

It is my privilege to report on SASCI's activities over the past six months leading up to the SA Heart Association congress.

SASCI's role as a representative body of cardiologists in South Africa, both fulltime and private, has been growing over the last few years and continues to do so. I would like to thank my Executive Committee for their continued hard work in their respective focus areas.

President  
President (ex-officio)  
Vice-President  
Secretary  
Treasurer  
Members

Dr Graham Cassel  
Dr Tom Mabin  
Dr Farrel Hellig  
Dr Adie Horak  
Dr Clive Corbett  
Dr Cobus Badenhorst  
Dr Jacques du Toit  
Dr Jai Patel  
Dr Mpiko Ntsekhe  
Dr Sajidah Khan  
Dr Chris Zambakides  
Rob Millar (Industry)  
George Nel (assisted by Me Franciska du Toit)

Executive Officer



**SASCI**

South African  
Society of  
Cardiovascular  
Intervention

## The following major activities/programmes were undertaken since the previous report:

There are ongoing discussions with funders and hospital networks, 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. These dealings continue to be frustrating as funders seem to distrust the objectivity of our opinion and the process is drawn out and time consuming. We do, however, continue to persist.

### TAVI Programme

During October 2009 the first Trans-Femoral and Trans-Apical Replacements were performed under proctor guidance in South Africa. SASCI was involved in coordinating the proctor programme and ensuring that it ran smoothly. 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 countrywide with results equal to 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 address this matter. We are part of the SOURCE registry of Europe with Farrel Hellig and Martin Sussman being our cardiology 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 centres 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 getting involved in this procedure. 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 obstacles on the road ahead and everyone remain frustrated by the slow rollout and subsequent financial issues.

Four South African registrars had the privilege to attend the annual **Society for Cardiac Angiography and Intervention (SCAI) Fellows Programme in Las Vegas** from 7 to 11 December 2009. Drs Farouk Mamdoo, Rahim Khan, Agostinho de Silva and Lou Hofmeyr made the most of the chance and gained knowledge and experience along with 250 other delegates from 21 countries. The four-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.

### **SCAI FELLOWS PROGRAMME DECEMBER 2010**

*Four South African Fellows and one young Mauritian cardiologist will be sponsored to attend this year's meeting. Attendance is made possible through support from SCAI and Boston Scientific South Africa. Recipients for 2010 will be announced during the SASCI AGM 2010.*

The **6th Annual SASCI Fellows Workshop** was held on 6 March 2010. On this occasion it was hosted by Dr A. Horak at Vincent Pallotti Hospital.

SASCI executive members who made valuable contributions were Drs Graham Cassel, Tom Mabin, Clive Corbett and Farrel Hellig. A total of 21 cardiology fellows from across South Africa attended as well as three 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. **The importance of decision making in angioplasty was stressed, 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 **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 the University of Cape Town to travel to the UK for a period of four weeks to work with Prof. Martyn Thomas from St Thomas Hospital.

The 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 cardiologists and industry consider the meeting to be. 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 an increasingly active role in the programme. **SASCI members who were invited as faculty members 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 sell-out attendance. Our vascular surgical colleagues from South Africa, **Philip Matley, VASSA chairman and James Tunnicliffe** were also, for the first time, participants in the programme.

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 expanding the international profile of the South African interventional community. It is hoped that it will encourage more of our colleagues to submit cases,

abstracts and original work to future PCR meetings.

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

### **SASCI IVUS/FFR Proctorship Programme**

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 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 first programme, which included didactic aspects and a number of interactive sessions with live cases. This approach allows doctors to master this important area of medicine and delegates gave extremely positive feedback 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 for the remainder of 2010:**

### **South African Heart Association Congress 2010**

SASCI has been represented by Dr Farrel Hellig as part of the Congress Organising Committee.

The congress will be held from **8 to 11 August 2010 at Sun City** and is organised by the Johannesburg Branch of SA Heart Association. The congress **focuses on holistic health care** and coincides with a public holiday, Women's Day. The congress, will deal with the **overall aspects of cardiac care and there will be a strong focus on heart disease in women.** Because of the holistic slant the special interest groups are all represented in a different way this year. A contribution from each special interest group will be integrated into every session so that SASCI involvement will be evident throughout the congress. The sessions are likely to be very interesting with the opening **preliminary session focusing on acute coronary syndromes and thrombus.** There will also be 'how to' sessions with short talks which will include contributions from SASCI members. There will be a fascinating **plenary session on stroke** and an **interventional cardiology perspective** will be included in this session. An interesting soapbox session where the speaker has to briefly justify a one-sided approach to an argument should be very attractive.

Our invited speaker, **Prof. Bernhard Meier (MD, FACC, FESC), is head of the Cardiology Department, Swiss Cardiovascular Centre Bern University Hospital, Switzerland.** He has been involved in interventional cardiology since its inception and was actually present at the first angioplasty procedure performed by Andreas Gruentzig in 1977. He has a keen interest in atrial septal defects and PFO closure and always offers an interesting perspective in this area. He will contribute to the soapbox sessions, 'how do I do it', basic science sessions and other plenary sessions.

The **SASCI AGM** will be on **Monday 9 August** (during the lunch break, venue TBC). 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 Member representatives on the Exco for period 2011-2012.**

*We are extremely excited at the prospect of hosting our first ever visiting professor. This programme promises to be a valuable addition to SASCI's longstanding commitment to enhancing cardiology sub-specialty training in South Africa.*

**Prof. Jean-Pierre Bassand from France will visit the country in September and October 2010,** spending a month at the University of Cape Town (Groote Schuur Hospital) and another at the University of Witwatersrand (Baragwanath Hospital). **During the two month period he will be involved in formal and informal undergraduate and post-graduate training and immerse himself in daily clinical grind of these hospitals.** He will also be presenting **several lectures** for the benefit of the cardiology community at large.

We look forward to welcoming him and trust that the experience will be the beginning of a long-standing mutually beneficial relationship between South African training institutions and foreign counterparts. **This is a SASCI venture sponsored with an unconditional educational grant from Medtronic South Africa.**

## 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**, including current editions of Braunwald's Textbook of Cardiovascular Medicine and Topol's Textbook of Interventional Cardiology. **In addition, MELiSA allows access to Pubmed, the Cochrane abstracts, MD Consult and First Consult.**

SASCI believes this **sponsorship from Pharma Dynamics** will promote research and education of SASCI members, two cornerstones of the society's mission. The sponsorship of a 12-month guest subscription for each SASCI member is valued at more than R2 500 per annum and should negate the need for individual journal subscriptions by members and the society.

### *As a SASCI member you simply need to do the following to access MELiSA*

1. Enter your unique username and password to access the SASCI member only section or click on "Forgot your user name or password" to request a "username and password".
2. Go to the SASCI Journal Room to access MELiSA
3. First-time users of MELiSA will have to subscribe by using the unique coupon number on the guest subscriptions vouchers which can be obtained from any Pharma Dynamic representative.
4. For further queries please contact Mariska Fouche, Marketing Manager at Pharma Dynamics on (021) 701 6080.

## Interventional Society for Allied Professionals (ISAP)

The formation of ISAP will **herald a new era in interventional cardiology for allied professionals**. It was felt that although the SASCI constitution allows for allied professionals to become associate members of SASCI, this group consisting of interventional nursing staff, technologists and radiographers has unique and compelling needs which can only be adequately addressed through a formal independent society. Continued professional development of allied professional was identified as one of the core immediate needs. The SASCI Executive believes that this endeavour falls within our constitutional objectives and extended our assistance and support to the interim committee at a meeting held in Johannesburg on 2 July 2010. **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.**

**George Nel** (SASCI Executive Officer) has been tasked with **assisting the ISAP interim committee in establishing a functional and viable society with SASCI providing financial support**. I would like to thank the Cross Roads Institute for the use of their facility and initial facilitation of the process.

SASCI **collaboration** with the **France-Reunion Cardiology Group** and the **South African Cardiac Surgery Group** will continue with the **6th Indian Ocean Meeting** to be held in Cape Town in November 2011. **Dr Tom Mabin** will continue his excellent work on behalf of SASCI as part of the Congress Organising Committee. Tom is currently working towards **establishing long-term collaboration with EuroPCR or Mayo Clinic to support IOM in the future.**

I would like to **thank our industry partners for their continued and unwavering support of SASCI and the society's constitutional objectives**. Without this close and professional relationship, very few of SASCI's objectives would be achieved. A **special thank you should go to Rob Millar** who, as industry representative on the Exco, did a sterling job over the last two years.

### **DR GRAHAM CASSEL**

President, SASCI

Please contact your **Executive Officer George Nel** if you need any assistance or need to formally communicate with the executive.

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