

South African gets top medical job at upcoming Fifa World Cup events

For first time in over 20 years someone new will be presiding over the medical operations at iconic Fifa football tournaments, and he's a South African to boot.

Professor Efraim Kramer, an extraordinary professor in sports medicine in the faculty of health sciences at the University of Pretoria (UP), has been appointed as the new Fifa tournament medical officer for the FifaConfederations Cup in Russia 2017 and the FIFA World Cup Russia 2018.

He has been passionately involved in emergency medicine for the last 30 years, including involvement in mass gathering medicine, which resulted in him being called upon for the 2010 Fifa World Cup that took place in South Africa.



Since then, he has been actively involved with Fifa in helping to establish international norms and standards for football medical services and football emergency medicine, with a particular focus on the prevention and management of sudden cardiac arrest on the football field.

Most recently, he provided emergency medical services for the 2016 Fifa U20 Women's World Cup that took place in Papua New Guinea.

'For this position to be held by a simple South African, out of the Free State, from sports medicine at Tukkies to the

stadiums in Moscow and St Petersburg, is sure evidence that if one aims for the moon, perseverance, passion, performance and committed, caring colleagues can actually catapult one there', he says.

Kramer accepted the invitation by Baron Dr Michel D'Hooghe, chairman of the FIFA medical committee and known as the "father of football medicine", to replace Professor Jiri Dvorak, the outgoing Fifa chief medical officer and chairman of Fifa's medical assessment and research centre, for these events.

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