

COHSASA expresses condolences on death of colleague in M17 disaster

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The Council for Health Service Accreditation of Southern Africa (COHSASA) wishes to express its profound sadness at the death of a Member of its Board and renowned HIV/AIDS specialist, Professor Joep Lange, who died tragically in the Malaysian Airlines Ukraine crash on Thursday 17th July 2014.



Professor Joep Lange, who represented the interests of COHSASA's Dutch partner, PharmAccess, was recognised as one of the leading specialists in the world in the field of HIV/AIDS.

COHSASA has been involved in the field of improving healthcare in Africa through the implementation of its standards, quality improvement and accreditation programmes for the past 18 years.

Chairman of COHSASA, Professor Erwin Schwella, said, "Our Board and indeed the world, is now deprived of an exceptional human being and a world-class academic and leader. Our sincere sympathy is with all who have suffered this loss. The COHSASA Board and all our Staff are in mourning with many people over the world. We salute the intellect and integrity of our colleague, Professor Joep Lange, now sadly and untimely deceased. Our condolences to all the millions whose lives he impacted positively. We hold all our Dutch friends dear in our thoughts and prayers in this extremely difficult time."

Said Professor Stuart Whittaker, CEO of COHSASA: "I have heard with deep regret the tragic circumstances under which Joep Lange and his partner, Jacqueline van Tongeren, have died. I would like to convey my sincere condolences and those of the entire COHSASA staff and Board to all at PharmAccess. Joep has been an inspiration in the field of HIV/AIDS and his loss will be felt across the globe. You are all in our thoughts during this sad time."

Joep Lange was Professor of Medicine, Head of the Department of Global Health, at the Academic Medical Center (AMC) at the University of Amsterdam and the Executive Scientific Director of the Amsterdam Institute for Global Health and Development (AIGHD), which was established to provide sustainable solutions to major health problems across our planet. He was also the founding chairman of PharmAccess Foundation until his death.

Joep Lange had been involved in HIV research and treatment since 1983. He was the architect and principal investigator of several pivotal trials on antiretroviral therapy and on the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV in both the developed and developing world. In addition to various positions at the AMC, he was Chief of Clinical Research and Drug Development at the Global Programme on AIDS of the World Health Organisation in Geneva from 1992 to 1995. From 2002-2004 he was President of the International AIDS Society.

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