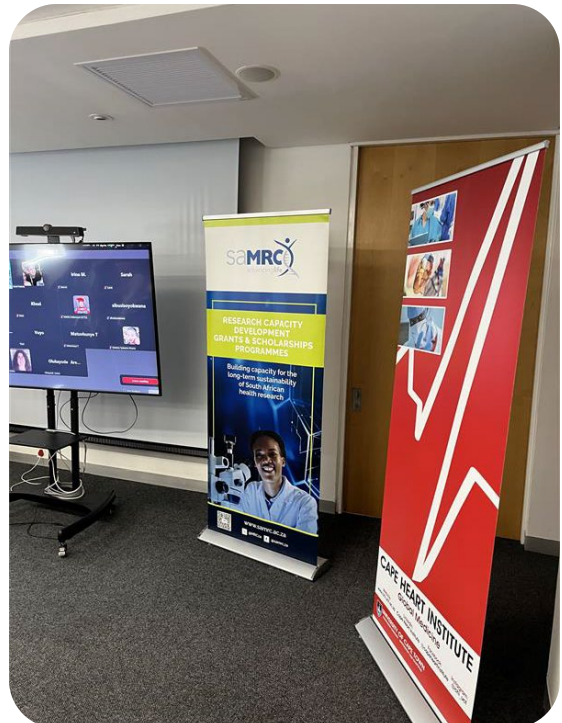


SAMRC's Division of Research Capacity Development Engages UCT Cape Heart Institute

In a significant step towards developing the next generation of health researchers, the South African Medical Research Council's (SAMRC) Division of Research Capacity Development (RCD) recently conducted an important engagement at the Cape Heart Institute (CHI), based at the University of Cape Town (UCT). This visit, initiated by the CHI, aimed to spotlight the diverse funding opportunities available through the RCD, thereby empowering UCT's academic and research professionals to drive health sciences forward across South Africa.



Introducing the meeting, Professor Sandrine Lecour, the CHI Deputy Director underscored the impact of SAMRC funding, sharing her personal journey as a former recipient of an SAMRC Career Development Award. She highlighted how instrumental this award was in shaping her academic career; an inspiring and relatable message for the attendees.

Dr Abeda Dawood, Divisional Manager, and Dr Frederic Nduhirabandi, Career Awards Programme Manager, outlined the SAMRC funding opportunities focusing on RCD Scholarship and Career Awards funding programmes. This detailed overview reinforced the SAMRC's overarching commitment to empowering future South African health research leaders making funding more accessible in order to promote excellence, equity, and transformation within the national research enterprise.

The presentations were followed by a question and answer session, accommodating over 60 postgraduate students and researchers, including in-person and online participants. The hybrid format ensured that attendees across the faculty of Health Sciences had the opportunity to engage directly with the RCD representatives.

The Cape Heart Institute is an important hub dedicated to cutting-edge research on cardiovascular risk factors and diseases, with a specific focus on those prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa. The institute's primary mission is to consolidate and expand existing efforts to combat major cardiovascular health threats and ultimately improve the overall well-being of the region's population. To advance this important mission, the CHI regularly holds meetings, inviting academic and research staff to explore relevant issues and share crucial knowledge on emerging topics in the field.

Concluding the meeting, Professor Karen Sliwa, Director of the CHI, praised the SAMRC's visit, emphasising its importance. She noted that such direct engagements provide up to date relevant information about funding opportunities that postgraduate students and early-career researchers might otherwise overlook, which are invaluable for their career development.

This impactful collaborative engagement between the SAMRC's RCD and UCT's CHI highlights a shared commitment to creating a robust and vibrant health research ecosystem in South Africa. It ensures that the next generation of scientists have the necessary resources and support to make groundbreaking and impactful discoveries that tackle urgent health issues.

AUTHORS: This article was drafted by Deney Christians, with input by Frederic Nduhirabandi and Abeda Dawood.