey to rebuild the branch's relevance and restore its presence on the provincial and national stage.

While the initial steps in 2023 were slow, by 2024, momentum had clearly developed, with a noticeable increase in participation, collegiality and enthusiasm amongst members. This positive trajectory has continued into 2025. The most important outcomes to date have been:

- Strengthened relationships across hospitals
- Renewed cohesiveness within the cardiology community
- A gradual rebuilding of morale amongst Cardiologists in the province

The branch still faces challenges, but there is renewed optimism that it can serve as an academic, professional and collegial hub for KZN cardiology.

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The AGM took place on 4 February 2025 – the first formal gathering of this nature in 2 years. While the attendance was modest – only 10 members were physically present – it was sufficient to achieve a quorum. Despite the limited numbers, the meeting represented an important milestone in the process of branch renewal, as it allowed for the formalisation of office bearers and the re- establishment of structured leadership.

Election of Office Bearers

Nominations had been submitted in advance via email, with no contestation received. Accordingly, the following individuals were confirmed as the branch Executive Committee for the 2025 term:

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- Chair: Rohan Lutchman
- Vice-Chair: Pumeshen Bisetty
- Treasurer: Mazwi Mabika
- Secretary: Selvan Govindsamy
- State Representative: Sandhiran Nadar
- Paediatrics Representative: Ebrahim Hoosen
- Surgery Representative: Darshan Reddy

Academic Component

The AGM evening also incorporated an academic session, which is an important part of our strategy to integrate governance with academic value. Dr Brian Vezi delivered an insightful CME presentation on Conduction System Pacing, sparking productive discussion amongst those present.

Academic and Professional Activities

Continuing Medical Education (CMEs)

The branch has placed strong emphasis on the revival of CME activities, recognising their value for both knowledge sharing and interhospital networking. The following CMEs were successfully hosted:

1. 10 October 2024: Approach to Complex PCI - Prof Tiery Laferve
2. 26 May 2025: Assessing Microvascular Dysfunction - Dr Keir McChutheon
3. 20 September 2025: Clinical Cases in OCT - Prof Abdul Mozid

Each of these events provided an opportunity, not only to hear from leading experts, but to also stimulate clinical discussion relevant to day-to-day practice in KZN.

Branch Journal Club

Recognising the need for consistent academic engagement beyond isolated CME events, the branch launched a monthly Journal Club. The intention is to provide a regular, structured forum for:

- Presentation of clinical cases
- Critical appraisal of contemporary journal articles
- Constructive peer review in a collegial environment
- The nurturing of academic interest amongst younger Cardiologists

The initiative has required sustained effort from the Executive Committee, both in terms of coordination and encouraging participation. Nevertheless, interest has grown steadily – with members from various hospitals and at different career stages, beginning to contribute. The aspiration is for this forum to become self-sustaining and embedded in the academic culture of KZN cardiology.

Journal Clubs Conducted in 2025 to Date:

- 11 June 2025 - Case presentations by Drs Pumeshen Bisetty & Haroon Mia: Journal article presented by Dr Rohan Lutchman
- 13 August 2025 - Cardiogenic Shock presented by Prof Sajidah Khan: Journal article reviews by Dr Shiraz Gafoor
- 18 September 2025 - Webinar broadcast: "Safety and Efficacy of Ranolazine in Patients with Chronic Coronary Syndrome" by Prof Collins

Ad Hoc Meeting

Beyond structured academic events, the branch has also sought to respond to professional challenges faced by the local cardiology community. On 29 January 2025, a meeting was convened amongst KZN Cardiologists, to deliberate on the practices of a local colleague who had attracted widespread attention for questionable patient management. After a frank discussion, the group resolved to approach the colleague with an offer of peer review and constructive support. A formal letter outlining these intentions was prepared and forwarded to the SA Heart® parent body. Unfortunately, due to potential medicolegal concerns, the initiative was not endorsed and further progress was curtailed.

Challenges

The single greatest challenge this year has been the reputational damage to KZN cardiology, arising from the practices of one of our colleagues. This issue has had far-reaching consequences – casting a shadow over the entire profession within the province and eroding confidence amongst both peers and patients. A further concern is the use of fictitious credentials by certain colleagues. Such practices threaten, not only the credibility of individual practitioners, but also the integrity of the profession as a whole. The potential for reputational harm is profound and the risk of medicolegal implications cannot be ignored.

At the upcoming AGM, we propose to table these matters formally with the following objectives:

- To create a structured framework for peer review
- To define clear, legally sound channels for addressing misconduct, misrepresentation and related ethical breaches
- To seek guidance and support from the parent body, on how such issues should be escalated, investigated and resolved

By confronting these challenges transparently, the branch hopes to safeguard professional standards, while maintaining a culture of collegiality and accountability.

Positives

Despite the challenges, there have been a number of important positives over the past year:

- Stronger academic culture: With regular CMEs and the introduction of Journal Clubs, members now have more

opportunities for structured engagement.

- Improved interhospital collaboration: Events have brought together Cardiologists from both state and private sectors.
- Growing participation: While not yet at desired levels, there is a discernible increase in enthusiasm and involvement.
- Rebuilding morale: After several years of inactivity, members are beginning to feel a renewed sense of belonging to a professional community.

Conclusion

The past 2 years have seen the KZN branch slowly, but steadily, restored from a period of inactivity, to one of cautious optimism. Much work remains to be done – particularly in addressing reputational challenges and broadening participation, but the foundations for a vibrant, active branch are being re-established.

Rohan Lutchman

President: KwaZulu-Natal Branch

PRETORIA BRANCH

Branch members, Dr Iftikhar Ebrahim (Chair), Dr Jameel Moosa (Vice Chair), Prof Rhena Delport (Academic Head) and Dr Musa Mayayise (Private Academic Head)

Educational Events Held or Involved with Through the Year

7 May hosted SA Heart® Journal Club, attended by about 50 HCPs

- Moderated by Pule Mutati
- Case Presentation: Spontaneous Coronary Artery Dissection by Dr Musa Mayayise
- Presentation: Worldwide procedural variations of primary percutaneous coronary intervention for ST-elevation myocardial infarction: Insights from the "Stent-Save a Life" programme by Prof Rhena Delport

An in-person branch meeting is planned for 21 August, with Elsabe Klinck as speaker on NHI (ethics accredited).

Challenges Experienced

- To get colleagues involved in the Branch leadership structure
- To ensure colleagues' attendance at face-to-face meetings

Grants, Sponsorships and Mentorship Programmes

- No grants
- All Branch educational events are offered free of charge to delegates

Goals for Next Year

- Expand Branch Committee
- Host 3 face-to-face meetings
- Scope of meetings to include General Practitioners

Iftikhar Ebrahim Chairperson: Pretoria Branch

WESTERN CAPE BRANCH

Branch members, Dr Chevaan Hendrickse (President and member of the SASCI Exco), Dr George Comitis (Vice President and SASCI PPC Chair), Dr Lloyd Joubert (Treasurer), Dr John Lawrenson (Secretary), Dr Blanche Cupido, Prof Anton Doubell, Prof Mpiko Ntsekhe, Dr Barend Fourie and Natercia da Silva

Annual General Meetings (AGMs)

The Annual General Meeting of 23 June 2025 at the Marriott Crystal Towers Hotel marked a decisive milestone. It confirmed a quorum, presented the President's and Treasurer's reports, and finalised over 18 months of constitutional reform.

- President's Report: Reflected on the branch's revival, establishment of a robust academic culture and development of partnerships with national and international colleagues.
- Treasurer's Report: Confirmed financial stability, with accrued interest income, prudent reserves management and balanced sponsorship models.
- Constitutional Reform: A revised constitution was unanimously adopted, aligning the branch with SA Heart® NPC's Memorandum of Incorporation. Reforms included membership rights, representation requirements, succession planning, term limits, financial transparency, electronic meeting provisions and honorary appointments.
- Leadership Transition: Outgoing President (2022-2025) stepped down, handing over to Dr George Comitis as the new President. Dr Barend Fourie became Treasurer and Dr Jacques Liebenberg, Secretary. Exco-at-Large positions were filled by Lindani Gambushe, Nazneen Allie, Herbie Mabin, and Christopher Hugo-Hamman. Vacant positions were later filled by Arlene Mazaza and Natercia da Silva, with Christopher Hugo-Hamman appointed Vice President.

Acknowledgement was made to Ms Erika Dau of SA Heart® NPC for her guidance in governance alignment.

Educational Grants and Sponsorships

Throughout 2024, the branch continued to provide

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educational grants and support for participation in the SA Heart® Congress, extending opportunities to technologists and Cardiologists.

One awardee was unable to use the grant, due to COVID-19 and funds were rolled forward.

The Louis Vogelpoel Travelling Scholarship was not awarded in 2024, but funds were earmarked for future allocation.

In 2025, the scholarship was awarded after rigorous review, with closer alignment planned with the SA Heart Education Committee for future cycles.

Challenges and Academic Activities

From 2022 to 2025, the branch strengthened its academic footprint with numerous activities:

2022:

Reactivation in August with a MitraClip evening (Groote Schuur & Tygerberg Hospitals, supported by Abbott Medical Technologies). By October, case presentations and abstract discussions were introduced, building a culture of inclusivity and peer learning.

2023:

A highly productive year with highlights including: Professor Paul Knaapen's lecture on chronic total occlusion intervention (January).

Reconvening of the Western Cape Journal Club (July) with strong contributions from local and national experts.

- Multiple academic case evenings and forums on interventional and structural cardiology.

2024:

- Professor James Spratt's intravascular lithotripsy session (May).
- Case-based evenings in August and October (attendance below expectation, due to IT and communication issues – important lessons for planning).

2025:

- Journal Club (February): Contributions from Dr Jama, Dr Sehgalke and Treasurer, Dr Lloyd Joubert, covering the SCOFF trial, peripartum cardiomyopathy and the ORBITA-2 trial.
- Plans for registrar-focused research evenings in September 2025.

Challenges:

- Overlap with major national and international congresses (e.g., AfricaPCR). Demanding clinical schedules limit availability.
- IT infrastructure and communication gaps are affecting attendance in 2024.

Goals for 2026

- Looking ahead, the branch aims to:
- Build on registrar-focused academic initiatives.
- Strengthen collaboration with the SA Heart® Education Committee, for transparent and efficient scholarship management.
- Expand inclusivity, by engaging public and private sector Cardiologists more actively. Improve communication and event planning, to increase attendance.
- Consolidate governance reforms under the new leadership team for long-term sustainability.

Financial Report

- The branch remained financially stable throughout 2022-2025.
- Careful stewardship of reserves ensured academic independence, while recognising industry partners.
- Balanced sponsorship models avoided overreliance and maintained fairness. Interest income contributed to stability.
- Scholarship allocations (including deferred funds due to COVID-19) were managed prudently.

Conclusion

- From 2022 to 2025, the Western Cape Branch of the South African Heart Association® achieved significant growth and transformation. The branch:
- Re-established itself as a leader in academic engagement Delivered high-quality educational activities
- Maintained financial stability Modernised its governance structures

Despite challenges of workload, infrastructure and competition with larger congresses, the branch built a strong foundation. With Dr George Comitis as President and a revitalised Executive, the Western Cape Branch is well-positioned to continue advancing cardiology, supporting members and contributing meaningfully to the SA Heart® mission.

Chevaan Hendrickse

President: Western Cape Branch

SA HEART® SCHOLARSHIPS

SUNECHO 2025

A very fascinating experience. Something different from my daily routine as a Health Care Practitioner.

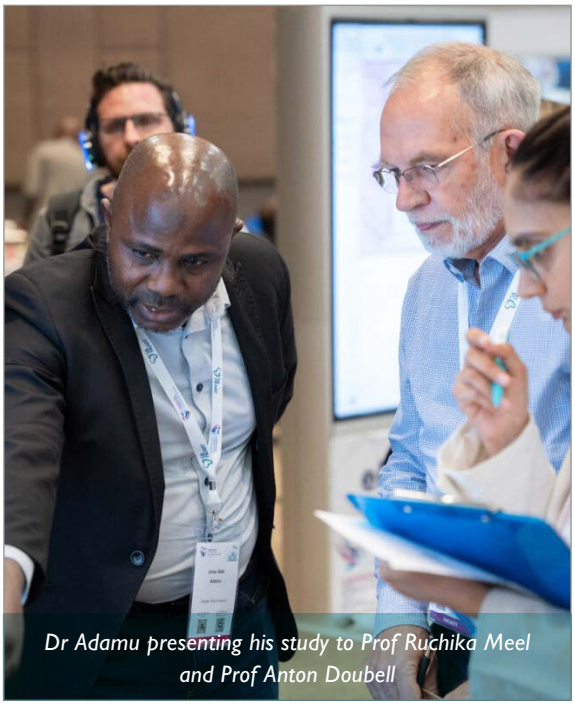
Firstly, I would like to thank SA Heart® for awarding me with such an excellent opportunity. A lot was learnt and will be applied in everyday practice. SunEcho is an excellent course that I would recommend for all Cardiac Physiologists to attend. It provides all the necessary knowledge – from the basics of echocardiography to in-depth interpretation of your findings, which is something that I can safely say I lacked.

The course was well organised, and the speakers were fluent and patient. They demonstrated a lot of passion and understanding of what they were talking about. A truly remarkable experience. Some of the talks were engaging, which made it easier to grasp the knowledge they shared across the room.

I would definitely like to attend again – possibly, even as one of the presenters. It was motivating and encouraging to do better. Thank you!

Ms Sinethemba Buthelezi
Cardiac Physiologist CMJAH





Dr Adamu presenting his study to Prof Ruchika Meel and Prof Anton Doubell

SA HEART® RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP

I am grateful for the scholarship I was awarded during the SA Heart® Conference last year, which has supported my ongoing research project titled:

"Serum (Plasma) Procollagen Type I N-terminal Pro-peptide and Procollagen Type III N-terminal Pro-peptide as Markers of Ventricular Remodelling in Heart Failure: A Prospective Case-Control Trial."

The project is progressing well. We are in the final stages of analysis and have begun drafting the manuscript.

I anticipate sharing more concrete outcomes in the coming months and plan to submit the manuscript to a peer-reviewed journal soon. I do wish the laboratory work had been completed earlier, as this would have allowed me to submit an abstract for SA Heart® 2025. Nevertheless, I am encouraged by the progress made and look forward to keeping you updated as the work advances.

Thank you once again to SA Heart® for the invaluable support and encouragement.

Dr Umar Adamu

THE SOUTH AFRICAN HEART® ASSOCIATION RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP

This scholarship is available to all members of the SA Heart® Association. It is primarily intended to assist colleagues involved in much-needed research, to enhance their research programmes.

REQUIREMENTS

- Applicants need to be fully paid-up members, in good standing for at least 1 year

Applications must include:

- The applicant's abbreviated CV
- A breakdown of the anticipated expenses
- Ethics approval
- Full details of the research
- The completed application form – please request a fillable MS Word document from erika@saheart.org
- Contact details of Head of Department or supervisor/mentor
- The research for which funding support is sought, has to have direct relevance to South Africa.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Preference will be given to early and mid-career applicants (<5 years post-qualification as a specialist and/or <5 years post-PhD qualification).

CONDITIONS

- Applicants may only submit 1 application every second year. Preference is given to those who have not had previous scholarships awarded.

- Awards are granted for 1 specific research project. Should that specific project be cancelled or the full amount allocated not be utilised for any reason, then the funds must revert back to SA Heart®.

APPLICATIONS MUST BE EMAILED TO:

erika@saheart.org

THE SELECTION PANEL WILL REVIEW APPLICATIONS ANNUALLY. THE CLOSING DATE IS 30 SEPTEMBER ANNUALLY.

One scholarship to a maximum amount of R85,000 will be awarded annually.

SA Heart® commits to inclusive excellence, by advancing equity and diversity. We particularly encourage applications from members of historically under-represented racial/ethnic groups, women and individuals with disabilities.

TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIPS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN HEART® ASSOCIATION

Applications for the SA Heart® Travel Scholarship for the third term finance year 2026 are invited to reach the SA Heart Office between 1 September 2025 and 30 November 2025.

The scholarship is for the value of up to R35 000.00 for international meetings and R 15 000.00 for local meetings. This scholarship is available to all members of the SA Heart® Association. It is primarily intended to assist junior colleagues, to ensure continued participation in local, or international scientific meetings or workshops.

REQUIREMENTS

- Applicants must be fully paid-up members for at least 1 year.
- The research presented at the congress for which funding is sought, needs to be relevant to South Africa.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Early and mid-career applicants (<5 years post-qualification as specialist and/or <5 years post- PhD qualification).
- Acceptance of an abstract/poster presentation at the scientific meeting to be attended.

CONDITIONS

- Awards will not be made for conferences or workshops, retrospective to the application submission deadline. If the conference is taking place within 6 weeks following the submission deadline, please indicate this in the appropriate place on the application form.
- It is not a requirement for the abstract to be accepted by the conference travel application closing date. Should the acceptance of the paper – including proof of registration – not be available at the time of submission of the application, then a provisional award may be made, pending receipt of the acceptance of the paper.
- Please ensure that applications are made as well in advance as possible (preferably at least 6 months prior to the conference date).
- Applicants may only submit 1 application every second year. The scholarship is for the value of up to R30,000 for international meetings and R9,500 for local meetings.
- Awards are only made, in the event that a paper or a poster is being presented, or in the event of a workshop attendance – if the reviewers deem the workshop attendance to be of high impact and consequently of benefit to the SA Heart® community.
- The applicant must ensure that the application is fully completed – including the requirements as detailed in the checklist section. Applicants are asked to be concise and to only include applicable and relevant information.
- Awards are granted for 1 specific conference. Should that specific conference be cancelled, or the full amount allocated not be utilised for any reason, then the funds must revert back to SA Heart®.
- A written report on the relevant congress attended, will need to be submitted by the successful applicant within 6 weeks of attending the congress. The congress report will be published in the South African Heart® Association Newsletter.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- For more information and application forms, please visit **www.saheart.org/cms-home/category/39**