



September 2011

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 August 2010 for a 2-year term of office is: Sandrine Lecour (President), Neil Davies (Treasurer), Sylvia Dennis (Secretary), Hans Strijdom, Siyanda Makaula, Karen Sliwa and Gideon Burger.

UK/SA Cardiovascular Basic Science Workshop London 2010

The main event for SASCAR since the last report has been the organization of the first joint UK/South Africa Cardiovascular Research Workshop, was held at the University College London, 6-10 December 2010.

The main research themes of the workshop were chosen to represent the major overlapping research interests in the UK and South Africa, and included: *myocardial ischemia reperfusion injury, signaling in cardioprotection, hypertrophic cardiomyopathy and heart failure* and *cardiovascular risk factors*. With the aim of promoting the work of young researchers, each themed session was opened by a senior scientist from the UK or South Africa, and was followed by short presentations by PhD students from both countries (+/- 60 participants attended the workshop).

For the remainder of the week, the 5 visiting South African PhD students were kindly hosted by Prof Michael Marber (King's College London), Prof Ajay Shah (King's College London) and Prof Derek Yellon (University College London) in their respective laboratories, which afforded the students an insight into cardiovascular research in the UK.

This workshop would not have been made possible without the support of Failure Society of South Africa (HeFSSA) and the Cardiac Arrhythmia Society of Southern Africa (CASSA), who each sponsored the participation of a South African student. The SA Heart Association and the Medical Research Council in South Africa, the British Heart Foundation and the British Society for Cardiovascular Research also supported this initiative.

Following the success of this initiative, it was decided to repeat the UK/SA workshop in Cape Town in August 2012. The ESC working group on cellular biology of the heart has already endorsed this meeting and an exciting programme is being put in place, including not only UK and SA participants, but also other eminent European researchers.

Joint SASCAR/HeFSSA Heart Failure workshop

In conjunction with the Heart Failure Society of South Africa (HeFSSA), SASCAR organized a heart failure workshop at the SA Heart meeting 2010, with the object to combine

basic science knowledge with clinical knowledge on heart failure. Following this first successful event, it was decided to repeat this workshop at the SA Heart meeting 2012.

Echocardiography workshop, Cape Town, September 2011

Our first echocardiography workshop in small animals organized by Dr Neil Davies was held at the University of Cape Town. We were very fortunate to have Dr Lori Blauwet from the Mayo Clinic to give the introductory lecture on echocardiography.

As in 2010, we are once again contributing to the exciting programme of the SA Heart Meeting, with two sessions entirely dedicated to Basic Sciences.

Updates on SASCAR activity are available on the website (www.sascar.org.za) or via Newsletters sent regularly to our Members.



Prof Sandrine Lecour
Chairperson
SASCAR