

## Meet the SA Heart® Editorial Board



### **ANTOINETTE CILLIERS**

Prof Antoinette Myrna Cilliers is the adjunct professor in the Department of Paediatrics, Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.

She is head of paediatric cardiology, Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital. Attended the University of Witwatersrand Medical School, specialised in paediatrics within the University of the Witwatersrand Hospital complex, and completed a 1 year fellowship in interventional cardiology at the Gasthuisberg University Hospital, Leuven, Belgium in 1999. Her clinical work focuses on the investigation and treatment of children with all forms of congenital and acquired heart disease with special interest in interventional cardiology, and echocardiography, and training paediatric cardiologists for South Africa. Fifty publications achieved to date.



### **ANTON DOUBELL**

Prof Anton Doubell is an emeritus professor in the Division of Cardiology, Tygerberg Hospital, University of Stellenbosch and SUNHEART, a non-profit organisation promoting improved access to advanced cardiac care for all South Africans. Prior to his current appointment he served as head of the Division for 25 years.

Born and raised in Port Elizabeth, Prof Doubell is married with 3 children. He completed his clinical training (MBChB, MMed and FCP) at Stellenbosch University. Then followed 2 and a half years at the Clinical Research Institute of Montreal (IRCM) in Canada as a research Fellow. On his return to Stellenbosch University, he was awarded the degree PhD before qualifying as a cardiologist.

His current research interests include valvular heart disease, other inflammatory heart diseases, infective endocarditis, and pericardial disease. He has 161 publications to his credit as well as 166 published proceedings of national and international congresses. He currently serves on the excos of CISSA, the Cardiac Imaging Society of South Africa and the Western Cape branch of the South African Heart Association. He is a past president of the South African Heart Association and previously served as editor of SA Heart®, the official journal of the South African Heart Association.



### **SAJIDAH KHAN**

Professor Khan is the Head of Cardiology at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. She obtained her MBChB at the University of Natal in 1982. Following a research scholarship with the MRC, her postgraduate training in Internal Medicine and Cardiology were completed at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Her PhD thesis examined the role of telomere biology in the pathogenesis of atherosclerosis.

Her clinical interests lie in the management of patients requiring cardiac intensive care as well as interventional cardiology. She has been a reviewer for several cardiology journals and an invited faculty member at over 300 national and international congresses.

She serves as the current president of SASCI (South African Society of Cardiovascular Intervention).

**FAROUK MAMDOO**

Dr Farouk Mamdoo graduated with an MBChB from the University of Witwatersrand Medical School and obtained the FCP in South Africa (SA) and Certificate in Cardiology (SA), and was awarded the Jock Gear Memorial Award and SA Heart® Award for best oral Congress presentation.

He underwent training in interventional cardiology at the Washington Hospital Centre, in the United States of America (USA), advanced echocardiography at Aurora St. Luke's Medical Centre (USA), cardiac synchronisation therapy at Santa Maria Della Misericordia Hospital in Italy.

He was director of the Transoesophageal Echocardiography Unit and began the 3D echocardiography service at Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital, publishing the TORCH Registry Data and various other publications / presentations in journals such as Circulation, the European Association of Cardiovascular Imaging, and the SA Heart® Journal.

Dr Mamdoo is a lecturer and co-ordinator for the Graduate Entry Medical Programme in the Unit for Undergraduate Medical School Education, the Department of Physiology and the Department of Internal Medicine at the University of the Witwatersrand as well as an external examiner.

He is a director for the Cardiovascular Research and Training Unit in Johannesburg and the Structural Heart Centre at the Netcare Alberton Hospital with proctoring roles for a number of multinational companies for interventional procedures including complex interventional coronary revascularisation, structural heart interventions e.g. TAVI, LAA Occlusion, balloon valvotomy, pacing, cardiac resynchronisation therapy, 3D transoesophageal echocardiography and cardio-oncology imaging.

His interests include acute coronary syndromes and heart failure management and structural heart disease.

He was Congress chair for the SA Heart® Annual Congress for 2022 and 2023 and is on a number of advisory bodies for device and pharmaceutical companies.

He is the current president of the Johannesburg Branch of SA Heart®.

**KAREN SLIWA**

Prof Karen Sliwa is the director of the Cape Heart Institute, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Cape Town - a translational cardiovascular research Institute with 8 distinct research groups.

She is on a joint appointment as senior cardiologist working at the Division of Cardiology, Department of Medicine, Groote Schuur Hospital, University of Cape Town and at UCT Private Academic Hospital. Her special areas of expertise are heart failure, structural heart diseases such as cardiomyopathy and cardiac disease in pregnancy.

Prof Sliwa is widely recognised as a world expert in cardiovascular diseases (CVDs), with a special interest in reducing mortality in women with cardiac disease in maternity. She has contributed to better understanding on the pathophysiology, treatment options and awareness of peripartum cardiomyopathy (PPCM), a global disease particularly prevalent in African populations.

She led and still leads several inter-Africa and global research projects, which have had a major impact for creating knowledge about CVDs common in Africa and other middle-to-lower income regions, leading to changes in policy. Her considerable experience in setting up simple, cost-effective registries and web-based data entry platforms have had a major impact on planning several innovative research projects and has facilitated the training of physicians from several African countries, including Mozambique, Nigeria, Cameroon,

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Uganda, and Tanzania. Her translational research from bench-bed-to-population studies have led to a much better understanding of CVDs such as rheumatic heart disease and heart failure due to various causes and subsequently to improved patient care.

She holds numerous awards such as the German Cardiac Society Paul Morawitz Award for Exceptional Cardiovascular Research (2013), a honorary doctorate from the University Diderot-Sorbonne, Paris, France (2017), European Cardiac Society Geoffrey Rose Award for Population Sciences (2019) and the South African Medical Research Council Gold award (2021), and the University of Cape Town Alan Pifer Award for Research Excellence. Prof Sliwa has been named the most prolific cardiovascular researcher from Africa with more than 450 publications and her work is highly cited (H-index 108; >120 000 citations). She has trained more than 30 post-graduate students.

Prof Sliwa leads several high-profile special interest groups including a dedicated EORP Working Group on PPCM of the Heart Failure Association of European Society of Cardiology and the World Heart Federation Long COVID-19 & CVD Study. Over her distinguished career she has served in many notable roles, including chair of the South African Heart Failure Association (HeFSSA), president of the South African Heart Association (2014 - 2016), president of the World Heart Federation (2019 - 2020) and currently board member and treasurer of the Pan African Society of Cardiology (2021 - 2025).



### LIESL ZÜHLKE

Professor Liesl Zühlke directs the Children's Heart Disease Research Unit focused on research into children's heart diseases of relevance in Africa, which includes the PROTEA project and multiple rheumatic heart disease projects. She has over 200 publications, conference proceedings and book chapters, her H-index is 55, she has been cited over 64 000 times and was recently shortlisted for the Women in Science Award of South Africa. She was the 2018 recipient of the MRC / Dfid African Research Leader Award, the winner of the NRF award for Social Impact in Research, the International Metrodora Award for Public Health and Research and the UCT Vice-Chancellor's Alan Pifer Award for research. She was recently inducted into the prestigious UCT College of Fellows, UCT's highest academic honour and is a member of the South African Academy of Sciences (MAssaf) and is NRF-B1 rated.

She has achieved the highest leadership positions within cardiology in South Africa; internationally she serves as the president of Reach, is a member of the board of World Heart Federation and Non-Communicable Diseases Alliance, the international scientific advisory board of Children's Heart Link, and an executive member of SAVAC (Strep A Vaccine Global Consortium). As the only woman full professor of paediatric cardiology in the country, she is an active and vociferous advocate for the advancement and empowerment of equity and women in medicine, including being on the Lancet Commission for Women in Cardiovascular Disease. She is currently the vice-president of the South African Medical Research Council, Extramural Research and Internal Portfolio.

**PETER ZILLA**

Professor Peter Zilla is the emeritus professor of cardiothoracic surgery of the University of Cape Town (UCT). He held the Chris Barnard Chair at UCT / Groote Schuur Hospital for almost a quarter of a century and continues leading a 70 employee spin-off UCT enterprise dedicated to developing a replacement heart valve tailor-made for Africa.

He holds a MD of the University of Vienna, a DrMed degree of the University of Zurich; a PD of the University of Vienna and a PhD of the University of Cape Town. He has published 225 peer-reviewed full papers, holds 46 US / PCT patents, and has an H-index of 60. He also initiated the Cardiac Surgery Intersociety Alliance (CSIA), an umbrella body uniting all major cardiothoracic societies with the goal of fostering the cardiac surgical capacity of developing countries. He is also adjunct professor at the Medical University of Vienna where he had previously pioneered clinical cardiovascular tissue engineering in the 1990s culminating in >500 patients having received in-vitro grown replacement arteries consisting of the patients own cells.