**BRANCH REPORTS 2014**

**Bloemfontein Branch:**
The Bloemfontein Branch has been in survival mode for the past year. Since the retirement of Prof Marx and the suspension of Prof Theron and his eventual resignation from his post as Head of Cardiology, the cardiology department which is the main training centre for cardiologists and pre-graduate students in the Free State and Northern Cape, has been without a qualified cardiologist now for the past six months.

The private cardiologists from this society have tried to maintain a service at the state hospital but the conditions there have deteriorated so much that they felt they couldn’t continue with the service any longer and it was thus suspended.

Unfortunately, with the condition as it was, the academic programme also fell by the wayside and no formal academic meetings were held. This branch is responsible for the annual SA Heart congress 2015 at Sun City, which will be our next goal and we intend to make it a success.

_Nico van der Merwe, president_

**Johannesburg Branch:**
We are extremely appreciative of Litha Pharmaceuticals, who have committed to sponsor our branch meetings since last year. I wish to especially acknowledge Carine Kilian, for her ongoing support in this regard.

John Robbie was the speaker at our 2013 AGM (20 November 2013). He gave an interesting and insightful lecture on the state of South Africa. Rugby obviously featured prominently as well. John specifically mentioned that he had recently joined the stent club. After having gone through this ordeal, he stated that the cardiology community had a major responsibility to educate the public w.r.t symptoms of heart disease / angina.

The branch committee has remained as follows:
David Jankelow (President & Treasurer)
Antoinette Cilliers (Secretary)
Eric Klug
Andrew Thornton
Darryl Smith
Pravin Manga
Keir McCutcheon
Ahmed Vachiat
George Dragne
Gavin Angel

Our annual Fellow’s Cardiology Fellow’s morning was held on Saturday 16 August 2014, and was kindly adjudicated by Dr’s Libhaber, Steingo and Obel.

- 1st Prize of R1500 was awarded to Dr Francois Botha for his presentation: “Stent Retrieval – A Novel Method”

The other speakers included:
- Dr Mohamed Mayet: “Aortic root abscess”
- Dr Temba Maluleke: "A mass-ive problem"
- Dr Rohan Ramjee: "A complicated pregnancy"
- Dr Bavisha Nagar: “Stress in the Cath lab”
Our next branch meeting will take place on Saturday 27 September 2014. This will be a debate: “Ticagralor (Dr G Angel) vs Clopidogrel (Dr K McCutcheon) in acute coronary syndromes”.

We have not yet finalized our next two meetings. We would like to hold a symposium on IT in Cardiology. Our 2014 AGM will be held at the end of November.

I have now served the branch for the past five years as both President & Treasurer. I am extremely appreciative to have filled both of these positions. We have had some memorable meetings. I feel that it is now time for someone new to take over the reigns as President. I am finding it difficult to find time for both this and my position as national Vice-President of SA Heart. I am however happy to continue in the future as Treasurer of our branch.

David Jankelow, president and treasurer

KwaZulu Natal Branch
The KZN branch has held three academic meetings thus far for 2014. The meetings were well attended and enjoyed the support of both cardiologists and surgeons. Visiting international guests were hosted at two of the sessions. These meetings remain the only regional forum where colleagues from the private and state sectors are able to interact for academic exchanges. It has been 10 years since Durban last hosted the national congress and we look forward to welcoming colleagues from outside the province to our shores.

Sajidah Khan, president

Pretoria Branch:
We have had a successful year with many interesting topics discussed. The meeting resolved around expert presentations followed by peer reviewed case studies.
We discussed varied topics from Q fever endocarditis to complex CTO interventions. Interesting cases were presented from the Steve Biko hospital included pulmonary valve endocarditis, the link between Sarcoidosis and Takayashu’s. 3D assessment of the mitral valve

We also had expert presentations on new resistant organisms by Dr Marcus Ethics sessions on medico legal implications
We would like to thank Pharma Dynamics for their ongoing support and to all the Doctors in the Pretoria branch who regularly contribute to our meetings.

Iftikmar Ebrahim, president

Western Cape Branch:
A long-held view that the Cape Town and Stellenbosch (Tygerberg) branches of the Association should merge gained momentum this year culminating in a meeting held at the Hatter Institute, Cape Town University held on the 27th of February 2014 to address possible amalgamation. The Cape Town branch was represented by Johan Brink, Jens Hitzeroth, Karin Sliwa and Liesl Zuhlke. The Stellenbosch branch was represented by Anton Doubell, Philip Herbst, Alfonso Pecoraro and Hellmuth Weich. The decision to amalgamate was unanimous and a proposed constitution was accepted. The members present formed an interim executive committee and the following office bearers were elected: President – Anton Doubell; Vice- President – Johan Brink; Treasurer – Alfonso Pecoraro. The Treasurer has opened a bankaccount with Investec Bank.
The most pressing matter that the new branch has had to deal with is the hosting of the annual SA Heart Congress. Alfonso Pecoraro was elected chairman of the Western Cape Congress organizing committee with John Lawrenson as his deputy-chairman. The Western Cape branch agreed to host the 2015 Congress, provided that the Congress was held in Cape Town. The SA Heart exco subsequently decided that the 2015 congress had to be held in Sun City for financial reasons and the Bloemfontein branch agreed to host the 2015 meeting. The Western Cape branch then agreed to explore the possibility of co-hosting the 2016 Annual Congress with the Society of Cardio-Thoracic Surgeons who will host the World Society of Cardio-Thoracic Surgeons’ Congress in Cape Town in 2016. Both the chairman of the Society of Cardio-Thoracic Surgeons, Robbie Kleinloog and the chairman of the Western Cape Congress organizing committee, Alfonso Pecoraro, are in agreement that they could co-host an exceptional meeting. However, at present an agreement to co-host the 2016 Congress has not been reached with outstanding issues being logistical details dealing with the scope of the SA Heart component of the Congress, equitable representation on the combined organizing committee and equitable profit sharing.

*Anton Doubell, President*