

Annual Report 2021

THE HEART
AND STROKE
FOUNDATION
SOUTH AFRICA

Table of Contents

Pg. 1 *Message from the CEO*

Pg. 5 *Chairperson's Message*

Pg. 8 *Board of Directors*

Pg. 9 *Vision, Mission and Key Messages*

Pg. 10 *The Global and Local Patterns of CVD*

Pg. 11 *Key Health Events and Campaigns*

Pg. 18 *Meeting The HSFSA's Vision and Mission: Our Work-Streams*

Pg. 18 *Health Promotions Programme*

Pg. 21 *Nutrition Science Programme*

Pg. 24 *Public Relations, Communications and Marketing*

Pg. 26 *Income Streams: Endorsements, Donations, and Fundraising*

Pg. 29 *Testimonials*

Pg. 31 *Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa's Champions*

Pg. 32 *Research and Publications*

Pg. 34 *Staff*

Pg. 36 *Financial Statement*

WILLOWTON GROUP

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



Professor Pamela Naidoo

At the end of the last financial year, albeit a good one for the Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa (HSFSA), there was much uncertainty in the country and around the world due the COVID-19 pandemic. The HSFSA did not escape the negative impact of the pandemic. In March 2020 South Africa (SA) had its first hard lock down and has since had three waves of increased prevalence of SARS-COV-2 within selected periods. It's been almost 18 months since SA, the region, and the globe have had to navigate the unpredictability of COVID-19, an infectious disease that proved to move at "lightning speed" in human-to-human transmission. In the way that all good things come to an end, so must all bad things. Scientific endeavour saved the day when vaccines were developed to mitigate the severe effects of the SARS-COV-2 virus. Of course, for those of us in medicine and public health, we know only too well that equitable distribution of the vaccine to low -and -middle income countries is the only way to beat the virus and achieve an acceptable level of population-level/global immunity.

A key achievement for the Foundation, is that as the CEO, I tried my utmost to maintain the viability, relevance and sustainability of the organization despite the economic fall-out in the country due to the pandemic. Given the fact that we do not, as an organization, receive ring-fenced or dedicated funding from Government and the fact that we are donor dependant, it is my humble opinion that we have thus far remained financially stable. At the beginning of this financial year, I made a decision in consultation with the Board Chair and members of the Board, to reduce expenditure by at least 25% of the budgeted amount as a cost-cutting measure. Unfortunately, the casualties of this strategy were three contract staff members who had to be retrenched. In addition, my PA, Fredeline Less took an early retirement after serving the organization for an estimated 31 years.

We are extremely grateful for Freddy's commitment to the organization. On a positive note, all our permanent staff have retained their jobs and the reduction in expenditure was also realized.

There is no doubt that the HSFSA felt the effects of the pandemic as we had to suspend many of our community-based programmes, the School's Health Promotion Initiative, and other operational pillars. In times of trouble, creative juices flow, and the Foundation continued with the valuable work underpinned by the primary goal of reducing the burden of cardio-vascular disease (CVD [heart disease & strokes]). I put together a set of strategies which was effectively implemented by the staff. The key to success was to pivot to digital ways of meeting the vision and mission of the Foundation and hence, we introduced a webinar format for our health talks, increased our social media presence and maintained contact with our key stake-holders, partners and the general public. Our staff worked virtually for only one month and returned to the office at the beginning of May 2020.

A key pillar of our work, namely the Heart Mark and DSA Food Endorsement Programme, remained very consistent during the pandemic for which we are very grateful as this contributes to our income stream. This fact also highlights the importance of nutrition and food (in)security during periods of turmoil. While many of our Heart Mark and DSA holders have retained their endorsements with us, smaller companies have definitely suffered the economic fall-out from COVID-19, not to mention supply-chain difficulties.

I am extremely proud of the fact that 99% of our staff are fully vaccinated. Their ability to embrace and trust in vaccine development and efficacy has enabled the Foundation to return to community-based work. During the last quarter of the financial year, our programme activities increased, allowing us to return to in-person reach for real impact. This is particularly important as this serves to empower disenfranchised communities.

One of the exciting achievements in this year was the construction of a mobile clinic made possible by a competitive grant to the value of R 1,8 mill, from the National Lotteries Commission. This state-of -the art clinic enables us

to roll-out our health promotion activities in communities where we haven't previously been able to. Moreover, despite the pandemic we were able to run our campaigns for major health events such as Salt Awareness Week, World Hypertension Day, Heart Awareness Month, World Stroke Week, National Nutrition and Obesity Week, and so on. Our key partners and stakeholders, such as the Willowton Group, Unilever, Tiger Brands, Lucky Star, Dischem, Philips and the Philips Foundation, Pharma Dynamics, MSC, and Boehringer Ingelheim (Angels Initiative) contributed to the success of our campaigns and resultant positive impact.

CVD remains one of the highest local and global burden of disease and, consequently, the Foundation's work remains relevant. Moreover, COVID-19 was found to be negatively associated with many non-communicable diseases, including CVD and its risk factors, resulting in poor health outcomes for many individuals who were positive. The resultant effect of SARS-COV 2 worsening CVD risk factors and vice versa meant that those of us in the CVD community of public health specialists, clinicians, researchers and the like, had to place an extraordinary emphasis on NCDs detection, treatment and care. My skills as a public health and behavioural medicine specialist were particularly useful over this financial year, as I continued with health advocacy and health policy initiatives. I continued my work as the President of the African Heart Network; as a member of the Advocacy Advisory Committee member of the World Heart Federation (WHF); as a Board member and as a Research Committee member of the World Stroke Organization; as an Executive member of the African Stroke Organization; and as a Steering Committee member of the Angels Initiative for Stroke in South Africa. At a national level I was directly involved with the SA NCDs Alliance and the National Department of Health strategic planning for NCDs and Universal Health Coverage.

High level involvement in global forums assist in showcasing the HSFSA. I feel honoured to have been invited to facilitate and speak at meetings such as the ESO/WSO international conference. My affiliation with key universities in the country continue. I remain a rated National Research Foundation Researcher and collaborate with other national and international organizations which help to consolidate my position as the CEO of the Foundation.

While the financial year started in catastrophic fashion due to the pandemic, the Foundation has soldiered on with the important work it does in heart and brain health. Moreover, we have remained financially viable and stable. Indeed, there was an increase in revenue this year although we did experience a decrease in cash and in-kind donations. Our persistence was underpinned by the continuous and unfailing support of our Board Chair, Board Members, our staff, our partners, donors and sponsors. I thank you all.

Do remain in good health, and encourage your family, colleagues and friends to take the COVID-19 vaccine. I look forward to continued efforts to make the world a better place and indeed a healthier one too.

Professor Pamela Naidoo
(MA, MPH, DPhil)

CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE



Dr Leshni Shah
(Board Chair)

Dear Stakeholders, Donors and Sponsors, and Fellow Board Members

Another challenging year for South Africa, and indeed for the Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa as COVID-19 continues to ravage our country, with similar and at times, even more devastating impact globally. While the vaccine roll-out has accelerated in the last 2 months in South Africa, the "anti-vaxxer" movement appears to be gaining momentum. This is a worrying trend, internationally and locally, as our only hope in normalizing society to some extent, will be achieved through extensive vaccine roll-out in the hope of achieving herd immunity. Education and awareness lie at the core of achieving this objective.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa (HSFSA), while achieving its primary objectives of creating awareness around non-communicable disease such as cardiovascular disease, and increasingly around diabetes through its association with Diabetes South Africa, plays, and will continue to play a role in the management of COVID-19 in the communities it serves. Underlying co-morbidities, such as heart disease, hypertension and diabetes have resulted in poor outcomes for patients with COVID-19. Hence the advocacy work, the creation of awareness and the advice and guidance of the HSFSA has gained even greater relevance during the pandemic.

As the Foundation achieves most of its work through personal interaction and community-based initiatives, COVID-19 also presented a significant challenge to the work of the organization. However, Professor Naidoo and her team were quick to implement alternate strategies to alleviate this challenge, by presenting on-line webinars and utilizing a comprehensive social media strategy to continue to interact with the community and stakeholders, including the rollout of campaigns for major health events such as World Hypertension Day, Heart Awareness Month, Salt Awareness Week and other significant campaigns relevant to the work of the organization.

The HSFA continues to depend on the generosity of its sponsors and donors, as well as the Heart Mark and Diabetes South Africa Food Endorsement Programme, which represents the major portion of our revenue. COVID-19's impact on the economy and its direct effect on many of our corporate sponsors and smaller businesses that support our endorsement programmes was a definite threat to our revenue and hence financial sustainability. Professor Naidoo, however, implemented prudent financial strategies to reign in our expenditure to meet the challenge to our revenue, while ensuring that the Foundation was still able to achieve its objectives. We continue to benefit from the generosity of our partners and sponsors such as the Willowton Group, Unilever, Tiger Brands, Lucky Star, Dischem, Pharmadynamics, MSC and Boehringer Ingelheim, who are sometimes donors-in-kind as well, which is both budget relieving and an enhancement to the programs run by the Foundation. We are sincerely grateful for your ongoing support and fully appreciate that in the last year, supporting the Foundation may well have been more of a challenge given the economic environment in which you have had to operate.

One of the highlights for the Foundation in this financial year was the award of funding from the National Lottery, which has enabled the Foundation to build its own state-of-the-art mobile clinic, a first, and a significant tool for the community out-reach work of the Foundation. We are proud of this innovation!

As a board, we once again extend our sincere gratitude and congratulations to Prof Naidoo on her achievements for the Foundation in these very challenging times. Her prudent financial management strategies together with her resourcefulness in meeting the objectives of the foundation during this period is commendable and greatly appreciated by the Board. Prof Naidoo, beyond her immediate responsibilities in the running of the Foundation, continues to dedicate her time to advocacy work through her membership and representation on the World Health Federation, President of the African Heart Network, representation on the World Stoke Organization, Committee member of the Angel's Initiative for Stroke, together with working with the National Department of Health on its strategic initiatives for Non-Communicable Diseases.

As always, my gratitude to my fellow board members for your unstinting commitment to the work of the Foundation. Providing your guidance and support and unselfishly giving of your time to ensure the efficient running of the organization, particularly during these challenging times, is much appreciated.

The Foundation will continue to work for the communities it serves, to influence lifestyles and encourage healthful living to reduce the burden of heart disease, stroke and diabetes. The organization will strive for better outcomes in communities where access to preventative care through education and awareness is limited, but with minimal intervention, has the ability to have life-changing impact.

Dr Leshni Shah
(MBChB, MBA)

WILLOWTON GROUP
TIGER BRANDS
LUCKY STAR

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Dr Leshni Shah
(Chairperson)



Mr Farouk Meyer
(Vice Chairperson)



Prof Edelweiss
Wentzel-Viljoen



Prof Gugu Mchunu



Ms Nanette Crouse



Prof Pamela Naidoo



Prof Richard Nethononda



Mr. John Stephenson

VISION

To promote cardiovascular and cerebrovascular health through advocacy, influencing policy, providing information, tools and support which will empower people to adopt healthy lifestyles and seek appropriate care early in the manifestation of the disease and assist in making healthy choices easier.

MISSION

To halt the rise of premature deaths through cardiovascular disease (CVD) in South Africa and to promote the adoption of healthy lifestyles.

KEY MESSAGES

- CVD (heart disease, strokes and other vascular diseases) is the leading cause of premature death and disability in the non-communicable diseases cluster in South Africa
- Risk factor reduction is imperative in decreasing CVD burden
- There are modifiable and unmodifiable risk factors for CVD. Unmodifiable factors include a familial history of CVD, including raised cholesterol. Modifiable risk factors include raised blood pressure, obesity, diabetes, dietary factors, physical inactivity, increased alcohol use, tobacco smoking, pollution, and other negative socioeconomic conditions such as poverty
- Blood pressure ≥140/90 dramatically increases the risk of CVD (heart disease and stroke) onset

FACTS ABOUT CVD



18% of the 48% of NCD's deaths in SA



225 people die every day from heart disease or strokes



10 adults suffer a stroke in South Africa every hour



Incidence of heart disease & strokes have been recognized as co-existing conditions with SARS-COV-2

- Raised bad cholesterol (LDL) increases vulnerability for CVD onset
- Having CVD and one or more other medical condition(s) such as COVID-19 leads to poor health outcomes
- Adoption of healthy behaviours over the life course helps mitigate CVD onset and reduce morbidity and mortality from CVD
- Self-Management among adults who have CVD and those at risk for CVD onset increases health-related quality of life
- Increasing medical treatment adherence and the uptake of healthy behaviours reduces morbidity and mortality for CVD and comorbidities
- Older adults are also at significantly greater risk of complications from Covid-19 and case fatality rates increase significantly with age due to reduced immunity and the increased likelihood of pre-existing chronic disease

THE GLOBAL AND LOCAL PATTERNS OF CVD

THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs), which include CVD (heart disease and strokes), diabetes, cancer, chronic respiratory disease, mental health disorders and other conditions, are the leading cause of death worldwide. NCDs cause over 60% of the world's deaths, 80% of which occur in developing countries. It is anticipated that by 2030 NCDs will overtake all other causes of death in Africa. Of all NCDs, CVD is the leading cause of disabilities and death, killing 17,7 million people annually.

CVD IN SOUTH AFRICA

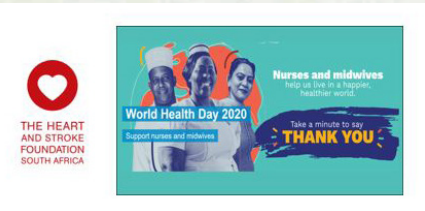
NCD's, including CVD's, are estimated to account for 48% of total adult deaths in South Africa. CVDs account for almost a fifth (18%) of these deaths. Some of the CVD related risk factors among adults in South Africa are:

- 18% of the adult population smoke tobacco
- 11 litres of alcohol is consumed per person
- 1 in 3 South African adults have hypertension, which can increase the risk of heart attacks, heart failure, kidney disease and strokes
- 60% of women and 31% of men in South Africa are overweight or obese
- In South Africa, the proportion of CVD deaths in women aged between 35 and 59 years is one and a half times more than that of women in the USA

KEY HEALTH EVENTS AND CAMPAIGNS

The core purpose of the Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa (HSFSA) programmes is to encourage the uptake of healthy behaviours for good heart and brain health. As an organization that is recognized as a key advocacy one, the Foundation empowers individuals through knowledge transfer. Throughout the year, the HSFSA conducts campaigns and health events observed globally, regionally and nationally that are associated with heart disease, strokes and associated risk factors such as hypertension, diabetes, obesity and raised cholesterol. The aim of highlighting these health events is to create awareness, educate, inform, impact health policy and champion the advocacy efforts on health matters affecting heart disease, strokes and other circulatory diseases. Driving public awareness with a follow-up call to action and mobilization is a goal we continuously strive for in the interest of all South Africans and all those who reside in the country. Ultimately, through these efforts, the burden on our public health system will be alleviated with a move towards Universal Health Coverage (UHC). The HSFSA observes selected health days on the national and international health calendar as set out by global organizations such as the WHO, WHF, WSO, the UN, and the National Department of Health in South Africa. These health events include National Nutrition and Obesity Week, and World Stroke Awareness Week. The Foundation also mobilizes South Africans, those on the African continent and around the world on global health days, such as World Heart Day, World Stroke Day, World Obesity Day, World Hypertension Day, World No Tobacco Day and World Health Day.

World Health Day: *7 April 2020*



The Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa (HSFSA) aligned with the 2020 theme ***"International Year of the Nurse and Midwife".*** Globally the emphasis was on the selfless service of nurses and other health care professionals within the healthcare system to reduce the death rate associated with many medical conditions. Ironically, nurses and healthcare professionals are at risk in the workplace, especially when treating infectious diseases, such as COVID-19 and other communicable conditions such as HIV/AIDS and TB. In South Africa, co-morbidities and multi-morbidities are not uncommon. There are individuals who may have more than one medical condition at any one point in time.

World No Tobacco Day: *31 May 2020*



The World Health Organisation's 2020 theme for World No Tobacco Day (WNTD) was ***"Tobacco Exposed: The Secret is Out"***. The HSFSA, in collaboration with its Global and National partners, CTFK, National Council Against Smoking (NCAS), CANSA and the SA Medical Research Council ear-marked this important day to draw attention to the widespread prevalence of tobacco use and the resultant negative health effects. The consortium of organizations continues to mobilize for the Control of Tobacco and Electronic Delivery Systems Bill to be passed in SA. The passing of the Bill will strengthen tobacco control and make public areas 100% smoke-free.

Rheumatic Fever Week: *3 - 9 August 2020*

Rheumatic Fever (RF) is directly related to the onset of Rheumatic Heart Disease (RHD), an autoimmune disease that affects the heart valves. RHD is the most common type of acquired heart disease below the age of 25 years. RHD is a complication of an untreated Acute Rheumatic Fever (ARF) and the Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa is committed to preventing Rheumatic Fever and Rheumatic Heart Disease (RHD) by increasing public awareness.



The HSFSA partnered with the African Heart Network (AHN) to assemble a panel of experts to participate in our first health campaign webinar entitled ***"The Relationship Between Rheumatic Fever and Rheumatic Heart Disease: Medical Aspects and Advocacy."*** Our panel of speakers included Professor Liesl Zuhlke from SA, Ms Elizabeth Gatumia from Kenya, Professor Sulafa Ali from Sudan and the Immediate Past President of the AHN, Professor Habib Gamra from Tunisia who spoke on topics such as the "Role of advocacy for the elimination of ARF/RHD in Africa". The webinar was widely attended and very successful.

Heart Awareness Month: *September 2020*

The HSFSA is well known to have initiated Heart Awareness Month in South Africa. During this time, the organization is engaged in many activities that is associated with reducing the burden of CVD.



COVID-19 was associated with many deaths linked to NCDs. Given that during the pandemic the Foundation was not able to continue community-based activities, the organization turned to digital technologies

to reach the various communities of South Africa and beyond. Members of the public were invited to weekly webinars which provided in-depth knowledge on heart health via the Zoom platform.

During Heart Awareness Month (HAM) the HSFSA focused on four core themes, dedicating a week to each theme. A webinar was hosted each week focussing on the relevant theme. Webinars were as follows: ***Week 1: Heart disease, COVID-19 and co-morbidities*** where Dr Blanche Cupido from SA Heart was the keynote speaker and the moderator was the HSFSA CEO, Prof Pamela Naidoo; ***Week 2: Nutrition, heart health and building immunity*** with the HSFSA Nutrition team Hayley Cimring and Kinza Hussain, as well as Prudence Cele, our HPO as the key speakers and Dana Govender as the moderator; ***Week 3: Tobacco smoking, alcohol consumption and CVD*** with Prof Fastone Goma from Zambia, Zanele Mthembu from Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids (CTFK), Savera Kalideen from the National Council Against Smoking (NCAS) as the main panelists and moderated by the Foundation's CEO; and ***Week 4: Health Care Practitioners and Allied Health Workers*** which emphasized CVD and COVID-19 and the speakers included Prof Gugu Mchunu, a HSFSA Board member, Dr Themba Nxumalo and Mrs Silingene Ngcobo from the University of KwaZulu Natal.

World Heart Day: *29 September 2020*

THE HEART AND STROKE FOUNDATION SOUTH AFRICA
USE ♥ TO BEAT ♥

The Foundation (HSFSA) aligned with the World Heart Federation to use the theme ***"Use heart to beat …… Cardiovascular disease",*** extending the theme to ***"use heart … for you, your loved ones and all those who live in South Africa"***.

World Heart Day (WHD), is observed on 29 September each year to increase public awareness and education about CVD, focussing on primary and secondary prevention and treatment. The World Heart Federation (WHF), together with the World Health Organisation (WHO) created this day in the health calendar to mobilize governments and communities globally through awareness and knowledge dissemination on the day in order to reduce the burden of CVD.

The Foundation hosted a number of WHD events in order to raise the alarm on the burden of CVD and its risk factors. The Foundation partnered with selected organizations in selecting iconic landmarks in SA to light up in red on WHD in support of our campaign. Similarly, around the world, monumental buildings were lit up in red.

Landmarks in SA that were illuminated in red to raise awareness about heart disease included the PwC building in Midrand, Philips South Africa office in Johannesburg and Life Healthcare Hospitals across the country.








National Nutrition Week (NNW): *9 -19 October 2020*

In collaboration with the National Department of Health (NDOH), the Foundation and other stakeholders worked together on the campaign, which had the theme ***"Good Nutrition for Good Immunity".***



The 2020 theme took into account how the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted food systems, leading to poorer food choices. Food security for many South African families was also compromised. The increasing rate of unemployment has also forced us to look more seriously at food insecurity and poor nutrition.

As part of the NNOW campaign, the Foundation's Nutrition team participated in their first Twitter Talk, hosted by ADSA, highlighting the importance of whole foods and educating communities on the types of foods and nutrients that can boost immunity, there were also messages on how to eat healthy foods on a budget, disseminated through social media platforms.

World Hypertension Day: *17 October 2020*



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the World Hypertension League made the decision to move its global campaign from May to October 2020. The primary purpose of the extended theme ***"Measure Your Blood Pressure Accurately, Control It, Live Longer"*** was to call attention to the importance of increasing the accuracy of blood pressure (BP) measures in all populations around the world in order to identify high-risk individuals who have raised blood pressure.

Due to COVID-19 safety protocols, the Health Promotion team was unable to conduct in-person health risk assessments (HRAs). Consequently, the team looked at new ways to educate the public by hosting information tables at selected venues and helping to run our health chat line to assist individuals who called the Foundation, telephonically.

Stroke Awareness Week and World Stroke Day:
29 October - 3 November 2020



The World Stroke Organisation encouraged the world to ***#JoinTheMovement*** in 2020 and get "moving"as consistent physical activity reduces the risk of getting a stroke. Boehringer Ingelheim and the Angels Initiative in collaboration with the Foundation hosted free educational webinars featuring a panel of experts. On the 29th of October, two webinars were held aimed specifically at healthcare professionals and the staff members at Boehringer Ingelheim, and the HSFSA. On the 3rd of November, a webinar was held targeting patients and the public. The aim of these webinars was to raise awareness of strokes and reduce the incidence of stroke within South Africa. The CEO, Prof Naidoo presented on the "Psychological well-being of medical professionals when managing a stroke patient".

World Obesity Day: *4 March 2021*



The HSFSA joined the World Obesity Federation (WOF) to mobilize for more comprehensive solutions, treatment and collective responsibility in addressing the obesity epidemic. The ***'EveryBody Needs Everybody'*** campaign was about coming together to reduce the burden of obesity and resultant poor health outcomes. The call was to recognize that obesity is not just about individuals but about acknowledging that everybody has a part to play including governments, policymakers and food manufacturers. Everybody needs healthcare, access to healthy food, and protection from those who benefit from promoting unhealthy lifestyles. The WOF, to which the HSFSA is aligned also wanted to ensure that one of the key public health messages is to destigmatize obesity by understanding that the cause of obesity is complex and is the result of a combination of factors including, biological, social, psychological and economic.

We encouraged members of the public to attend a webinar on World Obesity Day, entitled ***"The BIG problem facing South Africa: A focus on Bio-Behavioural Interventions"***. Our CEO, Professor Pamela Naidoo was the keynote speaker. We partnered with the National Department of Health (NDoH) and SANCD Alliance on this important day.

Salt Awareness Week (SAW): *8-14 March 2021*



This year, the Foundation and Unilever joined the World Action on Salt, Sugar and Health (WASSH) to highlight the need for consumers to make healthy, affordable food choices with ***"More Flavour, Less Salt"***

As part of the SAW campaign, the Foundation in partnership with Unilever designed an infographic that focussed on providing information to help South Africans reduce their high salt intake and develop healthier alternatives to increased salt consumption.

MEETING THE HSFSA'S MISSION AND VISION: OUR WORK-STREAMS

In order to meet our vision and mission, the HSFSA has core work-streams, namely Health Promotion and Disease Prevention; Nutrition Science; Public Relations and Communications; Business Development; and Research and Data Management. Each work-stream takes responsibility for its primary deliverables, although much of the work carried out at the HSFSA is cross-cutting.

HEALTH PROMOTION PROGRAMME (HPP)

The HPP experienced the direct impact of the pandemic and consequently many activities had to be scaled down. SARS-COV-2 poses a particular risk to individuals with underlying medical conditions, including CVD, high blood pressure, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, cancer, HIV/AIDS and other co-existing medical conditions.

The HPP team advocates for communities to adopt simple health-seeking behaviour change to prevent the onset of CVD. We continue to remind our communities that CVD is preventable and knowing your risk profile is important. Our HPOs also drive the message regarding the importance of managing existing medical conditions and adhering to the treatment prescribed by the doctor and allied health professionals.

Strategic Focus Areas for the Health Promotion Programmes

Health Activities in Public Settings



An important element at our public health events is sharing knowledge about heart and stroke disease so that members of the public understand the risks of certain lifestyle choices.

In the South African context, heart disease and strokes are responsible for almost every 1 in 6 deaths, but an estimate of 70 to 80% of premature deaths from CVD can be prevented by lifestyle choices. Through the Foundation's public health awareness programmes, the team disseminates educational information and empowers communities to adopt healthy lifestyle behaviours such as quitting tobacco smoking.

The Health Promotions Team also inspires members of the public to have regular health risk assessments, namely testing of blood pressure, cholesterol, glucose and body mass index. Our free health risk assessments in underserved areas promote early diagnosis in people with no symptoms and assist those with existing conditions, for example, hypertension, blood sugar and elevated cholesterol to better manage their conditions and take control of their health to live longer.

Our radio interviews on various health topics play an educational role in influencing behaviour change in communities to adopt healthier lifestyles. Nationally the team conducted a total of 233 radio interviews increasing awareness of CVD. The reach through radio exceeded 83 000 000 members of the public, providing an opportunity for those who cannot access TV and are unable to read, to obtain recent resourceful information on heart and stroke-related conditions.

Mended Heart and Stroke Group Meetings

Our free Mended Heart and Stroke Group Meetings are geared towards providing educational support for people who have had a cardiovascular or a cerebrovascular event, their families and friends. The meetings are also open to any persons interested in gaining knowledge about health matters and covers areas of primary and secondary disease prevention.



At every meeting, we endeavour to provide members and participants with practical information that they can incorporate into their daily lives and to have a better understanding of cardiovascular conditions, procedures and rehabilitation.

Virtual talks were provided by cardiologists, physicians, biokineticists, dieticians and other healthcare professionals on CVD, including the medical and social context of COVID-19, which was relevant during the pandemic.

Employee Wellness Programme (EWP)



The HSFSA, emphasizes the importance of employee wellness days to encourage employers to invest in their employees' health and well-being. Given the prevalence of CVD and associated co-condition, COVID-19 along with conditions including hypertension, obesity, diabetes and other medical conditions, we aimed to provide effective ways of raising awareness for employees in the corporate sector.

The team conducts paid health risk assessments. Measurements for blood pressure, glucose and cholesterol levels, and anthropometric measures to calculate Body Mass Index (BMI) and waist circumference are taken. Health talks, including virtual ones are also provided. The Foundation also has valuable health information leaflets to disseminate. More importantly, we offer ways to create a healthy working environment to promote productivity and reduce absenteeism in the workplace.

More information can be found on our website www.heartfoundation.co.za. Our Health Chat Line number is 021 422 1586, where one is able to make an appointment with one of our professional staff members to discuss your CVD health concerns.

NUTRITION SCIENCE PROGRAMME

The Nutrition Science Team provides scientifically accurate and updated information to underpin all programmes in line with the Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa's strategy. The team supports and works with all the programmes at the Foundation for key health events. The team supports health promotions activities, mended heart virtual talks and screenings. Monthly CVD updates are sent out to health professionals and we respond to frequent questions from the public. In addition, the nutrition team forms an integral part of the Endorsement Programme at the Foundation.

Salt Reduction Strategies

High blood pressure or hypertension, is one of the most serious risk factors for death from heart disease and strokes, and is responsible for 13% of all deaths globally. In South Africa, more than 1 in 3 adults live with high blood pressure and it is responsible for 1 in every 2 strokes and 2 in every 5 heart attacks. A high salt intake is linked to high blood pressure.

In 2016, South Africa was the first country to legislate maximum salt levels in processed foods. The date on which the revised version came into effect was 30 June 2019. Stricter measures were put in place for the following categories: bread, all breakfast cereals, all fat spreads, ready-to-eat savoury snacks, flavoured potato chips, processed meat, raw processed meat sausages, dry soup powders, dry gravy powders and stock cubes.



Links Grant

The Foundation is part of a collaboration that was awarded an international LINKS grant to evaluate how well the food industry is complying with the sodium regulation targets and to develop monitoring systems. Our CEO is one of the lead investigators that applied for the grant.

The Nutrition Science Team set up the first Expert Stakeholder Group Virtual Meeting on the introduction to the LINKS Grant Project for the Monitoring and Evaluation of Salt Legislation in South Africa 2021. The purpose of the meeting was to obtain buy-in and support for the project from the potential end-users. There were 19 attendees, including project investigators, representing food industry representative organizations, academia and government (Department of Health).

The Nutrition Science team assisted in facilitating the 2 breakout room discussions on Monitoring and Evaluation and Industry Compliance. Topics for discussion included how best the project can address the WHO SHAKE package for monitoring salt usage, consumption, and industry reformulation.

Food Endorsement Compliance

The Heart Mark endorsement programme is part of ongoing efforts by the HSFSA to reduce the number of deaths in South Africa from preventable heart disease and strokes. The HSFSA is also the official licencing agent of the Diabetes South Africa (DSA) endorsement programme. The Nutrition Science Team ensures that the standards of both programmes are based on the most current research in nutrition. These programmes form part of a health-enabling environment offering a tool that makes choosing healthier foods easier. It's a guaranteed way to buy food lower in salt, lower in sugar, lower in saturated fats, and higher in fibre.

Our criteria are based on the total body of evidence for specific nutrients which have an impact on heart health as per key publications and are also guided by the South African Food-Based Dietary Guidelines. The criteria are further in line with similar programmes from other international organisations, including the American Heart Association, the Australian Heart Foundation and the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada.

CVD Research Updates

The Nutrition Science Team forms a part of the Science Team which sends out the CVD news and research updates on a monthly basis primarily to health care professionals. Articles include the latest, peer-reviewed journal publications on Cardio- and Cerebrovascular diseases and the associated risk factors including poor nutrition, lack of exercise, tobacco harm, excessive alcohol consumption, day-to-day stress and obesity. The topics and areas of focus are chosen from the Health Awareness Calendar. The monthly email newsletter is sent to a growing database of over 1200 scientists, academics and health professionals. This year 12 editions were disseminated to our database of subscribers.

PUBLIC RELATIONS, COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING



Over the last year, the Public Relations, Communications and Marketing Department (PR, Comms) continued to build on its strategy of increasing the reach and exposure of the Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa through various communications channels to ensure that the organization and its partners are able to share vital health information both locally and internationally.

During this reporting period, the PR & Comms department has expanded its reach whilst aligning with our international and local partners, including the South African National Department of Health's health events calendar. Our communication tactics are constantly evolving, as we grow our channels. We continue to build and maintain relationships with various media, health experts, partners, suppliers and the public.

COVID-19 affected the HSFSAs outreach to numerous communities in South Africa. Hence, the PR team needed to ensure that health literacy messaging reached these individuals. The team had to strategise the media approach differently and as a result, we are grateful for the generous media support from the following community media channels such as eNCA, Channel Africa, SABC, Smile 94.0 FM, Heart 104.9 FM, Radio 786, Disa 95.9 FM, Eldos FM, Your Wellness Matters, Choice FM, Radio Kragbron, Thobela FM and others.

Social Media

Our social media pages have played a larger role in communicating with the public, especially in the time of a pandemic. To ensure content homogenization, we align our content with all health awareness days observed by the National Department of Health, the World Health Organisation (WHO) and other affiliated health organisations, and expand on each health day's theme or message via traditional and social media.

Our platforms are not only used to educate the public but also to engage with them. We use these platforms as a link to topical articles and a hub of information on our website, and also as an opportunity to donate to the HSFSA.

Facebook followers have increased by 8.7 % from 01 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 compared to 01 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 which saw a 4.8% increase	
1 April 2020	**31 March 2021**
8 260	9 063
1 April 2019	**31 March 2020**
7 761	8 150

Twitter followers increased by 4.5 % between 01 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 compared to 01 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 which saw a 4 % increase	
01 April 2020	**31 March 2021**
3 674	3 849
01 April 2019	**31 March 2020**
2 163	3 641

Annual media coverage for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021

During this reporting month, through our strong media relationships, we reached a total cumulative media reach (CMR) of 307 594 180 South Africans via various print (magazine and newspapers) and broadcast (television and radio) media.

Print	Broadcast	Total
254 492 291	53 056 889	307 594 180

INCOME STREAMS: ENDORSEMENTS, DONATIONS AND FUNDRAISING

Fundraising in the form of donations and sponsorship, both in-kind and cash, still forms a significant portion of our operational budget. However, to run key health events and campaigns, the Foundation needs to actively source external forms of funding. The Heart Mark food endorsement programme remains the Foundation's commercial flagship and continues to attract new Heart Mark holders. We have seen an addition of over 15 newly endorsed products displaying the logo and also received over 51 new Heart Mark onboarding enquiries during the 2019 period. The HSFSA and its business relationship with Diabetes South Africa is ongoing and the Foundation still serves as the official licencing agent of the DSA endorsement. The Foundation actively initiated a host of fundraisers during the period to supplement its income and ensure financial stability.

Food Endorsements

Heart Mark



There are 365 different products endorsed by the Heart Mark programme. Foods have to earn the Heart Mark, which can only appear on products after they have gone through a strict process that includes laboratory tests for verification. If the product does not meet certain criteria (e.g. the sodium level is too high), this will be discussed with the manufacturer and products may be reformulated or otherwise declined for endorsement.

The Heart Mark can be used alongside healthy eating guidelines. Food choices should be part of an overall healthy diet that includes appropriate portion sizes and a variety of different healthy foods. The endorsement is awarded on merit of the product nutrition make-up.

Heart Mark Product Audit and Quality Control

During the financial year, the Nutrition and Heart Hark administration team conducted 1 in-store product audit, at 1 major retailer in the Western Cape. This audit allowed the Foundation to verify that all products that use the logo are using it in accordance with our terms of usage and this exercise also allowed us to scan the shelves for products that may be using the logo without authorisation. The Foundation is pleased to report that all endorsed products were packaged in accordance with the usage rules during the period. The team also identified 3 endorsed products through our sampling method, which was sent to SANAS approved lab for nutritional testing, to verify that the products still meet the Heart Mark criteria.

Diabetes South Africa (DSA)

The DSA food criteria points out those foods that are suitable for people with diabetes to include as part of their diet. It is based on the South African Diabetes treatment guidelines and uses strict criteria for added sugar and where applicable, the glycaemic index (GI) to identify healthier options. Year on year more consumers switch to health-savvy shopping techniques pertaining to label shopping and seeking out endorsements as part of their shopping criteria. This in turn manifests a mutualistic symbiotic relationship as manufacturers match their formulation to that of the DSA standards and accredit their product with the endorsement logo. The HSFSA has promoted the Heart Mark and DSA endorsement programmes through a number of channels but more specifically through direct marketing or face to face in the community and businesses that are serviced by the Foundation. In this financial year, the HSFSA promoted awareness of the Heart Mark programme also through social media, mainstream newspapers and health magazines.

Campaign sponsors, Donors and Fundraising

The Foundation would like to express its gratitude to the following campaign sponsors: Tiger Brands, Luck Star, Philips & Philips Foundation, Pharma Dynamics and Dischem. We would also like to sincerely thank the media houses such as Paper Cone Studios, Highbury Media and Your Wellness Matters.

Last but not least, we thank the numerous other individuals, bequests and organizations that carried out fund-raising activities for the Foundation.

TESTIMONIALS



Mended Hearts and Stroke Group member (in her own words)

My name is Welhemina Phokungoane from Limpopo Province, in one of the rural villages called Ga-molepo Maphethwanel. I was diagnosed with Rheumatic Fever when I was fifteen years old and was hospitalised for more than two months and eventually discharged and put on oral treatment. I continued with my monthly follow-up for treatment and after a year or two, I stopped the treatment myself without the doctor's approval because I thought I was healed. After seven years of defaulting, I fell pregnant and it was picked up during my antenatal visits and I was referred to the Cardiologist and was diagnosed with Rheumatic Heart Disease and there was no medication that could help me, but surgery was my only option. I underwent open-heart surgery where I had a double valve replacement in March 2013 and was discharged and put on chronic medication.

I am currently working in one of the independent hospitals in Gauteng as a professional nurse in the emergency unit. On 16 July 2020, I was diagnosed with COVID-19 and survived.

Should I have not defaulted on my medication, I don't think I would have needed to be operated on and I also survived COVID-19 because I knew which medication I cannot take amongst the prescribed ones since they were going to contradict with my chronic medication.

And today I am not only a survivor of heart disease and COVID-19, I am also a frontline and a proud brand ambassador for the Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa (HSFSA).

Thank you!
Sister Wilhelmina Phokungoane

Employee Wellness Programme: Virtual Talk



My name is Ruchay Sohawan, I am 37 years old and I have very high cholesterol.

I was in my early 20's when I first found out about my high cholesterol. I was not shocked to find out but I was disappointed. Throughout my life, my family and I ate very healthily and this was due to the fact that my father had a heart condition when we were little. My father was 38 when he had his first heart attack, he then had a triple bypass at the age of 52 and a stroke at 60. This was very stressful for me; I remember I would wake up at night and smile to check if I was having a stroke.

I knew that diet alone would not lower my cholesterol and researched ways to combat it without having to rely on statins. I realized that stress is a huge contributor to our health problems and the way we respond to stress makes a difference to our overall health. While stress in small doses is healthy for us, constant higher doses affect our physical, mental and emotional health. This is where yoga comes in as the perfect solution for me. Yoga is not about bending your body into a pretzel. Yoga is a philosophy, a way of life. A Yogi is one who has mastered their mind.

Yoga can be used as a preventative measure that has been scientifically proven to help lower cholesterol, blood pressure and heart rate or it can be used as a rehab treatment to help one feel stronger physically, emotionally and mentally.

Whatever one's reason is for choosing yoga, it is definitely a step in the right direction for our overall health.

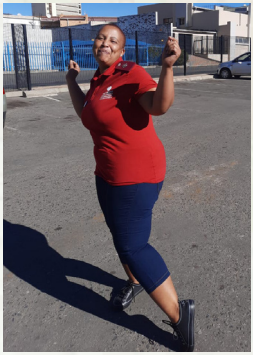
HEART AND STROKE FOUNDATION SOUTH AFRICA'S CHAMPIONS



Dr Saumya T Gautam



Jenni Gault



Sister Welhemina Phokungoane

Long Service Champion

Freddie Less served the Foundation for 31 years at the time of her retirement in December 2020. We are extremely proud of the fact that she remained a dedicated staff member for so many years and wish her well in her retirement.



Ms Freddie Less at her farewell

RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

The Foundation's programmes are based on evidence-based research outcomes. We are grateful for the relationships we have with fellow staff, members of our Board and research committee members who actively research focus areas associated with heart disease, strokes and associated risk factors.

Adom, T., De Villiers, A., **Puoane,T**., & **Kengne, AP**. (2020). School-based interventions targeting nutrition and physical activity, and body weight status of African children: A systematic review. *Nutrients* 12(1):95. doi: 10.3390/nu12010095

Akinyemi,R., Ovbiagele, B., Adeniji, O., Sarfo, F., Abdallah, F., Adoukonou, T., Ogah, S., **Naidoo, P**., Damasceno, A., Walker, R., Ogunniyi, A., Kalaria, R., & Owolabi, M. (2021). Stroke in Africa: Profile, Progress, Prospects and Priorities. In Press

Akinyemi, R., Sarfo, F., Abd-Allah,F., Ogun,Y., Belo, M., Francis,P., Mateus, M., B., Bateman, K., **Naidoo, P**., et al. (2020). Conceptual framework for establishing the African Stroke Organization. I*nternational Journal of Stroke* 0(0) 1–7. DOI: 10.1177/1747493019897871

Baatiema, L., Abimbola, S., de-Graft Aikins, A., Damasceno, A., **Kengne, AP**., Sarfo, FS., Charway-Felli, A., & Somerset, S. (2020) Towards evidence-based policies to strengthen acute stroke care in low-middle-income countries. *Journal of the Neurological Sciences*, 418,117117. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jns.2020.117117

Bryer, A. (2021). Stroke care: Leaps in addressing the shortfall with some Angels to the rescue. *South African Medical Journal*, 111 (3): 196-197. http://dx.doi.org/10.7196%2FSAMJ.2021.v111i3.15103

Champagne, B., Arora, M., El Sayed, A., Løgstrup, S., **Naidoo, P**., Shilton, T., et al. (2020). Healthy Choices for Healthy Hearts: How Front-of-Pack Food Labeling Can Help Reverse the Global Obesity Epidemic. *Global Heart*, 15(1):70. DOI: http://doi.org/10.5334/gh.935

Dzudie, A ., Barche, B., Mouliom, S., Nouko, A., Fogue, R., Ndjebet, J., Makoh, SA., Abah, J., Djomou, A., Nzali, A., Nkoke, C., Kamdem, F., Kingue, S., Sliwa, K., & **Kengne, AP**. (2021).Resting heart rate predicts all-cause mortality in sub-Saharan African patients with heart failure: a prospective analysis from the Douala Heart failure registry (Do-HF). *Cardiovascular Diagnosis and Therapy*, http://dx.doi.org/10.21037/cdt-20-785

Hughes, GD., Mbamalu, ON., Okonji, CO., & **Puoane, TR**. (2021). The Impact of Health Disparities on COVID-19 Outcomes: Early Findings from a High-Income Country and Two Middle-Income Countries. *Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities*, 1-8. doi: 10.1007/s40615-021-00999-5

Lopes, T., Zemlin, AE., Erasmus, RT., Faber, M., & **Kengne, AP**. (2020). Assessment of the association of plant-based diets with cardiovascular disease risk profile in Africa: a systematic review and meta-analysis protocol. *BMJ Open*, 10:e036792. doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2020-036792

Mandizvidza, V., London, L., & **Bryer, A**. (2021). Shortfall in stroke care: A study of ischaemic stroke care practices in a South African metropole. *South African Medical Journal*, 111 (3): 215-219. http://dx.doi.org/10.7196%2FSAMJ.2021.v111i3.15104

Swaminathan, S., Dehghan, M., Raj, JM., Thomas, T., Rangarajan, S., Jenkins, D., Mony, P., Mohan, V., Lear, SA., Avezum, A., Lopez-Jaramillo, P., Rosengren, A., Lanas, F., Alhabib, KF., Dans, A., Keskinler, MV., **Puoane, T**., et al. (2021). Associations of cereal grains intake with cardiovascular disease and mortality across 21 countries in Prospective Urban and Rural Epidemiology study: prospective cohort study, *BMJ*; 372 :m4948 doi:10.1136/bmj.m4948

Yuyun, MF., Bonny, A., Ng, GA., Sliwa, K., **Kengne, A.P**, Chin, A., Mocumbi, AO, Ngantcha, M., Ajijola, OA., & Bukhman, G. A Systematic Review of the Spectrum of Cardiac Arrhythmias in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Global Heart*, 15(1): 37. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5334/gh.808.

STAFF



Professor Pamela Naidoo
(CEO)



Fredeline Less
(Personal Assistant to the CEO)



Mathias Roberts
(Operations & Finance Officer: Assistant to the CEO)



Shaylin Nundlal
(Business Development Officer)



Dana Govender
(Health Promotions Manager)



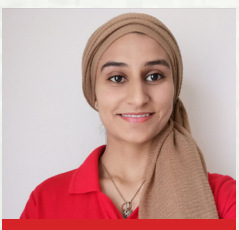
Hayley Cimring
(Nutrition Team Leader)



Sasha Forbes
(PR, Communication & Marketing Officer)



Bianca Snyders
(Project Team Lead & HR Assistant)



Kinza Hussain
(Registered Dietician)



Sam Dladla
(Health Promotions Officer: DBN)



Prudence Cele
(Health Promotions Officer: CPT)



Naomi Langeveldt
(Health Promotions Officer: CPT)



Lumka Mangena
(PR & Communications Intern: 2020)



Nomfanekiso Ngqona
(Office and Heart Mark Endorsements Administrator)



Rowda Alexander
(Accounts Administrator)



Emmah Siluma
(Office Administrator: JHB)



Nazeema Meniers
(DSA Endorsements Administrator)



Nomangesi Sokoyi
(Helper)

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

THE HEART AND STROKE FOUNDATION SOUTH AFRICA

Help us build a healthier South Africa by donating to The Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa:

Nedbank, Foreshore Branch
Account Number: 1083248251

Zapper™

Snap here to pay
SnapScan

HEAD OFFICE: WESTERN CAPE
Unit 5B, 5th Floor, Graphic Centre, 5 Buiten Street, Cape Town, 8001
PO Box 1513, Vlaeberg, 8018
Telephone: +27 21 422 1586 / Email: heart@heartfoundation.co.za

KWAZULU-NATAL OFFICE
Telephone: +27 31 273 5407

GAUTENG OFFICE
Telephone: +27 11 875 1403

EASTERN CAPE OFFICE
Telephone: +27 41 582 4086

APPROVED AS PART OF THE HEART AND STROKE FOUNDATION EATING PLAN

Diabetes South Africa