



SASS CONGRESS 2025 – PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

22 – 24 MAY 2025, CENTURY CITY, CAPE TOWN **V4 (subject to change)**

WEDNESDAY 21 MAY 2025		
15h00 - 17h00	SASS Exco Meeting	Meeting Room 10
18h00 - 21h00	Faculty Dinner – <i>By Invitation Only</i>	

THURSDAY 22 MAY 2025		
REGISTRATION	07h00 - 07h50	
07h50 – 10h00	SESSION 1 - SAFETY IN SPINE SURGERY	Hall B & C
Chairs	<i>Prof Ian Vlok</i>	
07h50 - 08h00	Welcome and introduction – <i>President of SASS - Prof Ian Vlok</i>	
08h00 – 08h15	Optimising safety in theatre – <i>Prof Robert Dunn</i>	
08h15 – 08h30	Neurophysiological monitoring - when and how - <i>Mr Darren Lui</i>	
08h30 – 08h45	Spinal GPS - the role of spinal navigation – <i>Dr Willem Strydom</i>	
08h45 – 08h55	Discussion	
08h55 - 09h10	Rational pre-operative patient workup in my practice – <i>Dr Adrian Swan</i>	
09h10 – 09h25	Inpatient peri-operative care - is this within the spine surgeon's competency? – <i>Dr Ramanare Magampa</i>	
09h25 – 09h40	Irradiation, the patient and the spine surgeon - "buy now, pay later" - <i>Mr Darren Lui</i>	
09h40 – 09h50	Scoliosis surgery, post-operative pain-management strategies – <i>Dr Vishaad Naidoo</i>	
09h50 – 10h00	Discussion	
10h00 - 10h30	Refreshments	



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THURSDAY 22 MAY 2025			
10h30 – 11h00	SESSION 2 - SAFETY CONTINUED		Hall B & C
Chairs	Prof Ian Vlok		
10h30 - 10h40	Lumbar degenerative surgery: my experience with over 2000 anterior and lateral cases focusing on complications, lessons learnt and how my practice has evolved with navigation and patient specific implants - <i>Dr Marc Coughlan</i>		
10h40 - 10h50	Spine surgery during pregnancy – <i>Dr Zakhele Khoza</i>		
10h50 - 11h00	Discussion		
11h00 – 12h45	SESSION 3 - SPINAL ENDOSCOPY		Hall B & C
Chairs	Dr Shawn Venter		
11h00 – 11h15	TESSYS 101 – <i>Dr Willem Strydom</i>		
11h15 – 11h30	UBE: 8 Core concepts – <i>Dr Nadir Yacine Benmebarek</i>		
11h30 – 11h40	Discussion		
11h40 – 11h55	The role of a mentor – <i>Dr Sailesh Ragoo</i>		
11h55 – 12h05	Discussion		
	Debate: TLIF should be performed endoscopically:		
12h05 – 12h20	For - Prof Jwo-Luen Pao		
12h20 – 12h35	Against: Dr Ian Zondagh		
12h35 – 12h45	Discussion		
12h45 - 14h00	Lunch		
13h00 - 13h45	SASS Lunchtime Registrar Session 1 Join Us for an Interactive, High-Yield Teaching Session Tailored for Registrars: Whether you're prepping for exams or want to sharpen your practical spine knowledge, this session is for you.		Coordinators: Dr’s Brad Harrington & Marcus van Heukelum
	Meeting Room 11		



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THURSDAY 22 MAY 2025		
14h00 - 15h30	SESSION 4 - INNOVATION	Hall B & C
Chair	Dr Ettienne Coetzee	
14h00 – 14h10	Front-back lumbar interbody fusion with unilateral biportal endoscopic decompression. Early experience and review of early post-operative results- Dr Reggie King	
14h10 – 14h20	Unilateral biportal endoscopic discectomy versus microdiscectomy a retrospective analysis of the outcomes and complications in lumbar pathology treated by either modality - Dr Elsje-Marie Geldenhuys	
14h20 – 14h30	My experience utilising patient specific implants over the past decade and advantages of utilising preoperative virtual surgical planning and patient specific implants - Dr Marc Coughlan	
14h30 – 14h40	Functional outcomes of patients with isolated L5/S1 pathology treated by either open transforaminal lumbar interbody fusion or endoscopic assisted transforaminal lumbar interbody fusion: Retrospective Analysis - Dr Reggie King	
14h40 – 14h50	Discussion	
14h50 – 15h05	Future of Robotic in spinal surgery - Dr Jesús Lafuente	
15h05 – 15h20	Large language model use in spine surgery – predicting surgical procedures and outcomes - Dr Ibrahim Obeid	
15h20 – 15h30	Discussion	
15h30 - 16h00	Refreshments	
16h00 – 17h00	Session 5 - SASS AGM - <i>Open to all SASS Members</i>	Hall B & C
17h00	End of Day – Free Evening	



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FRIDAY 23 MAY 2025		
07h00 - 08h00	REGISTRATION	
08h00 - 10h00	SESSION 6 - DEGENERATIVE SPINE / DEFORMITY	Hall B & C
Chairs	Dr Johan Davis	
08h00 – 08h10	Anterior lumbar interbody fusion vs transforaminal lumbar interbody fusion – a retrospective review of outcomes achieved in patients with isolated L5/S1 pathology - Dr Reggie King	
08h10 – 08h15	Discussion	
08h15 – 08h30	Challenge of cervicothoracic kyphosis - Dr Ibrahim Obeid	
08h30 – 08h50	Spine surgery in the geriatric patient - compromise for life - Dr Nicholas Kruger	
08h50 – 09h10	Surgical strategies and When to go to thoracic spine in degenerative lumbar scoliosis - Dr Jesús Lafuente	
09h10 – 09h20	Discussion	
09h20 – 09h35	Low grade spondylolisthesis – Dr Slade Vermaak	
09h35 – 09h50	High grade spondylolisthesis - Dr Ibrahim Obeid	
09h50 – 10h00	Discussion	
10h00 - 10h30	Refreshments	
10h30 - 12h45	SESSION 7 - SPINAL CORD INJURY SESSION (JOINT SESSION WITH SPINAL CORD ASSOCIATION)	Hall B & C
Chairs	Dr Francois Theron	
10h30 – 11h15	The early management of acute spinal cord injury – contemporary concepts and future directions – Dr Brian Kwon	
11h15 – 11h30	Discussion	
11h30 – 11h45	Spinal injuries in sportsman and return to play – Dr Johan Davis	
11h45 – 12h00	SCI care bundles - Dr Juliette Stander	
12h00 – 12h10	Rethinking the post operative protocol following anterior cervical surgery, outcomes from a tertiary orthopaedic spinal unit? – Dr Marcus van Heukelum	
12h10 – 12h30	Challenges facing the last dedicated acute spinal cord injury unit in Africa – Dr Nicholas Kruger	
12h30 – 12h45	Discussion	
12h45 - 14h00	Lunch	



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FRIDAY 23 MAY 2025			
13h00 - 13h55	SASS Lunchtime Registrar Session 2 Join Us for an Interactive, High-Yield Teaching Session Tailored for Registrars: Whether you're prepping for exams or want to sharpen your practical spine knowledge, this session is for you.	Coordinators – Dr's Brad Harrington and Marcus van Heukelum	Meeting Room 11
14h00 - 15h30	SESSION 8 - TUMOURS		Hall B & C
Chairs	Prof John Ouma		
14h00 – 14h15	Predicting survival in oncology patients - Mr Darren Lui		
14h15 – 14h25	Sacroplasty – Making the procedure more palatable – Dr Roger Smith		
14h25 – 14h40	Radiofrequency ablation for pain and tumours - Mr Darren Lui		
14h40 – 14h55	Myeloma and the spine surgeon – Dr Stefan Kruger		
14h55 – 15h05	Management of Spinal Lipomas: Retrospective Analysis from a Single Neurosurgery Centre in KwaZulu-Natal – Dr Buyani Buthelezi		
15h05– 15h20	Separation surgery - Mr Darren Lui		
15h20 – 15h30	Discussion		
15h30 - 16h00	Refreshments		
16h00 – 16h25	SESSION 9 - TRAINING AND SERVICE ORGANISATION		Hall B & C
Chairs	Prof Robert Dunn		
16h00 – 16h15	Optimising spine surgery in LMIC - Dr Jesús Lafuente		
16h15 – 16h25	Discussion		
16h25 – 17h15	SESSION 10 - FOUNDERS' LECTURE		Hall B & C
16h25 – 16h30	Introduction – Prof Robert Dunn		
16h30 – 17h15	Training SA spine surgeons - deficiencies and solutions – Prof Ian Vlok		
17h15 – 22h00	Networking Evening - Complimentary to all registered delegates		Hall A, FOYER



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SATURDAY 24 MAY 2025		
07h30 - 08h30	REGISTRATION	
08h00 – 10h00	SESSION 11 - Myelopathy	Hall B & C
Chairs	Dr Fred Ukunda	
08h30 – 08h55	Why I know less about myelopathy now than when I started - Prof Robert Dunn	
08h55 – 09h15	Management of cervical myelopathy - when, why what – Dr Hans Snyckers	
09h15 – 09h25	Discussion	
09h25 – 09h35	Interactive case discussion - thoracic myelopathy (Retief) - Prof Robert Dunn	
09h35 – 09h50	TB paraplegia - management classification – Dr Sanesh Miseer	
09h50 – 10h00	Evolution of TB spine surgery in the Paediatric patient - a single centre review – Dr Hammaad Gamielien	
10h00 – 10h10	Discussion	
10h10 – 10h30	Kahoot! Quiz to crown the Prince(ss) of Spine Surgery 2025 – Professors Robert Dunn, & Ian Vlok	
10h30 – 11h00	Refreshments	

11h00 – 13h30	SESSION 12 - You be the judge	Hall B & C
Chairs	Prof Robert Dunn	
11h00 – 11h10	Value based health care in spinal surgery: South African Context – Dr Paseka Seroto	
11h10 – 11h15	Discussion	
11h15 – 11h35	Managing the "joint minute" - MacRobert	
11h35 – 11h45	Discussion	
11h45 – 12h30	Learn from the courts: 3 legal cases to be discussed with clinical and legal input – Prof Robert Dunn / MacRobert	
12h30 – 13h30	Ethics of disclosing adverse events and errors in healthcare - Dr Marietjie Botes	
13h30	Congress Close	