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Alzheimer's Disease, Dementia Care Research and Awareness

&
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The clinical impact of echocardiography on patients in tertiary centers in South Africa

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According to the Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa (HSFSA), cardiovascular diseases are one of the largest burdens to treat in South Africa. Heart disease and strokes are South Africa's biggest killers after HIV/AIDS. Every hour in South Africa five people have a heart attack and 10 people have strokes. More South Africans die of the Coronary Vascular disease than all the cancers combined. The significant therapeutic impact of echocardiography has been accentuated over the last few years, especially in South Africa. Therefore the demand for echocardiography has increased drastically. Echocardiography has been shown to have a positive impact on the management of critical patients and influences the clinical management of these patients. When echocardiography screening is implemented at an early stage then appropriate care can be given immediately and waiting times for referrals to tertiary care settings or specialists can be reduced. Echocardiography gives important anatomical and functional information about the heart. A study done at the University of Cape Town showed that 84% of patient management was impacted by echocardiography and 56% of the echocardiograms that confirmed the referring doctor's diagnosis still had a significant impact on the patient's clinical management. The significant change in clinical management occurring as a result of echocardiography raises the question if this should not become a routine scan for most patients admitted with a history of cardiovascular disease. A large majority of tertiary centers in South Africa do not have access to echocardiography services. The lack of echocardiography training appears to be one of the main limitations of the rollout of this service to tertiary centers in South Africa. The demand to access this service and the need for training in echocardiography has been highlighted in previous studies. The significant impact that echocardiography may have on the management of patients in the general wards or ICU suggest that appropriate training in echocardiography should be incorporated into the curriculum of the MMed degree in all recognized specialties of Medicine in South Africa. These programmes should be structured to meet the Health Professions Council of South Africa's requirements for specialization in this field.

Biography

Arne Husselmann graduated in 2009 with a bachelor's degree in Clinical Technology, specializing in Cardiology at the University of Technology- Free State. Here she gained a lot of exposure to different pathologies in both adult and pediatric Cardiology. After she graduated she worked as senior Cardiac Technologist in the Cardiology department in Tygerberg Hospital where after she relocated to Dubai. When she returned to South Africa she started working at Christiaan Barnard Hospital as a Cardiac Technologist in Cape Town alongside some of the best Cardiologists where she realized my dream of starting my own practice. Louis Leipoldt Mediclinic serves as the basis for the Mobile Echocardiogram Clinic.

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