SA HEART®
Newsletter of the
South African Heart Association

2024
Volume 21
Number 1

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

SA HEART®: BEATING STRONG FOR SOUTH AFRICA'S CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH

The South African Heart Association (SA Heart®) stands as a vital pillar in our nation's healthcare landscape. Our not-for-profit organisation, driven by a dedicated team and a resolute mission, serves as the powerful voice of cardiovascular care in South Africa. SA Heart®'s commitment extends far beyond advocacy – it fosters collaboration, propels research, and strives to ensure exceptional care for all South Africans, from the tiniest hearts to the most seasoned.

The strength of SA Heart® lies in its comprehensive structure. An impressive Board of directors sets the strategic course, while the executive committee translates vision into action. Special interest groups, catering to specific areas of cardiovascular medicine, allow for focused expertise. Regional branches ensure a nationwide reach, bringing SA Heart®'s resources and guidance to every corner of the country. Underpinning this impressive framework is a dedicated team. The general manager steers the organisation's day-to-day operations, while the stakeholder manager cultivates vital relationships with healthcare professionals, policymakers and the public.

Presently SA Heart® stands at a crossroad. As the leading voice for cardiovascular care in South Africa, we hold immense power to improve the health of our nation. But the road ahead is not without its challenges.

Firstly, we must solidify SA Heart®'s brand as a unified, coherent force. This means ensuring that our diverse membership – adult and paediatric cardiologists, researchers, and allied health professionals – operates under a single banner. Unity of purpose will amplify our impact and project a clearer image of unwavering support for our members.

Secondly, we need to address the growing pressure from private health funders. We cannot stand idly by when funders attempt to restrict clinical autonomy and limit diagnostic and therapeutic options for our patients. SA Heart® will be a relentless advocate for both patient well-being and the best practices within cardiovascular medicine.



Prof Eric Klug.

The looming implementation of National Health Insurance (NHI) presents an additional hurdle. While it is admirable to strive for universal healthcare, building it on a fragile public healthcare system with strained finances creates a worrying scenario.

Engaging the next generation of cardiovascular professionals is crucial. We actively encourage younger members to volunteer and participate in SA Heart®'s structures. Their fresh perspectives and enthusiasm are vital to the future of our organisation.

By fostering a patient advisory group, we create a vital communication channel that benefits patients, practitioners, and the entire healthcare landscape. This is a major priority for SA Heart® in 2024. Advocacy efforts will hopefully work to influence policy decisions that prioritise cardiovascular health and improve access to quality care for all. SA Heart® intends to be a proactive voice in the process.

Continued on page 72

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT continued

A pivotal tool in our mission is the SA Heart® Journal. However, its viability rests on finding a dedicated editor, securing financial resources, and streamlining administration. This may be the final edition of the Journal, but we cannot afford to lose this valuable platform for knowledge sharing and advancement in cardiac care.

By presenting a unified front, attracting young talent, and securing the future of the SA Heart® Journal, we can overcome obstacles and emerge stronger. SA Heart® is not just an organisation; it is a testament to unwavering dedication. It is the tireless work of the Board, the executive committee, special interest groups, regional branches, the general manager and the stakeholder manager – united by a common purpose - that ensures that every South African heart beats strong and healthy and that its members are supported, protected and secure in their invaluable professional careers.

SA Heart® needs your support to achieve its aims. A cohesive society is a powerful one. This is the moment for making a concerted effort to promote cardiovascular health in South Africa. Join us, our members, and our dedicated staff in reaching that objective. A heart-healthy South Africa will benefit all of us.

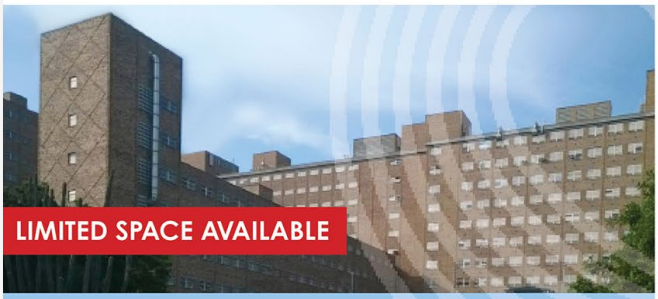
Warm regards

Eric Klug
SA Heart® President

REGISTER NOW!

13th SUNECHO

20-24 MAY 2024



LIMITED SPACE AVAILABLE



20 MAY 2024
Hands-on 3D Echo Workshop
Venue: Division of Cardiology, Tygerberg Hospital

21 - 24 MAY 2024
SUNecho Course
Venue: Protea Hotel, Techno Park, Stellenbosch

Closing date early registration: 9 February 2024 • https://consultus.eventsair.com/sunecho-2024

Endorsed by CISSA CARDIAC IMAGING SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA A SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP OF SA HEART®

Stellenbosch UNIVERSITY IYUNIVESITHI UNIVERSITEIT

SA HEART®

Proudly organised by ConsultUS (Pty) Ltd

SA HEART® BOARD: CHANGING OF THE GUARD

Following the AGM, there have been several changes in the Board's membership. Prof Blanche Cupido left the Board when her term as President ended in 2022. Dr Martin Mpe, Prof Alfonso Pecoraro, Mr François Mintoor and Mrs Robyn MacMhaoinigh indicated their unavailabilty for another term and Dr Thomas Mabin and Dr Tawanda Butau resigned from the Board for personal reasons.

SA Heart® is deeply indebted to all these individuals who gave freely of their time, expertise and knowledge to bring the Association closer to its vision of developing cardiovascular healthcare for all South Africans, while at the same time protecting members' interests, serving the best interests of the company, complying with governance requirements and managing the funds, contracts and communications responsibly.

The Board was augmented in May by recruiting Dr Tim Pennel (cardiothoracic surgery), Dr Anthony Dalby (cardiologist) and Ms Mandi Fine (marketing). They have joined Prof Eric Klug, current President, to serve during the new Board cycle. Following the SA Heart® AGM the Board also includes Prof Nqoba Tsabedze, Prof Ruan Kruger and 2 independent Board members, Mrs Roanleigh Thambiran (finance) and Mrs Maryna Wiesner (legal).

You can meet the current Board at:
https://www.saheart.org/menu/board_directors

New Board members were inducted on 6 November 2023. New Board Committees and their Chairs were appointed and Dr Dalby was elected Chair of the Board.

Dr Martin Mpe has been appointed president-elect of SA Heart®.

The Board will need strength and insight to steer SA Heart® through the challenges facing cardiovascular care in the country. To achieve its aims the Board will need the backing of volunteers on the Board Committees, the Standing & Project Committees, the Special Interest Groups, the Branches and the members at large who must all contribute to ensuring SA Heart®'s position as the leading professional opinion on South Africa's cardiovascular health.

Tony Dalby
SA Heart® Chair of the Board

WEBSITE LINKS

SA Heart®	www.saheart.org
CASSA	www.cassa.co.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



POPULAR CONGRESSES FOR 2024

CONGRESS	DATE	PLATFORM	HOST
SA HEART® JOURNAL CLUB - hosted by SASCI Check your email for registration code	08 May 2024	Virtual	South Africa
ESC HEART FAILURE CONGRESS https://www.escardio.org/Congresses-Events/Heart-Failure	11 - 14 May 2024	Lisbon	Portugal
EUROPCR https://www.pcronline.com/Courses/EuroPCR	14 - 17 May 2024	Paris	France
SUNECHO COURSE https://consultus.eventsair.com/sunecho-2024	20 - 24 May 2024	Stellenbosch/ Tygerberg	South Africa
SA HEART® JOURNAL CLUB - hosted by Johannesburg Branch Check your email for registration code	05 June 2024	Virtual	South Africa
SA HEART® FELLOW EXAM PREPARATION COURSE By invitation	07 - 09 June 2024	Johannesburg	South Africa
HeFFSA SPECIALIST SYMPOSIUM For information contact info@hefssa.org	07 - 08 June 2024	Sandton	South Africa
CARDIO ALEX https://cardio-alex.com	11 - 14 June 2024	Alexandria	Eygpt
ORIENTAL CONGRESS OF CARDIOLOGY TOGETHER WITH THE WORLD CONGRESS OF CARDIOLOGY https://world-heart-federation.org/world-congress-of-cardiology	27 - 30 June 2024	Shanghai	China
SA HEART® JOURNAL CLUB - hosted by PCSSA Check your email for registration code	03 July 2024	Virtual	South Africa
M & M MEETING By invitation	19 - 20 July 2024	Irene	South Africa
SA HEART® JOURNAL CLUB - hosted by ISCAP Check your email for registration code	07 August 2024	Virtual	South Africa
ESC CONGRESS 2024 https://www.escardio.org/Congresses-Events/ESC-Congress	30 August - 02 September 2024	London	Great Britain
SA HEART® JOURNAL CLUB - hosted by KZN branch Check your email for registration code	04 September 2024	Virtual	South Africa
SA HEART® JOURNAL CLUB - hosted by CASSA Check your email for registration code	02 October 2024	Virtual	South Africa
24TH ANNUAL CONGRESS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN HEART ASSOCIATION **https://www.saheart.org/congress**	**8 - 10 November 2024**	**Sandton Convention Centre**	**South Africa**

Check SA Heart® online calendar for updates and training events across the country.
https://www.saheart.org/calendar

SA HEART® CONGRESS 2023

As we are preparing for SA Heart® Congress 2024 (see convenor note), we want to hold a short review of Congress 2023 and express our sincerest thanks to all who made it such a huge success:

- Dr Farouk Mamdoo, convenor, who spent many days, nights and weeks putting together a sterling programme, engaging with speakers, funders, committees and congress organiser with vision, patience, and dedication.
- All those who contributed to the programme, as congress committee member, as faculty, presenter and chair, as abstract presenter and judge.
- To our supporting industry who gave generously to make this all happen.
- Event Options, the professional congress organiser with Larna and Sue at the helm and many efficient members of staff, who didn't tire to give their best to put the congress together and ensure smooth running, administration, accounting, and reporting.
- The AV and Tech team supporting the show ensuring smooth broadcast in each venue, and all those working in the background from registration desk to cleaning staff, from ushers to catering contingent and security personnel.
- And the Bokke, who lifted the spirit with their win!
- Last not but not least, all the delegates who attended the congress.

Here are some impressions from the SA Heart® Congress 2023. We are looking forward to welcoming you in Sandton for SA Heart® Congress 2024.



Drs Farouk Mamdoo, Convenor 2022 - 2023 congresses and Ahmed Vachiat, convenor 2024 - 2025 congresses.









SA HEART® BOOTH AT THE SA HEART® CONGRESS IN 2023

During the SA Heart® Congress 2023, SA Heart® had a welcoming booth in the Foyer, inviting delegates to meet Board and Committee members, to sign up to SA Heart®, to engage and discuss. Here are some impressions from the booth, well used by delegates to interact or just rest a bit, and most of all proudly find their name on the member board, hidden in the big Thank You to our members.

Make sure to keep your membership current to find your name on the board this year at SA Heart® Congress 2024. We are looking forward to improved engagement and interaction. You don't have to wait until the congress, comment, discussion and questions are invited throughout the year. Please contact info@saheart.org.













SA HEART® JOURNAL CLUB NEWS

In 2021, SA Heart® proudly launched the National Monthly Journal Club, an online educational platform accredited for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to enrich our members' learning experience. This monthly event, hosted and presented by our esteemed special interest groups or regional branches in rotation, has quickly become a cornerstone of our educational calendar. We are grateful for the generous support of our industry partners, which has contributed significantly to the success and impact of this initiative.

In October 2023 ISACP hosted the October edition of our Journal Club. We are grateful for the sponsorship provided by Vertice, allowing us to execute the series successfully. We had an array of esteemed Speakers for the night with Ms Rajoo opening, closing and managing the Q & A. Thank you to our colleagues for covering the following topics during the course of the evening; Dr K Moodley (LBB pacing- journal article / case presentation), Dr N Hadebe (Tausig Bing- Case presentation), Dr Bissetty (Cath lab Gremlins and superstitions) and Dr A Horak (Chronic ischaemic heart disease).

The Heart Failure Society of South Africa (HeFSSA) hosted the last edition of 2023, with their current president Prof Tsabedze as the host and Speaker. Thank you to CIPLA for sponsoring the November event. Prof discussed "HFrEF/AF: A Sub-Saharan African Perspective", a topic that our members found interesting and engaging. This was shortly followed by Dr Viljoen's compelling discussion and analysis on the study "Point-of-care NT-proBNP for the screening of PREGnancy-related Heart Failure: the PREG-HF".

Post summer break, the Pretoria branch commenced our 2024 series with an engaging presentation by Dr Shuping Mokgosi, who is currently in the third-year rotation of cardiology sub-specialty at Sefako Makgatho Health Science University / Dr George Mukhari Hospital. Dr Mokgosi covered a variety of topics, including Tachycardia and Atrial Fibrillation-Related Cardiomyopathies: Potential Mechanisms and Current Therapies, https://www.jacc.org/doi/abs/10.1016/j.jchf.2023.11.016. Peripartum Cardiomyopathy, and Mitral Annular Calcification https://www.jacc.org/doi/abs/10.1016/j.jcin.2023.06.044 https://www.jacc.org/doi/epdf/10.1016/j.jacc.2022.06.009. These presentations were well-received, and attendees participated in an interactive Q & A session before concluding the evening.

Wrapping up the first quarter, The Lipid and Atherosclerosis Society of South Africa (LASSA), led by Professor David Marais, presented the March Journal Club in partnership with the EAS Lipid Clinic Network. Professor Dirk Blom commenced the evening by delving into the topic of "Lp(a), an EAS consensus paper." Later, Professor Raal redirected the focus to the local context, discussing the "Applicability of the guidelines to the Black African population."

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all programme organisers, hosts, and presenters for generously dedicating their time and effort for the benefit of our members. We also want to express our appreciation to the Virtual Options team for their exceptional technical support and to our industry sponsors for their invaluable contributions, which have made these educational endeavours possible. We urge our current members to join us at our next Journal Club which will be hosted by CISSA Imaging on 3 April 2024.

SA Heart® is looking to expand the monthly national journal club, to date a member-only event to non-members against a nominal fee in the near future.

Thobile Ziqubu
SA Heart®'s Stakeholder Relationship Manager

THE ANNUAL 2024 CASSA SYMPOSIUM

CASSA
CARDIAC ARRHYTHMIA SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA
A SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP OF SA HEART®

Thank you to all who contributed to the success of the 2024 CASSA Symposium.

Your dedication, expertise, and collaborative spirit made this event an unforgettable triumph.

The Symposium served as a dynamic platform where thought leaders, innovators, and professionals converged for insightful discussions on the latest developments in Cardiac Arrhythmia.

We commend our esteemed speakers for their thought-provoking presentations.

We also thank all who attended - your engagement was pivotal in creating an environment conducive to learning, networking, and collaboration.

Together, we are driving positive change and contributing to the advancement of Cardiac Arrhythmia understanding.

Adèle Greyling
CASSA President



Drs Ruan Louw and Adèle Greyling.



Drs Len Steingo, Mervin Sender and Les Osrin.

SA HEART® CONGRESS 2024

On behalf of the Organising Committee of the SA Heart® Congress, we would like to invite all our colleagues in the Cardiovascular field and those interested to join us for the 24th Annual SA Heart® Congress at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg from 8 - 10 November 2024.

The theme for this year's Congress is **"Cardiology Connections"** representing Cardiologists, Cardiothoracic Surgeons, General Practitioners and other Subspecialists, Nurses, Technicians, Radiographers, Basic Scientists, and students in South Africa.

This year we intend to **"Connect"** various special interest groups namely the Society of Cardiovascular Interventions (SASCI), Cardiovascular Imaging Society of South Africa (CISSA), Cardiovascular Arrhythmia Society of South Africa (CASSA), Heart Failure Association of South Africa (HEFFSA), Interventional Society of Cathlab Allied Professionals (ISCAP) and the South African Society of Cardiovascular Research (SASCAR) as well as the Paediatric Cardiac Society of South Africa (PCSSA). We intend to have Joint sessions where we can work together to discuss cardiovascular themes to further improve healthcare for people of South Africa. Besides these established interest groups, we look forward to incorporating our cardiacthoracic surgeon colleagues and other subspecialists in an all-encompassing interdisciplinary programme.

We anticipate with excitement a vibrant Local and International Faculty. A Cardiovascular Team from the Mayo Clinic includes Prof Vuyi Nkomo (Imaging Cardiologist), Prof Soron Pislaru (Chair, Structural Heart Disease), Dr Juan Crestanello (Chair, Cardiothoracic Surgery) which will be conducting an Echocardiography workshop alongside other specialist workshops taking place on Friday morning, 8 November. We will be incorporating new innovative ways to learn, share and grow during our workshops and scientific sessions.

Dr Thomas Alexander from India will be enlightening us on creating STEMI (ST elevation networks) in South Africa. Dr Raman Krishna Kumar, also from India, with a diverse clinical and research interest will be joining the International Faculty team for the Paediatric programme. The programme is enhanced with great national support from our local experts who have proven time and again to deliver quality presentations of international standard. We look forward to seeing many colleagues in Johannesburg.

Connecting colleagues and role players, whether it may be private-public, industry, government, research, mentors or students, will be the aim of this congress, speaking to the vision of the SA Heart® which is to improve the Cardiovascular Care for all living in South Africa.

Ahmed Vachiat
SA Heart® Convenor



CARDIOLOGY
CONNECTIONS

24th Annual SA Heart® Congress 2024
Sandton Convention Centre
8 - 10 November 2024

SA HEART® RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP 2024

Understanding the pathophysiology involved in the development of doxorubicin-induced cardiotoxicity in breast cancer patients is key to identify novel cardioprotective strategies and early biomarkers. In this regard, our recent unpublished data identify high-density lipoprotein (HDL) particles as a potential key role player in the development of doxorubicin-induced cardiotoxicity. In both breast cancer patients and tumour bearing mice receiving a doxorubicin treatment, we observe an association between a shift in the HDL subclasses and cardiac abnormalities. Most importantly, HDL particles isolated from tumour bearing mice receiving doxorubicin have lost their cardioprotective properties.

HDL particles are composed of numerous functional proteins and lipids that may be altered by doxorubicin and breast cancer, causing these particles to become dysfunctional. Therefore, the aim of our current research is to characterise the composition of HDL particles in cancer mice treated with doxorubicin using a multiomics approach as this will enable us to better understand the pathophysiological mechanisms involved in the development of doxorubicin-induced cardiotoxicity and to hopefully delineate sensitive novel biomarkers that can detect early cardiotoxicity in breast cancer patients.



Carmelita Abrahams and Prof Eric Klug.

We would like to congratulate Carmelita Abrahams for her outstanding hard work. She is the receiver of the SA Heart® Research Scholarship 22024.

"Well done Carmelita!!"

PROUDLY SA HEART® MEMBER

The SA Heart® membership system now issues membership certificates for your current membership which you can print and display in your rooms.

Either login to your membership account, navigate to the My Membership tab and click on the relevant icon in the "edit" column, or when renewing membership, the certificate will be emailed together with your invoice.



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 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 one 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 to SA Heart®.

APPLICATIONS MUST BE EMAILED TO:

erika@saheart.org

THE SELECTION PANEL WILL REVIEW APPLICATIONS ANNUALLY AND THE CLOSING DATE IS 30 SEPTEMBER 2024.

One scholarship to a maximum amount of R80 000 will be awarded annually.

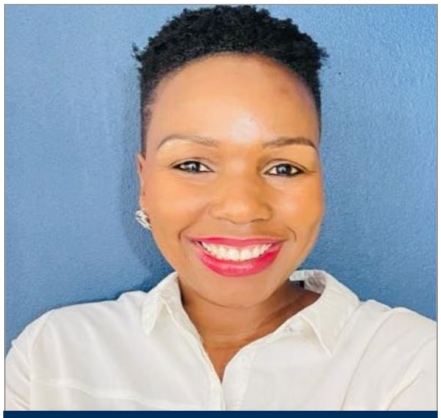
SA Heart® commits to inclusive excellence by advancing equity and diversity.

We particularly encourage applications from members of historically under represented racial/ethnic groups, women and individuals with disabilities.

INTRODUCING THOBILE ZIQUBU

SA Heart® is pleased to announce that Thobile Ziqubu has joined SA Heart® in the newly created Stakeholder Relations Manager (SRM) position. She brings with her over a decade of experience in the healthcare industry, mainly in the pharmaceutical space. As an SRM, she will work alongside General Manager, Erika Dau as well as our President Prof Eric Klug and other Board and committee members in executing a number of the organisations objectives and exciting projects going forward.

"Welcome Thobile."



Thobile Ziqubu.

EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE TO SA HEART®

We extend our gratitude to Marlize Stander for her exceptional service to SA Heart® over the past 2 years. Marlize has consistently demonstrated the utmost professionalism in managing our Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter accounts, contributing significantly to our online presence and engagement. As Marlize moves on to new endeavours, we wish her the very best in all her future pursuits. Her dedication and contributions will be fondly remembered, and we thank her for her invaluable contributions to our organisation.

"Wishing her the very best for the future."



Marlize Stander.

NEW SOCIAL MEDIA PARTNER

We are pleased to announce the addition of our new social media partner, Doclink, to the SA Heart® team. They will be instrumental in shaping our branding, design, and digital marketing strategies throughout 2024. With their wealth of industry experience, we anticipate significant enhancements to our member experience and a strengthened SA Heart® brand presence. We are excited to embark on this journey with Doclink and explore new avenues for growth and engagement.

Welcome aboard!

SA HEART® TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIP 2024

I am writing to express my heartfelt gratitude to the South African Heart Association for awarding me with a local travel scholarship which allowed me to attend the 23rd annual SA Heart® Congress, which was held in Sandton, from 27 - 29 October 2023. This was my first time attending the Congress and it was an honour and a privilege to attend such an esteemed event. As a 5th-year medical student and having recently graduated with an MSc degree, this event presented an invaluable opportunity for me to present the findings of my research, to network and learn from esteemed professionals. I could gain insights into the ever-evolving landscape of cardiovascular medicine and research.

The Congress, aptly titled "The Cardiac Collaboration" provided a platform for a wide range of cardiovascular researchers both from South Africa and all around the world to come together, share valuable insights and engage in discussions on the latest advancements and challenges within the field. Furthermore, the Congress was filled with national pride and excitement because it was the weekend of the Rugby World Cup final. It was great to see attendees in their Springbok shirts, people predicting the final score and the joy on Sunday morning after our national team won a much-deserved fourth World Cup.

There were a remarkable array of workshops, presentations and interactive sessions that covered a broad spectrum of topics ranging from novel basic sciences research to preventive cardiology strategies. One of the highlights of the Congress for me was the CVD – IMIBIZO workshop which was an interactive seminar aimed at young researchers within the cardiovascular field. I was honored to learn from renowned international and local speakers and to hear about their research journey of how they got to where they are today.

The South African Society for Cardiovascular Research (SASCAR) is a special interest group of the SA Heart® Association. They hosted 2 abstract sessions where researchers had the opportunity to give a short presentation of an abstract which they submitted to the Congress. It was in 1 of these sessions that I presented the findings of my MSc thesis, titled, "Investigating high-density lipoprotein (HDL) subfractions, composition and functionality in people living with HIV". Other interesting abstract presentations



Dr Peter Hudson together with Prof Sandrine Lecour and Carmelita Abrahams.

included discussions on how doxorubicin-induced is associated with dysfunctional HDL particles (by Ms Carmelita Abrahams) and how antiretroviral therapy reduces aortic stiffness in newly diagnosed HIV-infected patients after just 9 months (by Dr Pieter-Paul Robbertse) to name a few.

The organisation and logistics of the Congress were commendable, ensuring a seamless experience for all participants. From registration to session management, everything was efficiently handled, allowing attendees to focus entirely on the content and discussions. Moreover, the networking opportunities facilitated fruitful discussions and collaborations among attendees, fostering a sense of camaraderie and shared purpose in advancing cardiovascular health.

In conclusion, I extend my deepest appreciation to the SA Heart® Committee for their generosity and dedication in organising such an enlightening and enriching congress. Thank you once again for the honour of the local travel scholarship. I look forward to continuing to contribute to the field and hope it was the first of many SA Heart® Congresses that I can attend.

Peter Hudson
Cape Heart Institute

LOUIS VOGELPOEL TRAVELLING SCHOLARSHIP

Applications are invited for the annual Louis Vogelpoel Travelling Scholarship for 2025. An amount of up to R20 000 towards the travel and accommodation costs of a local or international congress will be offered annually by the Western Cape branch of the South African Heart Association in memory of one of South Africa's outstanding cardiologists, Dr Louis Vogelpoel.

Louis Vogelpoel was a pioneer of cardiology in South Africa who died in April 2005. He was one of the founding members of the Cardiac Clinic at Groote Schuur Hospital and the University of Cape Town. He had an exceptional career of more than 5 decades as a distinguished general physician, cardiologist and horticultural scientist. Dr Vogelpoel's commitment to patient-care, teaching and personal education is remembered by his many students, colleagues and patients. Medical students, house officers, registrars and consultants benefited from exposure to his unique blend of clinical expertise, extensive knowledge, enthusiasm and gracious style.

A gifted and enthusiastic teacher, he was instrumental in the training of generations of undergraduates by regular bedside tutorials. He served as an outstanding role model for postgraduates and many who have achieved prominence nationally and internationally acknowledged his contribution to the development of their careers.

All applications for the scholarship will be reviewed by the executive committee of the Western Cape branch of the South African Heart Association. Preference will be given to practitioners or researchers in the field of cardiovascular medicine who are members of the South African Heart Association and are resident in the Western Cape.

Applications should include: (i) A brief synopsis of the work the applicant wishes to present at the congress; and (ii) A brief letter of what the applicant hopes to gain by attending the relevant congress. The applicant should submit an abstract for presentation at the relevant national or international meeting. Should such an abstract not be accepted by the relevant congress organising committee, the applicant will forfeit his or her sponsorship towards the congress. (Application can however be made well in advance of the relevant congress but will only be awarded on acceptance of the abstract.) 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.

> "A gifted and enthusiastic teacher, he was instrumental in the training of generations of undergraduates."

Applications should be sent to Dr Alfonso Pecoraro, President of the Western Cape branch of the South African Heart Association, Division of Cardiology, Tygerberg Hospital, Francie van Zijl Drive, Tygerberg 7505; or alternatively email: pecoraro@sun.ac.za.

Previous recipients of this prestigious award include Sandrine Lecour, Roisin Kelle, Liesl Zühlke and Prof Hans Strijdom.

Applications close on 31 January 2025.

TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIPS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN HEART ASSOCIATION

Applications for the SA Heart® Travel Scholarship for the second term in 2023 are invited to reach the SA Heart® Office by 31 May 2024.

The scholarship is for the value of up to R35 000.00 for international meetings and R15 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 (six) 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 000.00 for international meetings and R9 500.00 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 utilised for any reason, then the funds must revert to SA Heart®; and
- 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 https://www.saheart.org/cms-home/category/39.

LASSA REPORT

LASSA
LIPID AND ATHEROSCLEROSIS SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA
A SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP OF SA HEART®

The difficulties in sustaining lipidology expertise in South Africa persist. Attempts to remedy the lack of exposure to lipid disorders during training of specialists treating patients with high cardiovascular risk have not been successful. The meeting about noncommunicable disease held in November 2022 failed to attract the attendance of the Minister of Health. The priming of the head of the department of internal medicine ahead of the meeting and input by Prof D. Blom who represented LASSA, failed to make an impact. The "Johannesburg Declaration" stated that noncommunicable disease would receive increased attention from the Department of Health. LASSA is unaware of progress. In January 2023, SA Heart® indicated that it could not assist in conserving lipidology. Subsequently LASSA has twice submitted documents about the plight of lipidology to the Minister of Health and the national committee of deans of the health science faculties as we hope expertise in lipidology will be strengthened by better training at health science faculties.

The guide from council for medical schemes about prescribed minimum benefit conditions was published in early 2023. (Hyperlipidaemia. PMB-X Guidelines 2023. Pages 53-56. Editor, McMillan CR. https://medicalacademic.co.za/issues/2023/pmbx2023/Accessed 2023.04.18). In the opinion of the LASSA committee the PMB-X did not appropriately deal with the wide range of disorders of lipid and lipoprotein metabolism and did not prioritise the most serious conditions, was somewhat dated about treatment recommendations and did not suggest referral criteria for patients requiring special attention. A letter was submitted to the South African Medical Journal, but this has been delayed for publication.

LASSA regrets the endless dealings around the National Health Insurance while patients with serious lipid and lipoprotein disorders in the public and private sectors of healthcare are not receiving best clinical assessment, diagnostic investigation and optimal treatment. Under these circumstances it is difficult to obtain appropriate information and to research locally relevant problems. Nevertheless, LASSA has embarked on an observational study evaluating patients with very severe hypercholesterolaemia.

The aim of the TC 12+ study (total cholesterol > 12mmol/L and triglyceride <5mmol/L) initiated by LASSA is to obtain information on the most severe cases of hypercholesterolaemia that most likely will need additional management beyond treatment with statins and ezetimibe. This may not necessarily be PCSK9 neutralising treatment for all as some rare sterol disorders may respond dramatically to diet. The study assesses hypercholesterolaemia following referral by the medical practitioner and involves combining the information the medical practitioner provides and a phone call to the patient to check on details. Subsequently, a blood sample is submitted for electrophoresis to characterise apolipoprotein B- containing lipoproteins and the most common LDL receptor mutations are sought by genetic testing where relevant. Armed with such information LASSA will be able to assess the management of severe dyslipidaemia in South Africa and make recommendations.

LASSA is experiencing some problems in common with the SASCI experience discussed in the communication on the 9th February 2024 by Prof E. Klug and Dr H. Weich concerning " ...the clinical autonomy in therapeutic decision making of our members.... We appeal to funders to respect cardiologists' clinical judgement in selecting either of these modalities or indeed other non-invasive ischaemia tests recommended by the guidelines." The difference, however, is that there are very few experienced and knowledgeable medical practitioners to deal with dyslipidaemia. Patients do not have ready access to expertise and in addition decisions about management are made by persons without full insight into the complex set of derangements. The severe dyslipidaemias in the broadest context involve about 500 000 persons in South Africa and the category for which high expertise is necessary will number at least 50 000.

The hope is that LASSA will find support for providing service, teaching and research in 2024 and beyond and that the developments that improve the well-being of people with severe derangements in lipid and lipoprotein metabolism will receive the best care under the current constraints in healthcare in South Africa.

David Marais
LASSA Chairperson

RETIRING STEWARDS

We would like to wish 2 hard working gentlemen, Dr Anthony Stanley and Dr Adriaan Snyders, huge congratulations on their retirement. Dr Stanley retired at the end of February 2024, and Dr Snyders retired at the end of March 2024. Thank you very much for dedicating your time and energy into Cardiology.

We hope you get to enjoy your future with lots of time to enjoy your hobbies, friends and family. Most importantly, we wish you good health and delight.



Dr Anthony Stanley.



Dr Adriaan Snyders.

"Congratulations on their retirement."

IN MEMORY OF PROFESSOR VLADIMIR GRIGOROV

13 June 1965 - 14 February 2024

When Prof Vladimir Grigorov joined Team Arwyp 2 decades ago, he brought not only his expertise as a cardiologist but also his remarkable spirit, becoming an integral and cherished member of our team. His leadership, mentorship, and unwavering commitment to excellence have guided us all. May we honour his legacy by continuing the important work to which he dedicated his life. Prof Grigorov will forever remain in our hearts, a shining example of humanity and excellence.



"Forever in our hearts."

CONTRIBUTION TO LITERATURE

The LIBerate-HR trial demonstrated that lerodalcibep reduces LDL-C levels in addition to statin therapy.

DESCRIPTION

The goal of the trial was to evaluate lerodalcibep compared with placebo among patients with increased risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD). Lerodalcibep blocks proprotein convertase subtilisin/kexin type 9 (PCSK9) binding to low-density lipoprotein (LDL)-receptors, thus preventing receptor degradation, which enhances LDL-C clearance and lowering of LDL-C levels.

PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

The primary outcome, change in LDL-C at 52 weeks, was -56.3% in the lerodalcibep group vs. -0.14% in the placebo group ($p<0.001$).

REFERENCES

Presented by Prof Eric Klug at the American College of Cardiology Annual Scientific Session (ACC.24), Atlanta, GA, 7 April 2024.

ACC CONGRESS

SA Heart® President, Prof Eric Klug travelled to the US for the 73rd Annual American College of Cardiology (ACC) congress in Atlanta Georgia where he got to represent the organisation as well as present the LIBerate-HR trial for a globally represented cardiovascular care community.



Prof Eric Klug representing SA Heart® at the Convocation of the ACC together with mace bearer Dr Nicole L. Lohr – Chair of the Board of Governors of the ACC.

TWEET OF PROF ERIC KLUG AFTER HIS PRESENTATION

