Annual Reports of the Special Interest Groups of SA Heart

CARDIAC ARRHYTHMIA SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA - CASSA
The Cardiac Arrhythmia Society of Southern Africa (CASSA), a special interest group of SA HEART, was founded in 1998 and currently has 132 active members.
The CASSA executive committee consists of: Ashley Chin (president), Andrew Thornton (immediate past president), Ronnie Jardine (treasurer), Pro Obel, Rob Scott Millar, Ruan Louw, 3 industry representatives (Luigi Zampieri, Anel Berning, Martin van der Berg) and CASSA co-ordinator Glenda Marcer. I would like to thank them for their time, expertise and support throughout 2017.
The aims of CASSA are to improve the treatment and awareness of heart rhythm disorders in sub-Saharan Africa through education and the facilitation of research. To achieve these goals, CASSA has been active in the following in 2017:

Annual CASSA symposia
The 2017 annual CASSA symposia took place at the Vineyard Hotel in Cape Town and the Maslow Hotel in Johannesburg over successive weekends in February. This year CASSA was privileged to host 2 dynamic, highly respected European speakers (Carsten Israel and Johannes Brachmann). The symposium was entitled “Arrhythmias – Cases and Controversies” and topics related to sudden death, atrial fibrillation, supraventricular tachycardias and implantable cardiac devices were discussed. The symposia were both well attended with positive reviews. This year the attendance fees for cardiology and medical registrars were waived. CASSA aims to organise these symposia on an annual basis. The 2018 annual CASSA symposia is entitled “Clinical Updates in Arrhythmias” will be held at the Maslow Hotel in Johannesburg on Saturday 17 February 2018 and at the Vineyard Hotel in Cape Town on 24 February 2017. Two international guest speakers have been invited.

Collaboration with European Heart Rhythm Association (EHRA)
CASSA was invited to chair a joint session with the European Heart Rhythm Association (EHRA) at the annual Europace meeting held in Vienna, Austria in July 2017. Two Speakers (Dr Pro Obel and Dr Ashley Chin) presented at a state of the session on cardiac pacing. This is a first for CASSA and an honour for the society. CASSA has again been invited to chair and present at a joint session with EHRA on supraventricular tachycardia at the annual Europace meeting in Barcelona in March 2018.

CASSA has been involved in the writing and review of scientific statements and guidelines and to endorse these guidelines. This is another first for CASSA to be able to contribute to international guidelines. CASSA has endorsed a recently published guideline “Antithrombotic therapy in atrial fibrillation associated with valvular heart disease” published in Europace in 2017.

Collaboration with Heart Rhythm Society (HRS)
Members of the CASSA EXCO met with the Heart Rhythm Society (HRS) at the annual Heart Rhythm Society in Chicago in May 2017. Opportunities for collaboration were discussed. CASSA is privileged to host Michael Gold (ex-president of HRS) at the SA Heart meeting in Johannesburg in 2017.

Medical Aid coding meeting
A medical aid coding meeting was held in Cape Town in August 2017. This was attended by many electrophysiologists where appropriate billing codes were discussed for various electrophysiological and device procedures.

Ongoing Education
The quarterly ECG quiz published in the SA Heart Journal and the 6 monthly The Andrzej Okreglicki Memorial Advanced ECG and Arrhythmia Interpretation Course continues to promote the teaching of ECG interpretation by cardiologists and cardiology senior registrars.

CASSA accreditation
This past year saw 3 cardiologists newly accredited by CASSA as electrophysiologists and device specialists (Adele Greyling, Haroon Mia and Vernon Freeman). We wish them all the best in their future careers in South Africa.
I would like to thank the CASSA corporate members for their ongoing support to the organisation. They are Medtronic, Amayez-Abuntu, Biosense Webster, Boehringer Ingelheim, Boston Scientific, Biotronik, Bayer Pharmaceuticals and Inova Pharmaceuticals.

Dr Ashley Chin, CASSA president
CARDIAC IMAGING SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA – CISSA

During the current year a number of CISSA endorsed events were conducted namely:

1. SUNECHO echocardiography course
2. New Horizon’s echocardiography course
3. Cardiac MRI course of South Africa

The yearly joint CISSA/Mayo echocardiography workshop is scheduled for the 8th of November 2017 and will feature both local and Mayo speakers.

CISSA believes accreditation in echocardiography is important to raise the standard of echocardiography. As such it is now possible to sit for the British Society of Echocardiography (BSE) examination in South Africa and to complete accreditation via local supervisors.

The scope of cardiac imaging is increasing and CISSA will be working hard to establish dedicated fellowships to enable members to acquire additional skills.

Alfonso Pecoraro, President: CISSA

HEART FAILURE SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA – HeFFSA

The Heart Failure Society of South Africa (HeFFSA) has several programs planned to ensure that we achieve our goals for the society for 2017.

The HeFFSA Executive is the driving force behind these programs: Martin Mpe (President), Eric Klug (Ex-Officio President), Jens Hitzeroth (Vice-President), Darryl Smith (Treasurer), Nash Ranjith (Secretary) and Karen Sliwa, Len Steingo, Tony Lachman, Makoali Makotoko, Nqoba Tsabedze and Ntobeko Ntusi with George Nel (Executive Officer).

The HeFFSA Medical Practitioners Program (primarily GP) continues to be of great value to the medical community as well as the pharmaceutical and device industry and it is also the main vehicle we use to achieve our Heart Failure educational goals. The program started in 2010 with approximately 500 GP’s attending in 2016. We offer the course annually and has established it both metropolitan and rural areas. This program is in its 7th consecutive year and continues to be generously supported by pharma industry Servier, Pharma Dynamics, Novartis and from device companies Medtronic and Boston Scientific.

The theme for 2017 is “The Patient Journey: Feel Good and Live Long” and the topics being addressed are: Heart failure with preserved ejection fraction, Heart failure with mid-range ejection fraction, treatment options, Decompensated chronic heart failure and Kidney dysfunction and heart failure. The case based slide compendium for this year’s program has been compiled by Martin Mpe, Nash Ranjith, Ntobeko Ntusi and Nqoba Tsabedze. The faculty members include distinguished South African cardiologist with an interest in Heart Failure: Martin Mpe, Len Steingo, Simon Beshir, Jens Hitzeroth, Darryl Smith, Eamon Maree, Adriaan Snyders, Cobus Badenhorst, Alan Koopowitz, Dave Kettles, Prof Makotoko, Jean Vorster, Nico van der Merwe, Adrian Horak, Innocent Segamwenge, Khulile Moeketsi, DP Naidoo, James Potts, Sizwe Mthiyane, Nqoba Tsabedze, André Lochner and Ntobeko Ntusi. This year’s meetings will be hosted in Johannesburg, Windhoek, Nelspruit, East London, Vanderbijlpark, Potchefstroom, Rustenburg, Bloemfontein, Polokwane, Port Elizabeth, Cape Town, Durban, George and Pretoria. If you are interested in becoming involved in this program, please contact the HeFFSA office.

Jens Hitzeroth has during the first half of 2017 put a huge effort behind updating the HeFFSA HF Guideline and Treatment Algorithm to reflect the current best practice based on the published ESC 2016 Guidelines, recent landmark publication and South African clinical experience. We thank Jens for the huge effort which was supported by various Executive Committee members focusing on their areas of expertise with Heart Failure in select patient groups. We plan to publish the update Guidelines and Treatment Algorithm in SA Heart Journal and SA Medical Journal with official launch at SA Heart Congress 2017.

Eric Klug has with support from HeFFSA Exco and CASSA developed a “Heart Failure Device Therapy Module” to be developed on the SHARE Registry platform. Ultimately, we hope that this clinical data set will be supported by enhanced Medical Aid reimbursement and at least less cumbersome funding approval (also replacing separate motivation forms currently required by funders).

HeFFSA will be involved in the SA Heart Congress, 9 to 12 November 2017, at Sandton International Convention Centre. All the HeFFSA members are requested to attend the HeFFSA sessions as well as the AGM. HeFFSA further invests in education by hosting
the annual Cardio Update for Non-Cardiologists. The update will take place on Thursday, 9 November 2017 from 12:00 – 17:00 with Len Steingo and Nqoba Tsabedze as the program convenors. We expect 100 medical practitioners to attend the meeting and the Faculty consisted of local Johannesburg Cardiologists as well as younger colleagues and HeFSSA Exco members.

Nqoba Tsabedze has prepared a 2-day specialist workshop program focused on Cardiologists and our Clinical Referral Network. The objectives are to update current knowledge and experience focussed on specialist heart failure treatment and device therapy. This course hope to standardise practice in complicated heart failure management. The target audience includes heart failure nurses, clinical technologists, physicians, GP who care for, treat and refer heart failure patients for advanced management and cardiologists. The 2-track workshop will most likely take place in Q1 2018.

In addition, we hope to impact on medicine supply at clinic level in the public sector (“down referral”), working with private managed care organisation(s) to ensure adequate training for frontline staff, nurses and pharmacists, as well enhancing their systems when dealing with patients. Please do approach Martin Mpe and Eric Klug if these are areas you wish to get involved in.

HeFSSA HF Clinical Snapshot Survey is planned for later in 2017 or early 2018. Makoali Makotoko is spearheading this initiative which we will launch nationally and hopefully become an annual audit of HF in South Africa allowing us to reflect year on year and in due course over extended periods. This survey could ultimately inform resource alignment and investment in HF networks.

HeFSSA is supported by loyal corporate members committed to programs in heart failure (through unconditional educational grants). Our sincere appreciation goes to Boston Scientific, Medtronic, Pharma Dynamics, Servier, Amayezza, Biontronik, Meda Pharma and Novartis for the continued support. The HeFSSA website is continually updated to remain relevant. Please visit the website at www.hefssa.org and contact the HeFSSA office to contribute to ensuring that the items stay updated and relevant.

HeFSSA encourages all parties who want to be involved in heart failure to contact George Nel, HeFSSA Executive Officer at info@hefssa.org.

Martin Mpe, HeFSSA President

**Lipid and Atherosclerosis Society of Southern Africa (LASSA)**

The Lipid and Atherosclerosis Society of Southern Africa (LASSA) remains affiliated with both the Society for Endocrinology, Metabolism and Diabetes of South Africa (SEMDSA) and the South African Heart Association (SA Heart). LASSA is linked to the International Atherosclerosis Society (IAS). The committee members are placed in academic institutions and endeavour to sustain a network so that expertise is available to medical practitioners, scientists and the public. The committee is led by Prof David Marais assisted by Prof Derick Raal as secretary, Dr Dee Blackhurst, Prof Dirk Blom, and Dr Chiman Rajput. There has, however, not been any improvement in support for developing lipidology at any of the health science faculties despite the increasing recognition of common disorders such as familial hypercholesterolaemia and serious other disorders deserve diagnosis and management. Attempts to raise funds through grants, business or philanthropy to preserve expertise have not met with success. Since LASSA is small and has limited expenses, its finances remain intact. The funds are held in a current and investment account for which there is a separate report.

In March last year LASSA hosted a session on familial hypercholesterolaemia (FH) in Cape Town. This is being written up after some delays because it includes the new entity of polygenic familial hypercholesterolaemia. Prof David Marais was an invited speaker at the 2nd Netherlands Lipid Association meeting near Utrecht in May 2016. He visited Prof Frank Visseren at the Utrecht Medical Centre. The Dutch are very aware of severe dyslipidaemias and have made genetic investigation available as well as special treatments according to best practice. Dr A.J. van der Walt received a travel award at the LASSA meeting in 2015 and attended the 84th Congress of the European Atherosclerosis Society (EAS) from 29 May - 1 June 2016 in Innsbruck, Austria. The report indicated that attention was paid to the emerging monoclonal antibody against proprotein subtilisin/kexin type 9 (PCSK9) for severe hypercholesterolaemia but that other issues such as obesity remain important. Lysosomal acid lipase deficiency is also being recognised as a severe disorder for which enzyme replacement has become available. There was a session on the 9th September 2016 supported by LASSA at the 17th Annual Congress of SA Heart and the 26th Annual Congress of the World Society of Cardiothoracic Surgery. Prof. Kees Hovingh from the Amsterdam Medical Centre was the international guest speaker along with Professors Blom, Raal and Marais. Lipidology in Cape Town benefited from the collaborative visit of Dr R Huijgen and Ms A. de Jong as well as a Mr X van Delden a medical student on elective assignment. The projects were an investigation into families with novel mutations in PCSK9 and the response to treatment in FH.

Professors Blom and Raal continued with excellent exploration of new modalities of treatment dyslipidaemia in general and particularly for FH. It is clear that monoclonal antibodies to PCSK9 lower low density lipoprotein (LDL) powerfully and safely in heterozygous FH and in many cases of homozygous FH. Though expensive, this treatment could make a dramatic difference to a subset of FH in which treatment is not effective or tolerated. LASSA is in a good position to contribute to improved management for FH by making available its clinical expertise and potentially also laboratory investigation where diagnosis is not clear. Dedicated
lipid clinics remain only in Johannesburg and Cape Town. Since neither the National Health Laboratory Service nor private pathology laboratories provide special investigations for these severe disorders, laboratory investigation of complex problems remains limited to the laboratory in Cape Town where funding and staff are limited.

The 13th LASSA congress was held on Sunday the 7th May. An overlap session with SEMDSA was followed by a general meeting to elect a new committee. A more focused lipid meeting will be considered as the Sunday afternoon sessions are generally poorly attended. The travel grant from Amgen was awarded to Dr T Botha.

David Marais, President, Lipid and Atherosclerosis Society of Southern Africa

Report of the Paediatric Cardiac Society of South Africa

The Paediatric Cardiac Society of South Africa adds two Paediatric cardiologists, Mahlubandile Nxele and Lenise Swenson Mahlubandile (Andile) obtained his Bachelor of Science degree from Rhodes University in Grahamstown. Thereafter, he went to the then University of Natal to study MBChB, which he obtained in 1994. He returned home in Port Elizabeth to do his internship and was a medical officer at Livingston Hospital. He then worked as a General practitioner in Motherwell for about six years. He then joined the Department of Paediatrics and Child, Dora Nginza Hospital, Walter Sisulu University as a registrar and he completed his Fellowship in Paediatrics in 2009. He worked as a Paediatrician at Dora Nginza Hospital for about 5 years. He developed interest in Paediatric Cardiology and fortunately for he could train in this area in the Port Elizabeth itself. He joined the Division of Paediatric Cardiology as a trainee and qualified as a Paediatric Cardiologist in the March/May 2017 cycle of the College of Medicine Examinations. His interest is that of Dilated cardiomyopathy non-invasive imaging. Andile works as a Paediatric Cardiologist at Dora Nginza Hospital, Port Elizabeth.

Lenise Swanson completed her undergraduate medical degree at the University of Cape Town in 2004, and then moved to Kimberley in the Northern Cape to start her career as a junior doctor. During her time in the Northern Cape, she developed a passion for child and maternal healthcare and spent a fair amount of time working as a medical officer in paediatrics. Since returning to Cape Town, she has acquired a post-graduate degree in Paediatrics and her Master of Medicine degree through Stellenbosch University, and she also obtained a Certificate in Paediatric Cardiology during the March/May 2017 cycle of the College Examinations. She currently works as a Senior Research Officer in Paediatric Cardiology at the Red Cross War Memorial Children’s Hospital and the University of Cape Town. Congratulations to Andile and Lenise.

Red Cross War Memorial Hospital bags three Associate Professors in Paediatric Cardiology; John Lawrenson, Rik de Decker and Liesl Zühlke.

John Lawrenson graduated his MBCh from University of the Witwatersrand. He then went to Stellenbosch University where he graduated with his Master of Medicine degree in Internal Medicine and obtained the Fellowship of the College of Physicians of South Africa. He developed an interest in congenital heart diseases and worked in a Paediatric Cardiology Unit at Red Cross War Memorial Hospital. He then did further training in Paediatric Cardiology in Leuven University in Belgium. In 2016, John was admitted as an Associate Fellow of the College of Paediatricians of South Africa. He has been Head of Paediatric Cardiology Services of the Western Cape, Department of Paediatrics and Child Health, University of Cape Town and Stellenbosch University for many years. His interests include echocardiography and the life-time management of patients with complex heart disease.

Rik De Decker is a consultant Paediatric Cardiologist in the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health of the University of Cape Town, and the Director of the Cardiac Catheterisation Laboratory at the Red Cross War Memorial Children’s Hospital. As a Generalist Cardiologist, he is involved in the management of children with heart diseases, including the utilisation of advanced echocardiographic, catheterisation and other tertiary investigations to assess and prepare children for interventions such as cardiac surgery and interventional catheterisation. He is also a Clinical Geneticist with an interest in the genetic aetiology of congenital heart disease and a focus on the detection of the syndromic associations of children with heart disease. Having previously completed a Masters’ degree in Zoology, he remains acutely aware of the importance of research and the enriching value of a wide diversity of academic connections.

He is also a mountain rescue doctor, previous convenor of the MCSA (CT) Mountain Rescue team, current rescue committee member and tutor/instructor, MCSA national rescue subcommittee member and national ICAR-Medcom representative for the MCSA and WSAR. When not at work, he prefers to spend time in the wilder and steeper parts of the world. He holds MSc (cum laude), MBChB, DCH (SA), FC Paed (SA) and Cert Medical Genetics.

Liesl Zühlke trained as a Paediatric Cardiologist in Cape Town and Düsseldorf, Germany. Her doctorate at the University of Cape Town provided new insights on outcomes of symptomatic and asymptomatic Rheumatic Heart Disease. Her major research interests are in Rheumatic Heart Disease and Congenital Heart Disease. A paediatric cardiologist in the Department of Pediatric Cardiology at RXH, she was instrumental in the development, coordination and management of the largest prospective RHD registry the Rheumatic Heart Disease Registry (the REMEDY study) involving 25 sites, in 12 African countries, Yemen and India and is currently the national leader of the INVICTUS study, which aims to enrol over 30,000 RHD patients. She has received a number of awards including an academic excellence award from Discovery, NIH Fogarty Fellowship, Wellcome CIDRI and Thrasher awards and the Hamilton Naki Post-doctoral Clinical Scholarship, an award given to clinical scholars of excellence. She is the Immediate Past President of the Pediatric Cardiac Society of South Africa, President of the South African
Heart Association and the Chairperson of the Pan African Society of Cardiology Paediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery Task force. She was one of the organizers of the 6th World Congress of Paediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery 2013, the World Congress of Cardiology and Cardiovascular Health 2016 and was on the Organising Committee for the World Congress of Paediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery in 2017. A previous board member of the Heart and Stroke Foundation of South Africa, she is now on the board of the Hatter Institute for Cardiovascular Research and is co-director of Rheach (Rheumatic Heart Disease-Evidence, Advocacy, Communication and Hope), the recipient of one of the largest grants from Medtronic Philanthropy for work in Rheumatic heart disease. The initiative will be providing scientific and technical support for Global RHD programmes over the next five years.

She has also recently established a research unit for paediatric and congenital heart disease, the Children’s Heart Disease Research Unit, which is based at the Red Cross War Memorial Children’s Hospital in Cape Town. She is currently a collaborator with the Institute of Health Metrics (IHME) and co-author on several Global Burden of Disease publications. She is involved in research projects spanning congenital and Rheumatic Heart disease, HIV in adolescents, Grown-up Congenital Heart Disease and cardiac disease in women of childbearing age. She has leveraged funding for several major research projects in South Africa and the rest of Africa, with new collaborations internationally, the recent being an MRCUK Global Challenges Research Fund – Foundation Award with colleagues at Manchester university.

Liesl holds MBChB DCH(SA), FC Paed (SA), Cert Cardiology (SA), MPH, FESC, FACC and PhD. The Paediatric Cardiac Society of South Africa congratulates these outstanding Associate Professors of Paediatric Cardiology at Red Cross War Memorial Hospital.

Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University and Dr George Mukhari Academic Hospital set to be the seventh Paediatric Cardiology Unit in the country.

Mamokgethi Rangaka nee Moshe, a wife and mother of three beautiful children a Paediatric Cardiologist, is in the process of setting up a paediatric cardiology unit at Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University and Dr George Mukhari Academic Hospital. She is the ninth born in a family of eleven children and I come from a staunch catholic family in Soweto. She completed MBChB at Medunsa in 1995; obtained Fellowship in Paediatrics in 2002 and started working as a General Paediatrician in 2003 at Dr George Mukhari Academic Hospital. She had always had interest in paediatric cardiology, and since then she was responsible for the paediatric cardiology patients together with her colleague Dr Nkohane.

It was a challenge to offer complete care to cardiac patients because they were not trained as Paediatric Cardiologists. Therefore most of their patients had to be referred to Steve Biko Academic Hospital for further assessment and management, and that was really a challenge for them. She went to Inkosi Albert Luthuli Academic Hospital in Durban in 2008 to start training in paediatric cardiology but that was interrupted by a family tragedy and she had to go back to Dr George Mukhari Academic hospital after a period of six months.

Prof Mawela, who is the current head of the Paediatrics Department at Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University and Dr George Mukhari Academic Hospital, facilitated the process for her to join the Paediatric Cardiology unit at Steve Biko Academic Hospital, University of Pretoria, under Professor Takawira in 2014. The cardiology team at Steve Biko Academic Hospital was very supportive and she successfully completed her training in 2016.

Kgethi went back to Dr George Mukhari Academic Hospital in 2017 and was faced with the challenge of setting up a unit. Dr George Mukhari Academic Hospital is situated in the northern part of Pretoria and takes care of patients from that part of Pretoria and also receives referrals from some areas in North West as well as those of Limpopo Province. With her team, they run a clinic of more or less twenty patients per week, and have more or less ten admissions per week. They have one theatre day per week and do 2 cardiac catheterisations per week. They have already started doing interventional cardiac catheterisations and have performed their first Percutaneous Patent Ductus Arteriosus closure on the 20th of April with the assistance of Prof Takawira. They have decided to start with simple procedures and will expand further as the whole team gains experience and confidence.

She has a tremendous amount of support from her Head of Department, Prof Mawela and the Paediatric Cardiology team at Steve Biko Academic Hospital. I aim and strive to have a successful and accredited fully functional unit that can start training fellows and expand their Paediatric Cardiology Unit and services.

The first Paediatric Cardiologist to be an Electrophysiologist in South Africa is from Port Elizabeth

After graduating from the University of Pretoria in 1999, Adele Greyling did her internship and community service in George Provincial Hospital. She then spent 4 years training in Leeds and Sheffield at The Sheffield Children’s Hospital in the UK and passed the Fellowship of The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health in 2005.

On her return to South Africa she spent another 2 years as a registrar at The University of Pretoria and obtained the FC Paed (SA) in 2007.

From 2008 to 2011 she worked as a paediatrician in private practice in Port Elizabeth.

In 2011, she joined the Division of Paediatric Cardiology, Department of Paediatrics and Child Health at Dora Nginza Hospital to train in Paediatric Cardiology and in 2014 obtained the Certificate in Paediatric Cardiology.

She spent 2015 and 2016 in Leuven, Belgium, as a fellow in Cardiac Electrophysiology. There, she gained experience in a high-volume unit in the treatment of cardiac arrhythmias (both with implantable cardiac devices as well as invasive electrophysiology) in the adult, GUCH and paediatric population. She passed The European Heart Rhythm Association certification examination in Cardiac Implantable Electronic Devices in 2015, and in 2016, the examination in Clinical Electrophysiology.

Since her return to Port Elizabeth in January 2017, she is the Head of the Division of Paediatric Cardiology at Dora Nginza Hospital and has also established a new electrophysiology service in public in the whole of the Eastern Cape Province.
SASCI Annual Report 2017

It has really been my honour to continue at the helm of our society: a group which plays some key roles in our cardiology community and wider healthcare sector. Let me say thank you to all who have supported me and this society so generously and warmly. Thank you to all who contribute at so many levels. Thank you for hard work and loyalty over so many years. I would like to thank SASCI members for attending the AGM during AfricaPCR Course and for your contribution to the election of a New executive committee and office bearers. A society is only as strong as its members and is highly reliant on entities willing to get involved to give guidance to the cardiology environment that we operate in.

D Kettles (President), F Hellig (Ex-officio President), Helmuth Weich (Vice-President), C Badenhorst (Treasurer), G. Cassel (Secretary), S Khan, Gavin Angel, M Ntsekhe, M Makotoko, A Vachiat, C Zambakides, J Vorster, G Angel, S Pandie and JP Theron. Thank you to the SASCI Executive Committee, your contributions make us what we are. SASCI Industry Liaison Andrew Sartor remains until AGM 2018. Dr Adriaan Snyders, and Prof Rhena Delport have worked tirelessly on the STEMI project. A special thank you to them.

During the Special General Meeting of 26 January 2017 members approved that SASCI NPC (legal structure) will be dissolved and a new SASCI NPO established as a Voluntary Non-Profit Association Governed by a Constitution. This decision was made with diligent professional inputs to come in line with current laws and regulations and with other Professional Societies. SASCI AGM 2017 saw the adoption of the new SASCI NPO Constitution, and begin formation of the new SASCI legal entity. SASCI functioning and activities will not change: this is simply a legal necessity.

The SASCI Private Practice Committee under the leadership of JP Theron, Jean Vorster, David Jankelow, Gavin Angel, Graham Cassel, and Andrew Thornton (CASSA). I am so grateful for their tireless work: many hours, and many issues. Most of us I believe have only partial insight into the impact their contributions have on our daily private practice. Some issues they have dealt with include:


Competition Commission and Health Market Inquiry - SASCI commissioned a snap survey amongst its members on some of the issues that were raised during Set 1 of the HMI Hearings in Pretoria. The Survey was managed by an independent third party, and we had no access to or insight into the source data. This data was submitted directly to the Competition Commission of South Africa. HMI subsequently conducted their own practitioner survey for which the report is not public “yet”.

The issue of “Self-determination” of cardiologists – Please consider this carefully, it is going to be a very big issue for us going forward! Legally, SASCI has been unable to negotiate on behalf of cardiologists, for example with funders. Such behaviour could be considered collusion, and be subject to substantial penalties in law. To enable us as a body of Cardiologists to be self-reliant without contravening the horizontal collusion clause of the Competition Act, the PPC decided that we attend and present our case at the Competition Commission Health Market Inquiry (HMI) hearings as well as approach the Competition Commission (CC). The CC responded to an incognito letter from our legal adviser to request guidance as to what CC will consider an appropriate legal structure within which we (cardiologists) may collaborate as a group with respect to fees charged for services. The CC has indicated that the proposed route will be through application for exemption from certain onerous sections of the Competition Act. Several other specialist groups are considering or pursuing exemption.

At AGM 2017 SASCI member provisional approved the budget to continue to explore an application for exemption (the projected cost of the application for exemption will be close to R 1 million in the next year or two in legal and other fees which is equivalent of about 1/3 of SASCI current cash on hand). If an exemption is granted will be for a period of about 4 years and the process will then have to be repeated (but at lower cost).

Legal opinions gained since the AGM rendered conflicting opinion ranging from “no possibility to gain exemption as practitioners” (a watchful waiting approach, to allow others to seek exception) to “grounds for exemption from the Act is under section 10 of the Act: Section 10(3)(b)(iii) allows for exemptions of agreements and practices that change the productive capacity to stop the decline in an industry. In this regard, the Practitioners can apply for exemption on this ground by proving that not allowing this exemption, there will be a decline in the profession of interventional cardiology in the market. Section 10(3)(b)(iv) allows for exemptions on grounds of economic stability of, again, an industry. There must therefore be economic proof of decline or loss of economic stability in the professional market in order to succeed with an exemption application.”. The second opinion will require significant practice data collection (and cost to do so) and employing Advocate (with his team) to take the case to HMI. A final decision on next steps have not be reached yet. At this stage it seems more sensible to wait and see how other specialist groups fare in their applications, rather than pursuing an extremely costly process with little prospect of meaningful benefit for now.
Elsabe Klinck Associates have been appointed on a monthly retainer to advise SASCI/PPC on matters pertaining to HPCSA Global fee issue, CMS PMB process (with Adriaan Snyders leading the way), HMI Outcomes Measures, TAVI Medihelp etc. Members are requested to bring issues to our attention to allow us to minimise impact on your individual practice.

Our private practice committee believes to secure the independent future of interventional cardiologists, we should be able to negotiate freely with Funders as a representative body. We could then within the limits of law and coding guidelines, advise funders how our members will code, and at what rates. We are considering moving forward in creating a Cardiac Business Unit (CBU), and within this a negotiating forum. We could then serve our private practice members with commercial advice, and negotiate effectively with funders on their behalf. This would of course involve fulltime management and part time clinical coding support, and we envisage that such a business unit membership would cost a Cardiologist (who is a member of SASCI) roughly R2,500 per month. The main benefit envisaged would be accepted billing guidelines, reduction in the effort of motivations and approvals follow up, reduction in disputed and thus unpaid bills, representatives at the highest level including in the setting of fees, and much assistance in hopefully very occasional cases of dispute resolution.

We thank our members in advance for their inputs to our private practice committee in response to these complex proposals: remember our only goal is to ensure your representation, and strengthening of your position as a service provider often overlooked in the bigger scheme of private practice negotiations between funders and hospital groups. Our experience is that service providers unless strongly represented will be bullied and coerced into unacceptable arrangements. We can be stronger together.

Educational Remains the key Pillar of our Society - The following initiatives took place:

**SASCI PASCAR and SCAI Master the Complex Meeting**

Boston Educare in collaboration with Society for Cardiac Angiography and Interventions (SCAI), South African Society of Cardiovascular Intervention (SASCI) and Pan-African Society of Cardiology (PASCAR) Interventional Group offered a Master the Complex Course in Johannesburg, South Africa on 27 and 28 January 2017. The Conveners of the course were Dave Kettles (SASCI, RSA) and Harun Otieno (PASCAR, Kenya) with key international faculty James Blankenship (President of SCAI, USA), Arun Kalyanasundaram (USA) and Simon Welsh (UK, Live Case), with regional key practitioners (as session chairpersons and case presenters). South African and Sub-Sahara African cardiologists attended this course which is focussed on the experienced interventional operator or operators at the cusped. The meeting was well attended by about 50 practitioners and the course was a balanced mix of interesting clinical case presentations and discussions by faculty and attendees.

The next MTC edition is planned for end January 2018 so watch this space.

**Visiting Professor Program and National Evening Lecture Series**

The Visiting Professor Program 2017 was a huge success. Dr Jacques Koolen from The Catharina Hospital, The Netherlands visited South Africa from 24 July to 16 August. His passion for teaching and the quality of his lectures and discussions accentuate the standard that has become core to this program. Not only did he give of his valuable time, knowledge and expertise, he also gave a part of himself to the patients, doctors and staff of the hospitals where he was positioned. Please see Dr Koolens Open Letter in the previous SA Heart Newsletter.

The combined SA Heart Branch and SASCI evening lecture series were held in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Bloemfontein, Durban and Cape Town. The topic of his talk was “Selecting an optimal revascularization strategy for my patients with left mainstem stenosis in 2017: making sense of the evidence”. The 2017 VPP Evening Lecture series was definitely a huge success according to the feedback we received from the 198 delegates who attended the 5 meetings. It was a great presentation which led to lively interactive discussions. Thank you to Medtronic and Pharma Dynamics for the continued unconditional support.

We are privileged to announce that Prof David Holmes (USA) has agreed to travel to South Africa during February and March 2018 as SASCI VPP 2018. We are most excited to host and learn from one of the grand masters in interventional cardiology.

**Boston Scientific RC Fraser International Fellowship:** Pieter Aucamp (Cardiology Consultant at Universitas Hospital) was at Prof Simon Redwood’s (Professor of Interventional Cardiology, Consultant Interventional Cardiologist) unit in March 2016 and the feedback regarding his experience and participation are very positive.

Dr Bradley Griffiths from the University of Stellenbosch is the recipient of the award for 2017 and will visit Prof Redwood’s unit in November 2017.

**SCAI Fall Fellows Course:** South African interventional cardiology fellows once again attend the Annual SCAI Interventional Cardiology Fall Fellows Course in Las Vegas, USA. The SCAI program is a crucial extension of our local fellows training and the successful candidates in 2016 were Rohan Lutchman, Anil Kurian, Mohammed Alteer, Khulile Moeketsi and Tangeni Auala (Namibia). Feedback received from Dr. Auala on her experience and participation was very positive too “It was absolutely fantastic: practical innovative and inspiring!!”. It is an intense five-day course however the format of the course is engaging and allows for easy understanding and retention of information. The course was a balanced mix of interesting clinical case
presentations and discussions by faculty and attendees, didactic lectures, small group sessions, informative exhibitions and demonstrations. This program is sponsored by SCAI, SASCI and Boston Scientific.

The four South African recipients for the 2017 are Deya Ramachandran (University of KwaZulu-Natal), Mfundo Mathenjwa (University of Witwatersrand), Arthur Mutyaba (University of Cape Town) and HW Snyman (University of Stellenbosch).

**SASCI Fellows Workshop 2017**

Since 2005 the SASCI Coronary and Vascular Workshop for fellows and junior consultants’ meeting has proven to be a resounding success. This is an integral part of SASCI’s public and private partnership which exposes “cardiologists in training” to operators in private sector practice as well as colleagues from other public-sector units in South Africa and beyond.

This 2017 event was held at Kloofzicht Lodge in Muldersdrift and well attended by 80% of cardiology Fellows in South Africa as well as a few recently qualified South African cardiologists, 1 colleague from Mauritius and 4 from the Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences, Tanzania; 44 doctors and 13 industry members in total. The Conveners of the 2017 Edition were Jean Vorster, Graham Cassel and Gavin Angel with faculty members: Dave Kettles, Adie Horak, Mark Abelson, Pravin Manga, Agnete Geldenhuys and Shaheen Pandie. The program was well received by all delegates and feedback was exceptionally positive from faculty, delegates and industry alike.

7 Fellows used the opportunity to present cases from their units and the two best cases were selected to receive free registration at the SA Heart Congress 2017 from SASCI. Congratulations to the recipients HW Snyman and Menachem Levin. Excellent quality presentations were also received from Chishala Chishala (Groote Schuur Hospital), Brian Kiggundu (Tygerberg Hospital), Zimasa Jama (Groote Schuur Hospital), Menachem Levin (Charlotte Maxeke Hospital), Lorrita Kabwe (Tygerberg Hospital), HW Snyman (Tygerberg) and Brad Griffiths (Tygerberg).

I was asked to close the meeting by reflecting on my view of the next 10 years in interventional cardiology! Our organisers are always thinking creatively, and keeping our meetings varied and stimulating!

**The SASCI Fellows Workshop 2018 will be hosted at Crystal Towers, Century City, Cape Town from 23 and 24 March weekend immediately preceding AfricaPCR Course.**

Research projects: This year has seen huge steps forward in the STEMI project, with active recruitment now of patients into a national registry, and a ‘hub and spoke’ project moving forward rapidly in Johannesburg. Thank you to this very active committee, and particularly to Adriaan Snyders and Rhena Delport who continue to work tirelessly (see more detailed STEMi SA report elsewhere).

The following corporates have been committed to our society and the support of Cardiology education in South Africa: Ascendis, Amayeza Abantu, Angio Quip, Aspen Pharma, Baroque Medical, B Braun, Biotronik, Boston Scientific, Condor Medical, Edwards, Medtronic, Obsidian, Siemens, Paragmed, Pharma Dynamics, Sanofi, Disa Vascular, Terumo, Torque Medical and Volcano. We are looking forward to continuing our collaboration with you. We thank you for your generosity, and acknowledge your immense contributions.

I wish to assure our members that the SASCI Exco will continue to work tirelessly to represent your interests, educate, and inform interventional cardiologists in our country. We deeply value, and need your support. Please feel free to get involved at any time.

Let us know if and where we can be further assistance to you as you deliver the best service possible to your patients.

*Dave Kettles, SASCI President*

**ISCAP Annual Report 2017**

I am very excited about the election of 3 Vice Chair persons, Isabel Bender, Sabira Khatieb and Human Nieuwenhuisen, from each of our constituent groups (Nurses, Radiographers and Clinical Technologists). Each region has a Regional Chairperson and representation from Radiographers, Nurses and Technologists. Each of these regional committees, with the help of the national ISCAP team and Society office, focus on developing quality educational programs for Allieds from across South Africa. Through this structure we hope to effectively attend to your specific needs as an Allied Member of ISCAP-SASCI.

I would like to thank my Committee and Co-opted members for their continued contribution.
### Gauteng:
- Isabel Bender (Vice Chair Nurses as well as Regional Chair)
- Kerry Moir (Radiographers)
- Jamie-Leigh Hayes (Technologist)
- Ramabai Zwapano (Nurses)

### Western Cape:
- Carmen November (Regional Chair)
- Sabira Khatieb (Radiographers)
- Human Nieuwenhuis (Technologists)
- Maggie Petersen (Nurses)

### Kwazulu-Natal:
- Noeline Nichols (Regional Chair)
- Selvan Govindsamy (Radiographers)
- Ameena Amod (Technologists)
- Hilary Gibbs (Nurses)

### Eastern Cape:
- Keri Meyer (Regional Chair)
- Ronelle de Glanville (Radiographers)
- Elzanne Oosthuizen (Technologists)
- Naomi Oosterbroek (Nurses)

### Freestate:
- Marisa Fourie (Regional Chair)
- Marlet Bester (Technologists)

### Co-Opted:
- Gill Longano (Education and Training)
- Amy Wolf (Congresses)

### Industry Liaison:
- Marelize Snyman
- Tina Fairfield
- Karien Meyer

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Dianne Kerrigan and the Boston team continued to work tirelessly to move our ISCAP Cath Lab Manual from hardcopy to a web based virtual e-learning tool (eventually available world wide). We expect the go live at the SA Heart Congress 2017. 

We have truly had amazing educational meetings in 2017 and the rest of the year is jam packed with opportunities to upskill yourself in your own home town. Through unconditional educational grants ISCAP is also able to support Allieds from outlying Cath Labs to attend our meetings (Mossel Bay, East London, Nelspruit and even Windhoek).

**ISCAP Radiographers meetings 2017**

Interventional Society for Cathlab Allied Professionals (ISCAP) is focussed on ongoing training for all Cath Lab Allieds. ISCAP was very privileged to have their first ISCAP radiographer’s workshops, 6 and 13 May in Johannesburg and Cape Town, respectively. We identified that the Radiographers in general had a need for specific training, and the topics for the first workshop were:

- POPI Act
- Role of the Radiographer in Interventional Procedures
- Infection Control: Sterile versus semi sterile. Superbugs - CRE MRSA
- Radiation Protection Services

These workshops were not only Cathlab specific, and attendees included theatre, paediatric and general radiographers. We are looking forward to the possibilities for 2018.

Thank you to the sponsors, **Boston Scientific and Siemens**, for their unconditional grant in this regard, making the leap forward possible.

**ISCAP National Lecture Series 2017 (Supported by Medtronic)**

Interventional Society for Cath Lab Allied Professionals (ISCAP) is focussed on ongoing training for all Cath Lab Allieds incl nurses, radiographers and technologists.

- **On 10 June 2017,** 40 Allied Professionals attended or workshop in Gauteng supported by Medtronic. The following topics where discussed:
  - Tips and tricks for Radial Approach – Dr Pieter van Wyk
  - Does the use of diabetic devices reduce the risk of heart attacks, stroke, kidney and vascular disease? – Hestie Dreyers
  - Patient and practitioner’s rights and obligations in the cath lab – Esme Prins van den Berg

During this workshop, we had the privilege of hosting two of our close collaborators from the Namibian Interventional Society for Cath Lab Allied Professionals (NISCAP), Lorraine Gaweses and Regina Mafwile.

On 22 July 2017, we hosted the second workshop of this Medtronic supported series at Crystal Towers Hotel in Cape Town. A massive number of 74 Allied Professionals attended this workshop! We had the privilege to listen to Dr Shaheen Pandie, Melissa King and Michael Bagraim.

On 26 August 2017, we hosted the third workshop of this Medtronic supported series at Ibhayi Guest Lodge in Port Elizabeth. 25 Allied Professionals attended this workshop. We had the privilege to listen to Dr Butau, Melissa King and Henry Lerm.

On 16 September 2017, we hosted the forth workshop of this Medtronic supported series at Endless Horizons, Durban. 40 Allied Professionals attended this workshop! We had the privilege to listen to Dr Andrew Asherson, Melissa King and Suren Naidoo.

This last of this workshop series will take place on 7 October at Leopard & Lace Guest House, Bloemfontein.

ISCAP thank **Medtronic** for your continued and longstanding support of our lecture series and programs.

**ISCAP National Lecture Series 2017 (Supported by Boston Scientific and Siemens)**

On 5 August 2017, ISCAP hosted the first workshop for 2017 in Bloemfontein. We had a very good turn-out of 30 Allies. The following topics were discussed:
- Diagnostic Tools, IVUS/FFR - What information do you get out of these technologies - **Dr Nico van der Merwe**
- IVUS image interpretation - **Dr Nico van der Merwe**
- Emergency equipment every Cathlab needs – **Marisa Fourie**

On 12 August 2017, we hosted the second workshop of this Boston/Siemens series at Crystal Towers Hotel Cape Town. With a brilliant turnout of 75 Allied Professionals. We had the privilege to listen to Dr Charles Kyriakakis and Shanaaz Omer.

On 2 September 2017, we hosted the third workshop of this Boston/Siemens series at the Boston Educare Training Facility in Bryanston, Gauteng. 42 Allied Professionals attended this workshop. We had the privilege to listen to Dr Zambakides and Isabel Bender.

**The next workshops of this series will take place:**

14 October: Kwa-Zulu Natal – Durban Endless Horizons
4 November: Eastern Cape – Port Elizabeth Ibyani Guest House

Thank you to **Boston Scientific and Siemens** for their unconditional grant to make this lecture series possible.

**ISCAP National Lecture Series 2017 (Supported by Paragmed, Volcano and Torque)**

On 2 September 2017, ISCAP hosted the first of this lecture Series at Crystal Towers Hotel, Cape Town. We had a very good turn-out of 51 Allieds. The following topics were discussed:

- PFO - Latest Update – **Dr Harold Pribut**
- Essential communication and conflict handling skills when working with patients and Cath Lab colleagues – **Magriet Badenhorst**
- Coronary Interventions in the High Bleeding Risk Patient – **Dr Piet Wessels**

On 9 September 2017, we hosted the second workshop of this Paragmed/Torque/Volcano series at Leopard & Lace Guest House in Bloemfontein. 29 Allied Professionals attended this workshop. We had the privilege to listen to Dr Danie Buys, Magriet Badenhorst and Dr Piet Wessels.

Thank you to **Paragmed, Torque Medical and Volcano** for their unconditional grant to make this lecture series possible.

**Please Save the Date for the upcoming workshops of this Lecture Series:**

30 September: Port Elizabeth Ibyani Guest House
21 October: Midrand Protea Hotel
4 November: Durban Endless Horizons Boutique Hotel

If you require more information regarding the topics etc for the above workshops, kindly contact the ISCAP Office – [johann.nice@medsoc.co.za](mailto:johann.nice@medsoc.co.za)

**Waheeda Howell, ISCAP Chairperson**

**Annual report of the South African Society for Cardiovascular Research (SASCAR)**

The South African Society for Cardiovascular Research (SASCAR), an interest group of the SA Heart Association, was created in October 2009.

The SASCAR Executive Committee elected in September 2016 for a 2-year term of office is: Prof Neil Davies (Chairperson), Dr Derick Van Vuuren (Secretary), Prof Sandrine Lecour (Treasurer), Prof Faadiel Essop, Prof Karen Sliwa, Dr Balindiwe Sisi, Dr Wayne Smith.

**Workshops and meetings**

Since our last report, SASCAR has organized several well attended workshops and meetings on a range of topics

1. **3rd European-South African Cardiovascular Research Workshop**

A workshop organised by Prof Sandrine Lecour was held from 5-9 September 2016 in Cape Town. This workshop hosted by SASCAR at UCT provided a platform for young researchers from different nationalities and institutions to present their research findings and interact with other junior and senior researchers, both formally and on a social level. Being a joint venture with the European Society of Cardiology (ESC), it attracted more than 85 participants including 15 European researchers and students and a range of attendees from South Africa that included Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University – Walter Sisulu University – University of Limpopo – University of Western Cape – UCT – Stellenbosch University. As one of the overarching goals of this series of workshops is inclusiveness, bursaries were provided by SASCAR for attendees from previously disadvantaged background. Delegates enjoyed a broad range of talks in packed sessions on cutting edge topics in basic cardiac science such as biomarkers for cardiovascular morbidities, stem cell therapy for myocardial infarction, cardiovascular risk factors, signaling and cardioprotection. The workshop was reported on in the European Heart Journal (April 2017 v38: pages 930-931).
2. **Preclinical imaging workshop**, University of Cape Town.
   A training workshop was given at the Lionel Opie Preclinical Imaging Facility (LOPI), UCT. A full day training program was given by Dr Sandra Meyer, the specialist technician of Visualsonics, the manufacturer of the Vevo® High-Frequency Ultrasound System. This is the only commercially available imaging platform that enables the researcher to obtain in vivo anatomical, functional and physiological data simultaneously in real-time with a resolution down to 30 µm. Real time demonstrations of a variety of functional cardiac procedures were observed by the 10 attendees. Through the combined knowledge present at the workshop, both from Dr Meyer and members of the audience, progress was made towards the translation of ultrasound guided cardiac injection to use in a rat model. This particular technique, which is a significant refinement for many cardiac procedures performed on small anima models are presently confined to the mouse model.

3. **Statistical principals and Statistica Software training workshop for post-graduate students.**
   SASCAR held a statistics training workshop targeting postgraduate students on the University of Cape Town Health Faculty campus. The workshop hosted by Dr Wayne Smith from the Hypertension in Africa Research Team, North-West University covered basic statistical principles and training in the Statistica software package. Apart from fitting with the SASCAR objective of developing young cardiac researchers, the growing concern in the scientific community that poor statistical practices are likely contributing to the irreproducibility crisis in the biomedical sciences added further impetus for holding this workshop. Topics covered included basic statistical concepts and statistical challenges faced in both experimental and basic epidemiological studies. The event was very well attended and well received by students from University of Cape Town, Stellenbosch University (Main Campus and Tygerberg campus) and University of the Western Cape.

4. **SASCAR at the ISHR meeting**
   For the third ISHR European meeting in a row, SASCAR was invited by the International Society for Heart Research (ISHR), European section to hold a joint session at their annual meeting in Hamburg, Germany, 24th to 27th July 2017. In a well attended session entitled “Signaling in cardiometabolic diseases”, Prof Barbara Huisamen from the University of Stellenbosch presented her latest and novel data on the role of the protein ATM in insulin resistance associated with obesity. Mr Nicholas Woudberg (PhD student: Hatter Institute University of Cape Town) presented data from a joint research project between the Hatter Institute and the Non-Communicable Disease Research Unit, South African Medical Research Council, demonstrating that alterations in HDL subclass distribution and function resulted from an exercise intervention conducted in obese women.
   Four postgraduate students/fellows from South African institutions (including 3 SASCAR members) attended the meeting, most of them receiving a travel grant from the ISHR and/or the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) to attend this meeting.

SASCAR looks forward to an exciting 2018 and I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to all members of the Executive Committee for their efforts over last year and in particular those who directly ran workshops.

*Assoc. Prof Neil Davies, Chairperson, SASCAR*

**Surgical Interest Group / SOCTS**

In the wake of the WSCTS congress organised by SOCTS (Society of Cardiothoracic Surgeons) in 2016 the surgical group has taken a participating role in 2017. The presidency of the WSCTS was handed over to Dr Yuri Pya at the 27th meeting of the WSCTS in Astana on September 1, where Dr Kleinloog delivered the presidential address and gave a presentation. The congress was attended by 2000 surgeons from 30 countries. A thoracic surgical program was organised by Tony Linegar during the SATS meeting which was very successful. The invited guests were Dr Kostas Papadopoulos from Leeds and Peter Licht from Austria. This was a very useful meeting for both cardiothoracic and thoracic surgeons alike.

The group will participate in the SAHA meeting in November, the program which will be organised by Martin Sussman and Agnetha Geldenhuys. During the meeting the 4th combined meeting between the South African and Israeli cardiac surgical societies will take place. Apart from the normal disappointing iterations from the funding industry our Society has had a major problem with the implementation of Preferred Provider Networks and DSP’s. The unsuitability of these financial models within cardiac medicine has been discussed at many meetings and unfortunately our exuberance after our initial talks with Discovery has been dampened somewhat.

The Society will continue their efforts to have these practices abolished. A date for the Biennial meeting of the Society in 2018 has not been confirmed.

*Robert Kleinloog, president, SOCTS*