



## **HeFSSA News: January 2009**

Dear HeFSSA member,

Welcome back after what I hope has been a rejuvenating and peaceful break!

2010 promises to be a big and busy year for HeFSSA but 1<sup>st</sup> some reflection on the past year.

### **SA Heart Congress 2009:**

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.

During the congress the HeFSSA **Annual General Meeting** took place. It was with great sadness that all whom knew Kevin O'Connell heard of his untimely passing. The HeFSSA Exco will surely miss him in the future. Opportunity was given for the late Dr Kevin O'Connell to be remembered.

**AGM Highlights** – Welcome to Prof Lecour who was proposed and elected to the HeFSSA Exco! Financial Statements for the Society was presented by Martin Mpe (Treasurer) and accepted by the meeting. It was decided that GP HF Education will be a major focus for 2010 and that initially CPD accreditation will be offered for these programs with more formal official recognition to be sought in due course. HeFSSA will remain involved in offering appropriate echo training courses until such time as an official Special Interest Group within SA Heart Association “houses” this. Dr Christina Radulescu, Exco member with a specific interest in echo, was “mandate” by the meeting to proceed with process to create an official Echo SIG within SA Heart Association.

### **HeFSSA hosted two dedicated pre-conference 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 SAHA 2009. Delegates who attended the course requested that this becomes an annual institution at the SA Heart congress. This specific meeting was made possible to support from all our corporate members with Phillips being very involved. The HeFSSA Executive will discuss this with the SA Heart Association and the decision will be communicated to the members.

**Cardio Update for Non-Cardiologists:**

Another successful HeFSSA initiative of 2009 was 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. Topics that made part of this very relevant and practical programme included 'Cardiovascular risk profiling', 'Assessing ECG's' and 'Diagnosis and treatment of Hypertension'. 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. This meeting would not have been possible without the unconditional support of AstraZeneca.

This meeting will become an annual event on the HeFSSA calendar.

**GP Workshops:**

Historically, HeFSSA GP programs were predominantly driven by our individual pharmaceutical corporate members. Pharmadynamics and Medtronic took the lead during 2009. These meetings were advertised by the company and the latter was heavily involved in deciding on the areas in which these meetings were going to be held.

Now, with 5 Corporate Members on board, four of which have a specific interest in educating GP's, HeFSSA is in a position to launch a formalized training program on Heart Failure for GP's. Running the program centrally from the HeFSSA office will ensure that all major areas across South Africa will be covered and all GP's who would like to learn about HF will get the opportunity to do so. The four companies will be AstraZeneca, Pharmadynamics, Servier and Medtronic.

HeFSSA is planning 18 meetings in the following major centres: Johannesburg, Cape Town, Pretoria, Durban, Port Elizabeth and Bloemfontein. Visit [www.hefssa.org](http://www.hefssa.org) for more information or contact Franciska du Toit on 082 806 1599 or [franciska@hefssa.org](mailto:franciska@hefssa.org).

**Get Involved:**

The Society can only function successfully if the members are actively involved. Visit the HeFSSA website regularly for general information and to stay abreast of events in your area.