Reports from the Special Interest Groups

CASSA

I am happy to report that CASSA’s membership and influence continues to grow.

CASSA has continued to play an active role in **education**. In the organization of this year’s SA Heart Congress programme, we were represented by Andrew Thornton and outside of the plenary sessions, we held a case discussion session, having elected a couple of years ago to hold the annual CASSA symposium outside the dates of the annual SA Heart Congress. This year the CASSA symposium is entitled “Many faces of Atrial Fibrillation”, and will be held in Cape Town on the 16th of October and Johannesburg on 23rd of October, and has 2 overseas invited speakers viz Pro Johannes Brachmann and Dr Neil Sulke. CASSA is tasked to with the organization of the SA Heart Congress 2011, and the convener is once again Andrew Thornton assisted by Londocor (Sonja du Plessis). The Road Show programme continues with a meeting having taken place on the 10th of April in George (AO and Dave Milne) and further meetings are arranged for Johannesburg in September and Kimberley in November.

AO continues to provide one to the highlights of the quarterly SA Heart Journal in the form of an ECG quiz. We were fortunate in May to hear one of our ex-patriates, Dr Ricky Marcus, an echocardiography expert, expound on the echo-doppler evaluation of biventricular pacing for heart failure. This meeting was sponsored by Sanofi-Aventis. Last month a large group of allied professionals was addressed at the Medtronic Rapid Exchange meeting by Pro Obel and AO.

In promoting **research**, CASSA continues to support the ARVC registry of South Africa run by the University of Cape Town. It was pleasing to see an important publication come out of the registry in the last year, in relation to the genetics of this condition.

With reference to **health care policy and standards**, we have had interaction with funders specifically Medscheme and once again recently attended the meeting of the Medical Advisors Group which was addressed by Prof Martin Cowie of the Royal Brompton Hospital who addressed issues related to cardiac devices and ablation. Last month Pro Obel and Andrew Thornton addressed guests of a “funder forum” that was organized by Medtronic. I have personally been involved in the past few months to try and clarify and expedite the Sotalol supply problem which suddenly emerged early in the year. I have communicated with the various parties involved and have now even written to the Minister of Health on this issue. The principles for accreditation of the individuals who implant ICD’s have been agreed, but there has been no implementation yet, pending the perusal of curricula of the courses which are offered by companies that market these devices.

I must again mention CASSA **corporate members** and thank them for their support: they are Medtronic, Sanofi-Aventis, Amayezu, Cordis (J&J), Boston Scientific and Boehringer-Ingeheim.

Finally, this being my swan son as CASSA president, I must thank members for this honor over the past 4 years, and congratulate the incoming President and assure him of my unbridled support. I am grateful for the support of my Executive Committee, viz immediate Past President Prof R Scott Millar, elected member Ms J Daniels (treasurer) Prof A Okreglicki (Secretary), Dr IWP Obel, Dr A Thornton, Dr A Stanley Dr D Milne Ms H Henry and Mr. W Stranix. Lastly I must acknowledge the boundless energy and enthusiasm of our Executive Officer Mrs. Franciska Rossouw (formerly du Toit).

*Dr Ronald M Jardine*

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**HeFSSA**

The past year has not been without heartache and HeFSSA kindly remembers deceased EXCO member, Dr Kevin O’Connell as well as Prof Mathivha with whom we had the pleasure of working in 2009 during the organizing of the SA Heart congress. These colleagues will be sorely missed for both their professional contributions as well as in person.

Welcome to Prof Lecour who was proposed and elected to the HeFSSA Exco during the 2009 AGM! I will like to thank the members of the Executive Committee who so freely and willingly gave of their time and skill to make 2010 a successful one for HeFSSA:

- **President**: Prof Karen Sliwa
- **Vice-President and Secretary**: Dr Eric Klug
- **Treasurer**: Dr Martin Mpe
- **Members**: Dr S Middlemost, Dr Pro Obel, Dr D Smith, Dr C Radulescu, Prof S Lecour
- **Industry**: Mr. W Stranix
- **Executive Officer**: Mr. George Nel (assisted by Me Franciska du Toit)

*Education and International Affiliations:*
Members of HeFSSA have contributed to the Heart Failure Working Group on peripartum cardiomyopathy of the European Cardiac Society. The formation on a formal ESC working group June 2009 increased awareness worldwide for a condition common in Africa.

The position statement is now in press in the European Heart Failure Journal “Current state of knowledge on etiology, diagnosis, management and therapy of peripartum cardiomyopathy (PPCM): a position statement from the Heart Failure Association of the European Society of Cardiology Working group on PPCM”

In addition a workshop to plan a larger African study on PPCM took place in April 2010 at the Hatter Cardiovascular Research Institute, Faculty of Health Sciences in Cape Town with the participation of delegates of all the larger South African tertiary centres and 8 African countries. The more than 30 delegates had active discussion with presenters from various countries including the USA, UK and Australia.

Continuous Medical Education

SA Heart Congress:
The SA Heart Congress 2009, organized by HeFSSA with assistance from other Special Interest groups, proved to be a big success. The meeting attracted approximately 1300 delegates and the academic programme was well accepted featuring both renowned international speakers and ample opportunity for local faculty.

HeFSSA host two dedicated pre SA Heart Congress Workshops -

Echocardiography in collaboration with MAYO Clinic:
The HeFSSA Echocardiography workshop, which was held in collaboration with faculty from the MAYO Clinic (US) drew more than 230 delegates and was one of the highlights of SA Heart 2009.

For SA Heart 2010 HeFSSA will again host this program in association with the US Mayo Clinic group (8 August, at Sun City). This program under the directorship of Dr Darryl Smith will educate attendees on the latest techniques in echocardiography, enhance the performance and interpretation of high quality 2D, colour and Doppler echocardiography and improve the integration of echocardiography in clinical decision-making. The programme covers the common and fundamental aspects of echocardiography, including valvular, coronary and myopericardial. Invited Mayo faculty this year includes: Dr. V. Nkomo, Dr. B. Eidem, Dr. W. Freeman, Dr. Y. Maalouf and Dr. R. McCully.

HeFSSA Cardio Update for Non-Cardiologists:
At the SA Heart Congress 2009 HeFSSA offered the Cardiology Update for Non-Cardiologists. This meeting was attended by 109 General Practitioners and Physicians and once again proved that there is a definite need amongst these groups for information on dealing with cardiac patients. I would like to thank Dr Eric Klug for his hard work as program director and the local faculty for their willingness to spend an additional day away from their practices to share their substantial knowledge with our colleagues.

HeFSSA will once again be hosting a Cardiovascular Update designed especially for general practitioners and physicians on 8 August, the day prior to the Annual SA Heart 2010 Congress.

HeFSSA would like to thank Dr David Jankelow for contribution as program director and for the faculty members for their time. This year’s programme will involve advice on clinical assessments of cardiac patients, interpreting ECG’s, recommendations on cardiovascular risk profiling and treatment tips on hypertension, hypercholesterolemia, coronary artery disease, arrhythmias and heart failure. Patient case studies will be used extensively.

HeFSSA will, in keeping with the academic commitment of the society, continue to offer appropriate training opportunities to members.

Joint Heart Failure workshop, SA Heart Congress 2010
In conjunction with the South African Society for Cardiovascular Research (SASCAR), a new interest group of SA Heart, HeFSSA has put in place a workshop with the objective to combine basic science knowledge with clinical knowledge on heart failure. Prof Lionel Opie and Prof Angela Woodiwiss kindly accepted to contribute to this workshop.

GP with Special Interest in Heart Failure
As mandated during the 2009 AGM: 2010 sees the Heart Failure Society of South Africa focusing on GP education primarily. These programs will come to fruition during the later part of 2010.

An exciting and first ever accredited GP course in Heart Failure consisting of three modules that culminate in a certification for the practitioners who completed the course will kick off in August 2010 and run through to October 2010. Dr Pro Obel, who is the content director of the program, has put together an informative, interactive and interesting program.

Module 1:
Lecture 1: An Introduction to Heart Failure – Epidemiology (it affects all people of all ages; cause of death, good management improves outcomes)
Lecture 2: Pathogenesis of HF – Introduction to the four typical presentations of heart failure

Module 2

Lecture 1: Diagnosis of each of the four patient types mentioned above.
Lecture 2: Treatment of each of the four patient types mentioned above.

Module 3: Case studies of all four profiles to determine whether GP understands the following:

These meetings will be held in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Durban and Bloemfontein with the objective to educate more than 200 General Practitioners on the prevention, diagnoses and treatment of Heart Failure.

HeFSSA would like to thank colleagues around the country who will be lecturing at these meetings as well as industry for their financial and logistical support.

General
As always, the HeFSSA website (www.hefssa.org) is regularly updated throughout the year and worth a visit on a regular basis.

Industry
Representation has assured a close liaison facilitated by George Nel and F du Toit. We will like to thank them for their effort and will continue to pursue collaboration on issues of common interest, which include facilitation of educational resources expenditure, advice on applications, guidelines, etc. We remain very grateful to the industry for the financial and strategic support received and would like to thank the following companies for their continued support: Medtronic, Pharma Dynamics, Servier, Philips and AstraZeneca.

We believe the survival of a strong Special Interest Group in heart failure is in the best interest of all stakeholders (physicians, industry vendors, health funders, hospital groups, government) and especially patients. For this reason, we appeal to all to get involved in HeFSSA and contribute towards achieving our objectives.

We aim to continue to develop our areas of influence and offer a HELPLINE through our Executive Officer George Nel, whereby any party can access us with enquiries, requests for assistance, lobbying etc. His direct line is 083-458-5954. These requests will be dealt with in a professional and efficient manner to provide a vital service to all.

Prof Karen Sliwa

LASSA
The Lipid and Atherosclerosis Society of Southern Africa (LASSA) remains affiliated with both the South African Heart Association (SA Heart) as a Special Interest Group (SIG) and with the Society for Endocrinology and Metabolism and Diabetes of South Africa (SEMDSA).

LASSA remains a small group with its orientation as an academic body covering a wide area of interest in inherited disorders of lipid and lipoprotein metabolism, atherosclerosis, nutrition, epidemiology and pharmacotherapy. Expertise in severe dyslipidaemias remains mainly at a few teaching hospitals where problems mentioned in the previous annual report (facilities, staff, remuneration of medical and allied professionals) have not been resolved. Newsletters were sent to inform members of new developments when international meetings were attended by some of the LASSA members.

The conjoint meeting with SEMDSA happened from 17th - 21st April 2009 with the 9th LASSA conference being on 20th and 21st April 2009. The latter day was a short lipidology course that was well-received and could be incorporated at future meetings. As is customary, colleagues who attended the LASSA meetings paid towards membership and additional annual membership fees were raised by a circular along with renewal of SA Heart membership. LASSA remains affiliated with the International Atherosclerosis Society.

Prof AD Marais, Groote Schuur Hospital & University of Cape Town
Prof FJ Raal, Charlotte Maxeke Hospital & University of Witwatersrand

PCSSA
The Paediatric Cardiac Society of South Africa is a Special Interest Group of the SA Heart Association, and incorporates physicians who work with children with heart disease, including cardiologists, surgeons, anaesthesiologists, paediatricians, and others. The Society aims to improve all aspects of care for children with heart problems in southern Africa, including the promotion of research, support for education and training in the area of children’s heart disease, and advocacy for children with heart disease.

The PCSSSA Executive Committee elected in 2008 to a 2-year term of office is: John Hewitson (President), Stephen Brown (Vice President + Treasurer), Liesl Zühlke (Secretary), Jeff Harrisberg (Private Practice), and Ebrahim Hoosen (without portfolio). Chris
Hugo-Hamman is an ex-officio member as past president, and also chairs the local organizing committee for the 2013 World Congress.

The subject that has increasingly occupied our thoughts and time since 2008 when Chris Hugo-Hamman led a bid to host the World Congress, is planning for the 6th World Congress of Paediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery. The dates have been set for February 18th to 22nd 2013, at the Cape Town International Conference Centre. The Local Organizing Committee includes Christopher Hugo-Hamman, John Lawrenson, Susan Vosloo, John Hewitson, Liesl Zühlke, and Andre Brooks. We have established a Section 21 company under whose auspices the congress will be run.

The society’s annual Paediatric Cardiac Symposium continues to be held in conjunction with the South African Heart Association Congress. The 2009 meeting was held 22-25 October at Sun City, organized by Jeff Harrisberg and John Hewitson. The excellent international faculty was augmented by program items particularly relevant to the burden of paediatric heart disease in Africa, including a half-day mini-symposium on rheumatic heart disease. The international invited guests were: Frank Hanley, Professor of Cardiothoracic Surgery and Director of the Children’s Heart Center, Stanford University Medical Center, California, USA; Neil Wilson, Consultant Paediatric Cardiologist at The Children’s and John Radcliffe Hospitals, Oxford, UK; and Allison Cabalka, Interventional Cardiologist at the Children’s Heart Clinic, and Associate Professor of Pediatrics at the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine, Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA.

The 2010 symposium will again be held at Sun City (8-11 August 2010) as part of the 11th Annual Congress of the South African Heart Association, and is being organized by Antionette Cilliers and Deliwe Ngwezi.

Another local annual scientific meeting with which our members are closely involved is that of the Walter Sisulu Paediatric Cardiac Centre for Africa, which was held in March at Sunninghill Hospital, Johannesburg. The focus of this meeting was on interactive discussions around predominantly surgical topics. International invited surgeons this year were Christian Brizard, Christian Schreiber and Richard Jonas. Many PCSSA members attended and contributed to the excellent program.

Three society members attended “Cardiology 2010: 13th Annual Update on Pediatric Cardiovascular Disease” in Florida, USA in February, and Chris Hugo-Hamman was given the opportunity to address the plenary about our plans for the 6th World Congress in Cape Town in 2013.

The audit of paediatric cardiac services in South Africa that we began almost three years ago was published in the SA Heart Journal in January this year (SA Heart Journal; 2010;7(1):4-9), together with a position statement from the society entitled “Optimal paediatric cardiac services in South Africa – what do we need?” (SA Heart Journal; 2010;7(1):10-16). An editorial in the SAMJ will follow soon.

Our thanks to Ebrahim Hoosen for managing the process and writing and editing the manuscripts. The aim is to highlight the increasingly urgent need in this country to address service delivery in the area of paediatric heart disease, as our state services struggle to maintain even basic services amidst ever more stringent budget constraints and staff shortages. The gross deficiencies within the paediatric cardiac services are highlighted and requirements for a viable service in the future are identified. We hope this will serve as a reference for developing adequate infrastructure and human resources within the country.

Where do we go from here? As we move towards hosting the world’s premier event in the area of children’s heart disease in 2013, we need to persist in addressing the development of services in our country and on the continent. We have stated our intention of addressing services in the developing world at the 2013 meeting, and this audit should be seen as the opening stage of a developing program of advocacy, first for South Africa, but then also for developing nations in general.

Dr John Hewitson

SASCAR

The South African Society for Cardiovascular Research (SASCAR), a new interest group of the SA Heart Association, was inaugurated at the SA Heart Meeting in October 2009.

At the launch meeting, which was attended by approximately 50 delegates, the main objectives of this new interest group were outlined and the interim Executive Committee for 2010 was introduced.

It is my privilege to thank the Members of the Interim Executive Committee, who have given so much of their time and skills to make the first 9 months of the Society so productive, namely:

Mrs Sylvia Dennis (Secretary)
Mr Gideon Burger
Dr Neil Davies
Dr Syanda Makaula
Executive Committee
An Executive Committee, who will serve for a 2-year period, will be formally elected at the SASCAR Annual General Meeting, which will take place on Monday, 9th August 2010.

Newsletters and website
Our website (www.sascar.org.za) has been up and running since January 2010 and it contains information about our activities and SASCAR Members. It is constantly updated by Mr Gideon Burger of Lasec, who must be thanked for all his endeavours to keep this website updated and informative. Newsletters are also sent via email to all our Members on a regular basis.

Workshops
Our two first workshops were held in the Western Cape. In March 2010, Prof Hans Strijdom organized a workshop on basic introduction to flow cytometry. This session was well attended by PhD students and SASCAR sponsored a student from the University of Witwatersrand to attend the workshop.

In April 2010, Mr Gideon Burger successfully organized the workshop on blood pressure measurements (in vivo and in vitro). I would like to take this opportunity to thank both these organizers for making these teaching sessions so successful.

Our third workshop (Tuesday 10th August 2010), will be held in conjunction with the Heart Failure Society of South Africa (HFeSSA), during the SA Heart Meeting with the objective of combining basic science and clinical knowledge on heart failure. Prof Lionel Opie (University of Cape Town) and Prof Angela Woodwiss (University of the Witwatersrand), have kindly agreed to participate in this workshop.

As in 2009, we are once again contributing to the exciting programme of the SA Heart Meeting, with two sessions entirely dedicated to Basic Sciences.

International workshop with the British Society for Cardiovascular Research (BSCR) in London, December 2010.

Together with the British Society for Cardiovascular Research, we have put in place a joint workshop. The aim of this joint workshop is to represent the major overlapping cardiovascular research interests in the UK and South Africa. The objective is to highlight the work of our young PhD researchers and to promote and enhance cardiovascular research collaborations between the UK and South African research workers. The workshop will be attended by 50 cardiovascular research PhD students and will include five PhD students and three Senior Researchers from academic institutions within South Africa, who will attend present their data in the UK. Furthermore, they will be afforded the opportunity to visit and spend time in research laboratories within the UK. This initiative has been well received in both countries and it will be partially sponsored by SASCAR, BSCR, the British Heart Foundation, the Medical Research Council (South Africa). However, we are still seeking additional travel funding to enable of South African students/researchers to participate.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the South African Heart Association for accepting us as a Special Interest Group.

I have been honoured to serve as Chairperson of this new Society, which has proved to be very active in the few months since its inception and I would, once again, like to acknowledge again the fantastic input, support and enthusiasm of the Interim Committee.

Last, but not least, I would like to acknowledge our sponsors, without whose assistance, we would not have been able to achieve so much in our first nine months. We are extremely grateful for your support.

Prof Sandrine Lecour

SASCI
The SASCI Annual General Meeting took place at the SA Heart Congress 2009 at Sun City and was well attended. I would like to thank Sajidah Khan and Chris Zambakides for their willingness to serve on the executive as new members as well as existing executive whom was re-elected for another term (ending 2011). It is also my pleasure to serve another term as SASCI president. A constitutional amendment was tabled and approved during the 2009 AGM that allow groups to affiliate with SASCI. SASCI was approached by the newly formed Mauritian Cardiac Society for affiliation. With acceptance of the constitutional amendment the request was tabled and approved by the meeting.

SASCI’s role as a representative body of cardiologists, both fulltime and private in South Africa has been extended over the last few years and continue to do so. The Executive Committee elected to a 2-year term of office ending in 2011 is:

President Dr Graham Cassel
President (ex-officio) Dr Tom Mabin
Mamdoo, Rahim Khan, Agostinho de Silva and Lou Hofmeyr made the most of the chance and gained

INTERVENTION

Four South African Registrars had the privilege to attend the annual Society for Cardiac Angiography and Intervention (SCAI) Fellows Program in Las Vegas from 7 to 11 December 2009. Dr’s Farouk Mamdooh, Rahim Khan, Agostinho de Silva and Lou Hofmeyr made the most of the chance and gained

The following major activities/programs took place since the previous annual report:

Discussions with Funders and Hospital Networks are ongoing with specific focus on all new technologies and procedures to enable funding for these procedures.

Relationship with Medical Funders – The formal Advisory Board with Discovery Health to discuss numerous aspects of patient care and procedure funding has continued in 2010. We have met on a regular basis during the year to discuss amongst others new products such as Trans Arterial Aortic Valve replacement; introduction of Drug Eluting balloon into the South African market and the use of the MERCI device for the treatment of acute stroke. We have also been involved with pricing of different types of stents and other interventional devices. We remain frustrated in these dealings as they seem to distrust the objectivity of our opinion and the process is drawn out and time consuming but we continue to persist anyway.

TAVI PROGRAM: During October 2009 the first Trans femoral and trans-apical replacements were performed under proctor guidance in South Africa. SASCI was very involved in coordinating the proctor program and ensuring the smooth running of the program. The South African cardiologists and cardiac surgeons involved were chosen by the European Proctors and the European Company and not by SASCI. To date nearly 40 cases have been performed country wide with results equally those from the best units in Europe. Many patients are still being denied this important new technology because of funding issues but we continue to try and address this issue. We are part of the SOURCE registry of Europe with Farrel Hellig and Martin Sussman being our cardiologist and surgical representatives. I know other centres are frustrated at being excluded but initially limiting the number of centres was one of the prerequisite for our country’s inclusion. Doctors from other centres are welcome to refer their cases to one of the three current centers AND come and learn from the local centres.

Mechanical clot extraction during Acute Stroke (Merci Device) – Discovery Health will fund the Merci procedure if a formal Stroke Unit is available at the hospital BUT will only reimburse an interventional cardiologist for the procedure if no interventional radiologist is on site. SASCI members need to contact Mark Abelson (SASCI member at Vergelegen Hospital) to discuss the necessary training. Mark is our most experienced operator with this device/procedure. A SASCI guidance document is available to members and funders.

Cath Lab Registry: We continue to work together with the Executive of SA Heart in bringing the SHARE Cath Lab Registry to all Cath Labs in South Africa. Dr Cobus Badenhorst is our representative on the committee and hopefully 2010 will see the introduction of the Registry in most Labs in South Africa. There are many problems on the road ahead and everyone remain frustrated by the slow rollout and now financial issues.

SASCI collaborated with the France-Reunion Cardiology Group, and the South African Cardiac Surgery Group, to organise the 5th IOM meeting in Mauritius November 2009.

Once again this meeting was a resounding success. It boasted a truly international faculty of 32 prestigious speakers coming from a wide spectrum of European speakers, USA and South Africa. The meeting was well attended by over 350 international cardiologists and Cardiac Surgeons. The programme comprised an exciting combination of didactic lectures, symposia, debates and discussion groups dealing with many of the hot topics of the day, including coronary artery disease management, diabetes and cardiovascular disease, thrombosis and bleeding, heart failure, pacemakers, valve replacement, and STEMI management. In the true tradition of the IOM meetings, there was a good mix of cardiologists and surgeons making an ideal forum for discussion, agreements and disagreements and productive consensus outcomes.

Many attendees have praised this particular meeting as having been the best yet with an extremely high standard of presentations and entertaining vigorous debate. It provided enormous opportunities for attendees to interact at a personal level with some of the world’s most respected authorities in their fields.

The IOM meetings have been held every 2 years either in Mauritius or in South Africa and the next meeting is planned for the end of November 2011 in Cape Town.

During the congress representatives of the SASCI Exco met with the Mauritian Cardiac Society executive to officially welcome the group as a member of SASCI. The main areas of initial collaboration will be sharing opportunities for education such as young Mauritian cardiologists attending the annual SASCI Fellows Program as well as joint sessions with SASCI at EuroPCR.

Four South African Registrars had the privilege to attend the annual Society for Cardiac Angiography and Intervention (SCAI) Fellows Program in Las Vegas from 7 to 11 December 2009. Dr’s Farouk Mamdooh, Rahim Khan, Agostinho de Silva and Lou Hofmeyr made the most of the chance and gained

Vice-President Dr Farrel Hellig
Secretary Dr Adie Horak
Treasurer Dr Clive Corbett
Members Dr Cobus Badenhorst, Dr Jacques du Toit, Dr Jai Patel, Dr Mpiko Ntsekhe, Dr Sajidah Khan, Dr Chris Zambakides, Rob Millar (Industry, term end 2010)
Executive Officer George Nel (assisted by Me Franciska du Toit)
knowledge and experience along with 250 other delegates from 21 countries. The 4 day course was presented by the leaders in the field and comprised an up to date overview of the entire syllabus of interventional cardiology. According to the SA delegates a fascinating selection of cases was shown and the simulator sessions were exceptionally life like. Apart from the extensive review of current best therapy in the field of complex PCI and related issues, the eye catching topics discussed were post-CABG angina treatment, percutaneous mitral valve repair, intravascular ultrasound & FFR, and percutaneous valve replacement. This training opportunity was a unique chance to learn from the best in the field.

The 6th Annual SASCI Fellows Workshop was held on 6th March 2010. On this occasion it was hosted by Dr A. Horak at Vincent Pallotti Hospital. SASCI executive members who made valuable contributions were Dr Graham Cassel, Dr Tom Mabin, Dr Clive Corbett and Dr Farrel Hellig. 21 Cardiology Fellows from across South Africa attended as well as 3 young cardiologists from Mauritius. The emphasis of the SASCI Day was to demonstrate advanced angioplasty techniques through live cases with moderators. All in all six patients underwent PCI with lesions of varying complexity. Total occlusions, bifurcations, calcified lesions and a mainstem lesion were demonstrated. In all cases the emphasis was on the appropriate use of various techniques. Stress was laid on the importance of decision making in angioplasty, as well as the appropriate techniques and choice of equipment during a procedure. Between live cases the panel of experts gave various short lectures including Primary PCI in Acute Myocardial Infarction, FFR and its uses. SASCI would like to thank all the staff from LIFE Vincent Pallotti Hospital for their dedication and hands on contribution to making this Fellow Workshop a huge success as well as financial support received from our corporate supporters.

SASCI used the Fellows Workshop to also announce the recipient of the 2010 Boston Scientific RC Fraser International Fellowship Award in Interventional Cardiology. This award will allow the recipient Dr Neil Hendricks from University of Cape Town to travel to the UK for a period of 4 weeks to work with Prof Martyn Thomas from St Thomas Hospital.

This highly popular EuroPCR cardiovascular interventional meeting moved back from Barcelona and returned to Paris this year. The more than 13 000 attendees were testament to how important the meeting is considered by cardiologists and industry alike. Once again the organisation was remarkable, the programme extensive and the faculty the best in the world.

SASCI has been integrated into the EuroPCR umbrella and our members have been playing a more and more active role in the programme. SASCI members who were invited as faculty included Drs Graham Cassel, formally representing SASCI as President, Tom Mabin, Farrel Hellig and Adrian Horak, all acting as chairpersons and/or members of discussion panels, whilst Helmut Weich and Mark Abelson had abstracts accepted. SASCI participated with the German Interventional Society in a combined session on complications, which had a sellout attendance. Our vascular surgical colleagues from South Africa Philip Matley, VASSA chairman and James Tunnicliffe were also participants in the programme for the first time.

This meeting remains a must in our annual calendar and our active participation as SASCI is just reward for the hard work the Executive has put into getting the South African Interventional community a higher international profile. It will hopefully encourage more of our colleagues to submit cases, abstracts and original work to future PCR meetings.

Tom Mabin has been appointed to the editorial board of EuroPCR online publication for 2011.

SASCI IVUS/FFR Proctorship Program

An internationally acclaimed learning programme was hosted by Dr Farrel Hellig under the auspices of SASCI on 3 and 4 June at Netcare Sunninghill Hospital. The Preceptorship on IVUS, VH and FFR was the first programme of its kind to be held outside of Europe and the US. It is envisaged that this will become a centre of learning in the Southern Hemisphere in IVUS and FFR, and be available to train students from South Africa and anywhere in the world.

Fourteen interventional cardiologists from across South Africa attended the 1st program, which include didactic aspects and a number of interactive sessions with live cases. This approach allows doctors are to master this important area of medicine and feedback from delegates was extremely positive after the course. The presenters of the programme (preceptorship) were Dr Farrel Hellig and visiting cardiologist Dr Jacek Legutko of Jagiellonian University and University Hospital, Krakow, Poland, one of the world’s foremost experts in IVUS, VH and FFR. The equipment for the preceptorship was supplied by Volcano Therapeutics South Africa.

The following notable activities will take place after the annual reporting period -

- **The South African Heart Association Congress 2010** – SASCI has been represented by Farrel Hellig as part of the Congress Organising Committee.

- The **SASCI AGM will be on Monday 9 August** (during the lunch break). We encourage members to attend and contribute to SASCI through identifying focus areas for 2011 and beyond. The AGM will also see the ratification of the new Corporate Members representatives on the Exco for period 2011-2012.

- **VISITING PROFESSOR’S PROGRAM** - Professor Jean-Pierre Bassand from France will visit the country for September and October 2010, spending a month at the University of Cape Town [Groote Schuur Hospital] and the University of Witwatersrand [Baragwanath Hospital].

...
- **SCAI Fellows Program December 2010** – Four South African Fellows and one young Mauritian cardiologist will be sponsored to attend this year’s meeting.

- **MELiSA** – SASCI members will gain **FREE ACCESS** to the online Medical Library of South Africa. MELiSA offers Medical Professionals the opportunity to keep up-to-date with medical literature through immediate, full access to over 1,000 international journals and more than 200 international book titles.

- **Interventional Society for Allied Professionals** (ISAP) – The formation of ISAP will herald a new era in interventional cardiology for allied professionals. Continued Professional Development of allied professional was identified as one of the core needs. The SASCI Executive believes that this endeavor falls within our constitutional objectives and there for extended our assistance and support to the interim committee. ISAP will formally approach SASCI at our AGM to become an Affiliate member group of SASCI, all ISAP members will need to be both SA Heart Association and SASCI members.

I would like to thank our industry partners for their continued and unwavering support of SASCI and the society constitutional objectives. Without this close and professional relationship very few of SASCI’s objectives will be achieved. Please contact your Executive Officer George Nel on 083-458-5954 or sasci@sasci.co.za if you need any assistance or need to formally communicate with the executive.

*Dr Graham Cassel*

**SURGICAL GROUP**

The 2009/2010 year has been one of moderate activity for this group whose activities fall within the Society of Cardiothoracic Surgeons. It may be necessary for the SIG to explain this position within SOCTS, as this has led to many enquiries before.

As most Cardiothoracic Surgeons in South Africa practice both cardiac and thoracic surgery, the forum within the SIG does not allow for the Member’s thoracic interest to be protected. There are a number of Surgeons practicing pure thoracic surgery and their interests have to be protected within the Cardiothoracic Society.

Therefore, it was a decision with ab initio for the Cardiac Surgical Specialist Interest Group, to exercise its activities within that of the SOCTS Group.

As 2010 is a year where the SA Heart meeting is to be organized by the parent body and in this instance the Johannesburg branch, the Registrars Forum was held separately during the 15-17th March 2010, in Bloemfontein.

The Registrars Forum was concurrently held with and fell within the first educational course, sponsored by the European Association for Cardiothoracic Surgery.

Thanks to the tremendous input of Francis Smit. This very successful meeting was held over 3 days in Bloemfontein and included both Basic Medical Sciences and a Clinical Practical Course. It was attended by 99 local guests, 9 guests from Africa and 10 international guests. Although aimed at Registrars, Junior Consultant Staff also found great value in the presentations.

*The Society and thereby the SIG is represented on the College of Medicine of South Africa in an ex officio capacity and thereby provides input into matters pertaining to training and examination of candidates and this report of the head of the constituent college, is available from the college.*

Our appreciation and congratulations are extended to Francis for his tireless efforts in bringing this prestigious group of surgeons to South Africa and hopefully this will become an annual event.

This year the academic part of the SA Heart meeting will be organized by the Johannesburg Branch under the leadership of George Dragne and Hendrick Momorare.

The Society has been involved in remuneration issues with the Health Funding industry and this has been all but frustrating, but progress has been made.

The Society will in 2011 arrange a surgical meeting, which will be a biennial one and this decision was taken by the great demand for it by local surgeons. In order to reintroduce this biennial meeting The Society has undertaken to organize an Aortic Surgical Symposium for this year, which if possible will be held in the first week of November.

Financially the SIG has had no contributions from SA Heart since the 2007 meeting and there is nothing to report on that.

*MR Robert Kleinloog*