2020 saw major disruptions in some CASSA-related activities because of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, I am still pleased to report that some initiatives and activities continued even during these difficult times.

**Annual 2020 CASSA symposia**

CASSA held 2 successful symposia prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2020 CASSA symposia took place on the 29 February and 7 March at the Vineyard Hotel in Cape Town and the Capital Hotel in Johannesburg over 2 successive weekends. This year CASSA hosted 2 international speakers: Professor Sabine Ernst (Royal Brompton Hospital, UK) and Dr Neil Sulke (Bournemouth Hospital, UK). The symposia were entitled “Clinical Updates in Cardiac Arrhythmias”. Prof Sabine Ernst, a specialist in congenital heart disease arrhythmias, spoke on the approach to the management of patients with adult congenital heart disease and cardiac arrhythmias. She also spoke on the role of catheter ablation in the treatment of these complex arrhythmias. Dr Neil Sulke gave an update on the management of patients with syncope and ventricular tachycardia storm and spoke on the role of implantable loop recorders in the follow-up of patients with atrial fibrillation. These talks were supported by an excellent local faculty of local electrophysiologists.

**African Heart Rhythm Association**

The 1st meeting of the African Heart Rhythm Association (AFHRA) was held in Nairobi, Kenya in January 2020. This was the largest arrhythmia conference ever held in Africa. CASSA members (Dr Andrew Thornton, Dr Brian Vezi and myself) were invited faculty. AFHRA was formed in November 2019 by arrhythmia task force of the Pan African Society of Cardiology (PASCAR). CASSA is proud to support this association which comprises members from other national arrhythmia societies. Dr Brian Vezi was elected to be a regional representative for South Africa and I will serve as regional representative for the Asia/Pacific region. The aim of this association is to:
1) detect, prevent and treat cardiac arrhythmias in Africa
2) educate and train African healthcare professionals on the management of arrhythmogenic disorders and their outcomes
3) educate the public to recognize and prevent risk factors for cardiac arrhythmia outcomes and 4) facilitate the research of cardiac arrhythmias and conduction disturbances as well as in sport cardiology. CASSA hopes to partner with AFHRA in many future initiatives including training, teaching and research projects.

**Collaboration with the European Heart Rhythm Association (EHRA)**

CASSA continued to collaborate and work closely with EHRA on several initiatives over the past 3-4 years. CASSA was invited to chair a joint session with EHRA at the annual Europace meeting in Vienna 2020. Unfortunately, this meeting was cancelled because of COVID-19. In its place, CASSA hosted a virtual webinar called “Arrhythmia management in critically ill and post-surgery patients”. This September webinar overviewed aspects from the joint EHRA/CASSA/LAHRS/APHRS consensus paper on management in critically ill and post-surgery patients in which CASSA contributed to.

**Ongoing Education**

The quarterly ECG quiz published in the SA Heart Journal has continued, but the 6 monthly Andrzej Okreglicki Memorial Advanced ECG and Arrhythmia Interpretation Course had to be cancelled in March 2020. This meeting will now be a virtual meeting in November 2020. CASSA plans to host 3 webinars in November 2020. One of the webinars will focus on atrial fibrillation during “Global AF Aware Week” in November 2020. The other 2 webinars will focus on ECG teaching for general practitioners in November 2020. A number of teaching webinars and journal clubs for cardiac technologists are planned for 2020 and into 2021.

**Thanks**

As my 4 year leadership of CASSA draws to an end - I would like to thank the following who served on the CASSA EXCO this year (and in the past) for their time and efforts: Andrew Thornton (immediate past president), Pro Obel (treasurer), Adele Greyling (co-treasurer), Rob Scott Millar, Ruan Louw, 2 industry representatives (Robert Botes, George Van Der Merwe), Human Niewenhuis (allied professional) and CASSA co-ordinator Glenda Nichols. I would like to thank them for their time, expertise and support over the past 4 years.

Finally, I would like to thank the CASSA corporate members for their ongoing support to the organisation. They are Medtronic, Vertice, Biosense Webster, Boehringer Ingelheim, Boston Scientific, Biotronik, Bayer Pharmaceuticals and Inova Pharmaceuticals.

A/Prof Ashley Chin
CASSA president

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Executive Committee: Prof A Chin (President), Dr Pro Obel (Treasurer), Dr A Greyling (Deputy treasurer), DrA Thornton, Dr R Louw, Prof Rob Scott Millar, Mr G Vd Merwe, Mr R Botes, Mr H Niewenhuis