



Dr Ahmed Vachiat

Wits Donald Gordon Medical Centre, Netcare Milpark Hospital, Parktown,
Johannesburg, South Africa

Congress Convenor; SA Heart® 2025

Welcome to the SA Heart® Congress 2025

We would like to welcome all our colleagues in the cardiology community to the 25th Annual SA Heart® Congress in Johannesburg. This year's theme is "unifying hearts and minds". With this shared vision, we wish to expand our knowledge of the link between heart and mind in the ever-evolving field of cardiology. The congress will take place at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg from 17 to 19 October 2025.

From mental health to stress cardiomyopathy, artificial intelligence in cardiology, and an excellent paediatric parallel programme addressing conditions like diabetes, obesity, and injectables, to interesting cases and complications, we will explore a variety of topics that reflect both the current state and the future horizon of our profession.

We anticipate with excitement a vibrant, local, and international faculty. We welcome guests from Switzerland, Italy, Africa, and the United States, along with great support from our local experts, who have proven time and again to be world-class. The international speakers this year include Profs. Burri (President-elect of EHRA), Gersh, Roubin, McDaniel, Volpe, and Dr. Majani. The Heartbeat Stage, featuring insightful talks and engaging presentations, was a great addition to the congress last year, and we will continue this link with industry and our delegates. This year, we intend to have an interactive SA Heart® quiz on Saturday evening at the Heartbeat Stage.

Cardiovascular disease continues to be one of the leading causes of mortality worldwide. Despite the many breakthroughs we have achieved – from revolutionary imaging technologies to life-saving interventions – our challenges remain vast. Nevertheless, so too is our potential when we come together, not only as scientists and clinicians, but as collaborators and humanitarians. Equally important as the knowledge we share is the spirit in which we gather. "Unifying hearts and minds" invites us to foster greater collaboration across specialities, institutions, and nations.

In an era defined by rapid scientific progress and digital connectivity, it is vital that we also cultivate connection at the human level – sharing not only our expertise, but also our experiences, challenges, and aspirations. The pandemic tested our systems and our spirits, but it also underscored the critical importance of cardiovascular health and the integral role of unity in crisis response. We emerged more agile, more connected, and more aware that healing is both a medical and moral imperative.

In that light, our theme takes on even deeper meaning. To unify hearts is to commit to patient-centred care that recognises not just conditions, but people. To unify minds is to harness collective intelligence, break down silos, and engage in meaningful, multidisciplinary collaboration. Let us pursue not only excellence in science but empathy in practice. Let us unify our hearts and minds to share in the vision of SA Heart® – to improve cardiovascular care for all living in South Africa.

Dr Ahmed Vachiat