



# August 2025 Newsletter

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# Informative Session: Pregnancy Hidden Impact: Cardiovascular and Dementia Risks

**CASSA** COUNCIL OF AGENCIES SERVING SOUTH ASIANS

## Community-Leader, with a Go-Getter Mindset!

**Informative Session**  
Pregnancy's Hidden Impact: Cardiovascular and Dementia Risks

 September 10, 2025  
 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM  
 Zoom  
 Now Open to Everyone!  
**Register By:** September 5, 2025

If you have any questions please email [gurat@cassa.ca](mailto:gurat@cassa.ca)

### Special Guests



**Shahin Jaffer, MD, MHSc, FRCPC**  
 Clinical Professor of Medicine  
*University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC*  
 Division of Community General Internal Medicine

Internal Medicine Consultant

Co-Chair Knowledge Translation and Dissemination,  
 Executive Steering Committee  
*Canadian Women's Heart Health Alliance*

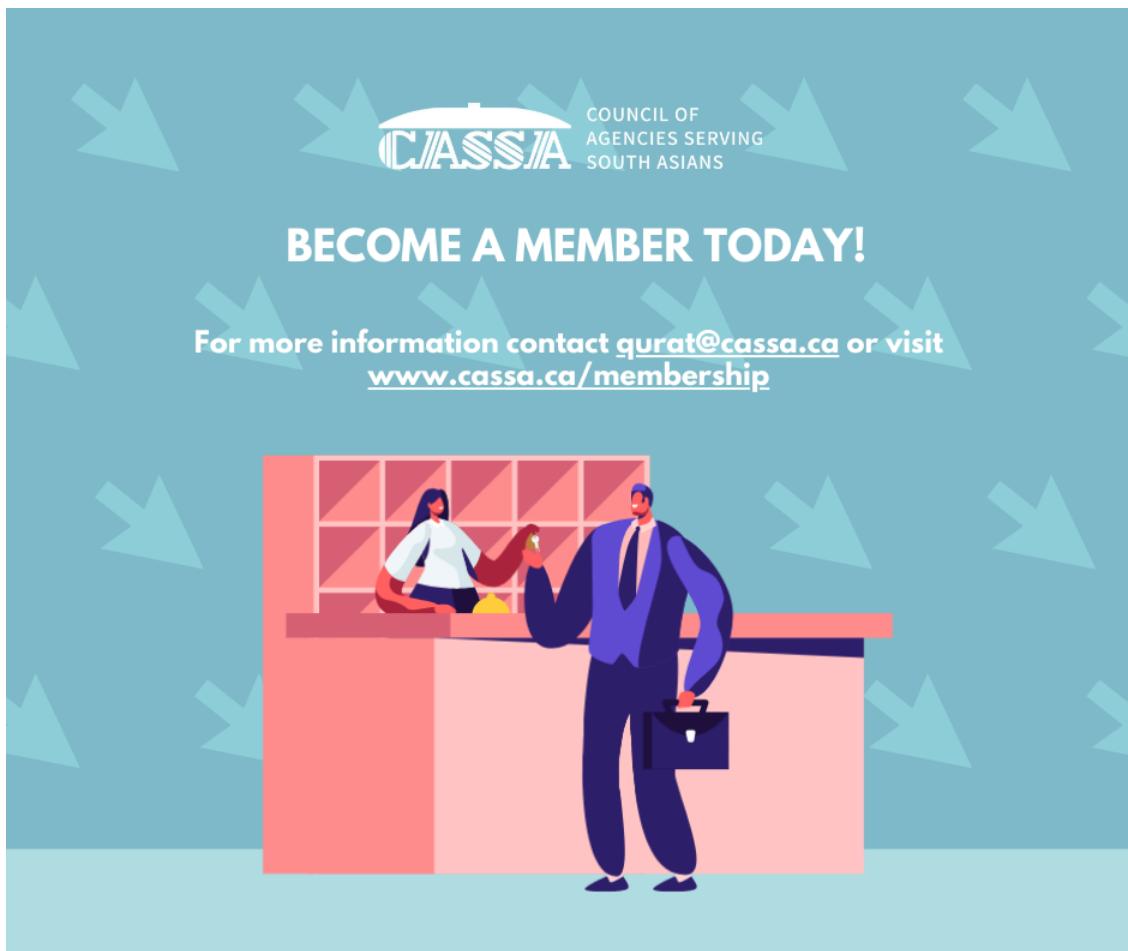


**Saleema Allana, RN, PhD**  
 Assistant Professor  
*University of Western Ontario, London, ON*



**Juhi Patel**  
 Woman with Lived Experience

# CASSA's Membership!



## CASSA Project Updates

### South Asian International Students Research Project

The South Asian International Students Research Project is actively seeking participants for the ongoing study. This research aims to delve into the experiences and challenges faced by South Asian international students in Ontario. The project has interviewed about 20 participants so far.

#### Participant Eligibility:

- South Asian international students

- Currently enrolled in a post-secondary educational institution in Ontario

So far, we have successfully conducted interviews with 22 students from a diverse range of institutions. We are now looking to recruit at least 10 more participants by August 2025.

**Community Partners & Institutional Staff Interviews:** In addition to student interviews, we are also engaging with community partners and institutional staff who work closely with international students. These interviews will provide diverse perspectives on the challenges faced by South Asian international students and help inform our research.

**Data Analysis and Report:** Starting from July 2025, the collected data will be transcribed and analyzed according to the theoretical framework of "education of other." A comprehensive report will then be prepared based on these findings.

For more information or to participate, please contact us at [tanzinatahereen@cassa.ca](mailto:tanzinatahereen@cassa.ca).

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### The Data for Equity 3.0

We are pleased to announce the successful completion of the second stage of the Data for Change project: Collect & Store. The project now moves into its third stage, Analysis and Interpret. The next workshop will be led by SHIP on August 14 on Trauma Informed Practices, so please register <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/PPNcOwpsSHyxZnQYcnzq1A>

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### South Asian Social Justice Network Project - Alberta

#### **Upcoming Initiative: Resource Fair in Calgary:**

We are excited to announce plans for an upcoming Resource Fair in Calgary! This initiative is aimed at eliminating access barriers for South Asians who may not be aware of or able to access free government programs, services, and assistance.

We are proud to have representatives from almost every South Asian language group, who are committed to serving the community with open hearts, offering culturally and linguistically appropriate support for immediate needs.

#### **Community Impact:**

as we push for equity, visibility, and representation in all sectors of society. We look forward to your continued support and participation as we build a stronger, more empowered South Asian community in Alberta and beyond.

Alberta Project lead Amber Qureshi

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### **Taking the Honour Out of 'Honour-Based Violence' Project**

Our ongoing project explores 'honour-based violence' (HBV) within South Asian communities in Canada. Following a scoping review to identify service gaps, we conducted consultations with survivors and subject matter experts to understand how HBV is experienced and addressed. These findings are being analyzed to develop practical, culturally responsive recommendations. We're currently finalizing a survivor-centered HBV training module and preparing a social media campaign to raise awareness and reduce stigma. Both the final report and campaign will be released by the end of the year, marking a key step toward improved support for South Asian women affected by HBV.

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## Opportunities

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### CCMW: I Belong, You Belong

Join the Canadian Council of Muslim Women (CCMW) on **November 6–7, 2025**, for the ["I Belong, You Belong" National Employment Conference](#) — a two-day gathering of changemakers committed to building inclusive and equitable workplaces for Muslim and racialized women across Canada.

Hosted in partnership with the Diversity Institute as part of CCMW's [ASPIRE Project](#) and funded by Women and Gender Equality Canada, this two-day hybrid conference is designed to foster equitable and inclusive work environments for Canadian Muslim and racialized women.

#### **Join us for:**

- Inspiring plenaries & panel discussions
- Interactive workshops & skills-building sessions
- Meaningful networking opportunities
- Muslim Women's Marketplace

#### **Featuring powerful speakers like:**

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- **Dr. Zainab Abdurrahman** - President, Ontario Medical Association
- **Muneeza Sheikh** - Partner, Muneeza Sheikh Employment & Human Rights
- **Dr. Rhonda McEwen** - President, Victoria University (University of Toronto)
- **Dr. Ruby Latif** - Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging, Brant Community Healthcare System
- **Rabia Khedr** - National Director, Disability Without Poverty
- **Marya Bangash** - Education & Outreach Coordinator, SMILE Canada

Get your early bird ticket today → [Register here](#)



## Epilepsy & Seizure First Aid Public Education Workshops

Offered in-person, over Zoom, teleconference and hybrid.

Please email [leah@epilepsytoronto.org](mailto:leah@epilepsytoronto.org) for further information.

Presented By



Session will cover:

✓ Myths and Misconceptions about Epilepsy	✓ Epilepsy Toronto's Services
✓ Difference Types of Seizures	✓ Seizure first aid
✓ Treatment	✓ Client stories

[www.epilepsytoronto.org](http://www.epilepsytoronto.org)



# HELP FIGHT HEART DISEASE & DIABETES IN SOUTH ASIANS



**Register with Team SANSAR Foundation  
at the  
2025 Toronto Waterfront Marathon!**

- Participants must commit to a fundraising minimum of \$50
- Receive a SANSAR running jersey, sweatband, and water bottle
- Virtual or in-person race participation options available
- Honor a loved one by fundraising in their name

Runner's medals, souvenirs, gift bags, and more from the Toronto Waterfront Marathon vendors!

To volunteer and for other opportunities, contact us: [info@sansar.org](mailto:info@sansar.org)

[www.sansar.org](http://www.sansar.org)

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2025

# 8th Annual South Asian Cardiovascular Conference

October 22 & 29, 2025  
7:00 - 9:00 pm EDT**SACC Learning Objective:**

Identify, evaluate, and treat South Asian patients with and at risk for cardiovascular disease.

**SACC Agenda****Session 1 Co-Chairs: Milan Gupta/Alka Kanaya**

Time	Talk	Faculty
7:00 PM	Opening Comments	Milan Gupta & Alka Kanaya
7:05 PM	Cardiometabolic risk in South Asian women	Sadiya Khan Chicago, IL
7:23 PM	SANSAR/Burgundy Young Investigator Award	Narendra Singh Atlanta, GA
7:33 PM	What are the mechanisms underlying the South Asian CV epidemic?	Alka Kanaya San Francisco, CA
7:51 PM	Risk assessment/coronary calcium in the apparently healthy South Asian	Anandita Agarwala Plano, TX
8:09 PM	Specific lipid considerations and future directions	Milan Gupta Brampton, ON
8:27 PM	Discussion	
9:00 PM	Closing	

**Session 2 Co-Chairs: Milan Gupta/Alka Kanaya**

Time	Talk	Faculty
7:00 PM	Opening Comments	Milan Gupta & Alka Kanaya
7:05 PM	The Brown Heart - Real stories of survival and loss related to the menace of heart disease in South Asians	Nirmal & Renu Joshi Mechanicsburg, PA
7:20 PM	Yoga and Stress Management	Sat Bir S. Khalsa Medway, MA
7:38 PM	Diabetes in South Asians	Harpreet Bajaj Brampton, ON
7:56 PM	Chronic kidney disease/ heart failure in South Asians	Narendra Singh Atlanta, GA
8:14 PM	Obesity: Current and new directions in South Asians	Megha Poddar Toronto, ON
8:32 PM	Discussion	
9:00 PM	Closing	

**Registration Today!**Visit: [www.ccrnmd.com](http://www.ccrnmd.com)For inquiries regarding this program, please contact [info@ccrnmd.com](mailto:info@ccrnmd.com).**Co-Chairs****Milan  
Gupta**

MD, FRCPC, FCCS, CPC(HC)  
Assistant Professor,  
Department of Medicine,  
University of Toronto  
Medical Director,  
Collaborative CME and Research Network  
Brampton, ON

**Alka  
Kanaya**

MD, FAHA  
Professor of Medicine, Epidemiology &  
Biostatistics, University of California  
San Francisco Principal Investigator,  
MASALA Study  
San Francisco, CA

**CFPC Accreditation:**  
This activity has been certified by the College of  
Family Physicians of Canada for up to 4 Mainpro+®  
Certified Activity credits.

**AAFP Accreditation:**  
Members of the American Academy of Family  
Physicians are eligible to receive up to 4.00  
Prescribed credit hours for attendance at this  
meeting/event due to a reciprocal agreement with  
the College of Family Physicians of Canada.

 **SANSAR** This program is hosted by SANSAR  
[www.sansar.org](http://www.sansar.org)



This program was developed by the Collaborative  
CME and Research Network and has received an  
unrestricted educational grant from Amgen and Bayer.

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7:00 - 9:00 pm EDT

## SACC Full Agenda

Session 1: Wednesday, October 22 (7:00 - 9:00 pm EDT)			Co-Chairs: Milan Gupta/Alka Kanaya
Time	Talk	Learning Objective	Faculty
7:00 PM	<b>Opening Comments</b>		Milan Gupta & Alka Kanaya
7:05 PM	Cardiometabolic risk in South Asian women	Identify the unique cardiometabolic risk factors in South Asian women and discuss strategies to address these factors in clinical practice.	Sadiya Khan Chicago, IL
7:23 PM	SANSAR/Burgundy Young Investigator Award	Discuss recent research on the health of South Asian populations and the implications for clinical practice.	Narendra Singh Atlanta, GA
7:33 PM	What are the mechanisms underlying the South Asian CV epidemic?	Discuss the biological, genetic, and environmental factors contributing to the cardiovascular epidemic in South Asian populations.	Alka Kanaya San Francisco, CA
7:51 PM	Risk assessment/coronary calcium in the apparently healthy South Asian	Evaluate the role of coronary calcium scoring in cardiovascular risk assessment for apparently healthy South Asian individuals.	Anandita Agarwala Plano, TX
8:09 PM	Specific lipid considerations and future directions	Examine the lipid management strategies specific to South Asian populations and discuss future directions in lipid research and treatment.	Milan Gupta Brampton, ON
8:27 PM	Discussion		
9:00 PM	<b>Closing</b>		

Session 2: Wednesday, October 29 (7:00 - 9:00 pm EDT)			Co-Chairs: Milan Gupta/Alka Kanaya
Time	Talk	Learning Objective	Faculty
7:00 PM	<b>Opening Comments</b>		Milan Gupta & Alka Kanaya
7:05 PM	The Brown Heart - Real stories of survival and loss related to the menace of heart disease in South Asians	Examine the underlying causes of heart disease in young South Asians and develop strategies to raise awareness about this growing health crisis.	Nirmal & Renu Joshi Mechanicsburg, PA
7:20 PM	Yoga and stress management	Identify the role of yoga and stress management techniques in improving cardiovascular health.	Sat Bir S. Khalsa Medway, MA
7:38 PM	Diabetes in South Asians	Describe culturally relevant approaches to the prevention, diagnosis, and management of diabetes in South Asian individuals.	Harpreet Bajaj Brampton, ON
7:56 PM	Chronic kidney disease/heart failure in South Asians	Examine the prevalence and impact of chronic kidney disease and heart failure in South Asian populations, and discuss appropriate management strategies.	Narendra Singh Atlanta, GA
8:14 PM	Obesity: Current and new directions in South Asians	Identify current and emerging strategies for managing obesity in South Asian populations, including culturally specific interventions.	Megha Poddar Toronto, ON
8:32 PM	Discussion		
9:00 PM	<b>Closing</b>		



### Registration Today!

Visit: [www.ccrnmd.com](http://www.ccrnmd.com)For inquiries regarding this program, please contact [info@ccrnmd.com](mailto:info@ccrnmd.com).This program is hosted by SANSAR  
[www.sansar.org](http://www.sansar.org)

This program was developed by the Collaborative CME and Research Network and has received an unrestricted educational grant from Amgen and Bayer



*South Asian Network Supporting Awareness & Research*



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

### HELP FIGHT HEART DISEASE & DIABETES IN SOUTH ASIANS

We are looking for volunteers to help staff our charity's booth at this year's Toronto Waterfront Marathon Expo!

- Greet visitors
- Share info about heart health in the South Asian community
- Hand out pamphlets and giveaways
- All volunteers will receive a FREE SANSAR T-shirt

Friday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.  
 Saturday, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Enercare Centre - Hall A, Toronto ON, 100 Princes' Blvd, M6K 3C3

Contact us at [info@sansar.org](mailto:info@sansar.org)

[www.sansar.org](http://www.sansar.org)



**Frontline Community Centre**  
is accepting applications for our  
**Youth Micro-grants Program**  
**2025-2026**



**\$2000**

Support Canadian Youth Shape an Inclusive Tomorrow  
through **Social Innovation**, Guided by  
Mentorship and Strong Networks.

**Eligibility**

- Between the age of 15-30 at the time of application
- Must be a Canadian citizen, permanent resident, or have granted refugee status in Canada

**Orientation**

August, 2025  
At Frontline  
Community Centre

**Apply Now!**

<http://bit.ly/4kkjnRy>  
Applications Open - June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025  
Applications Close - August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025

416-840-4425  
INFO@FCCCANADA.ORG

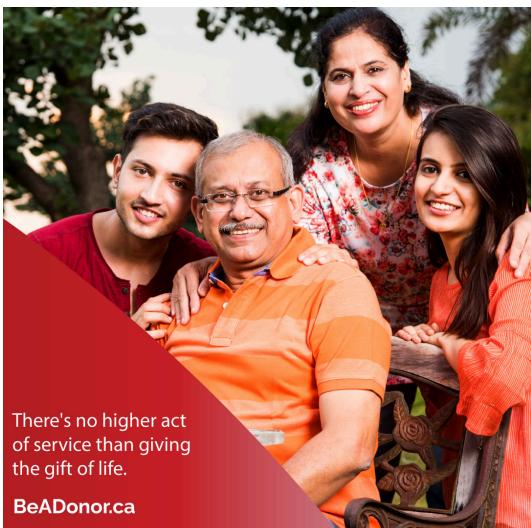
3031 MARKHAM ROAD, UNIT #25  
SCARBOROUGH, ON M1X 1L9

FCCCANADA.ORG [🌐](#)  
FRONTLINECOMMUNITYCENTRE [🔗](#)



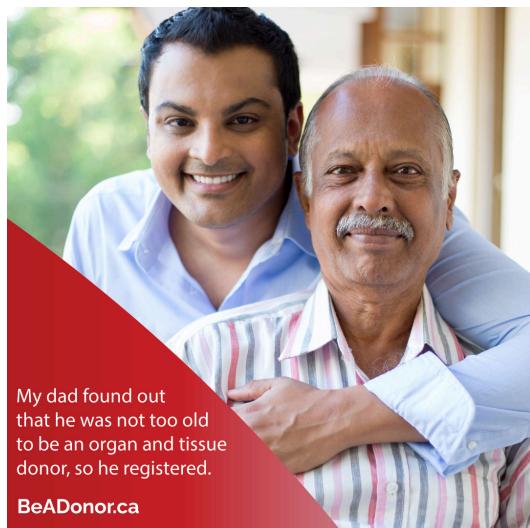
It only took me two minutes to register to save lives as an organ and tissue donor. You can do it too.

**BeADonor.ca**



There's no higher act of service than giving the gift of life.

**BeADonor.ca**



My dad found out that he was not too old to be an organ and tissue donor, so he registered.

**BeADonor.ca**

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Even though I wasn't born here, once my health card arrives in the mail, I can register to be an organ and tissue donor.

[BeADonor.ca](#)



I'm a registered organ and tissue donor because one day someone in my family might need a transplant.

[BeADonor.ca](#)



**"I'm enjoying my life, thanks to the generosity of my organ donor."**

**-Ramesh, Lung Recipient**

**[BeADonor.ca](#)**

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## In the News

### [Three years, one shot: The race to stay in Canada](#)

What happens when an international student dreams of higher education and permanent residency in Canada? For many, it may seem simple. Apply to college or university, get an offer letter, apply for a student visa, pay tuition, pack bags, move to a new country and start life all over again.

### [How language classes for immigrant students can perpetuate inequity](#)

Different countries and regions use various models for integrating immigrant students who need to learn or improve the language of schooling.

### [Immigration lawyers say rising number of CSIS security screenings causing delays](#)

The Canadian Security Intelligence Service says it's dealing with a growing number of immigration security screening requests — and immigration lawyers say their clients are coping with long delays as a result.

### [Community 'grieving' after Toronto pastor and 2 daughters ordered deported to Kenya](#)

Early Wednesday morning, Rev. Rosalind Wanyeki and her two children, six-year-old Pearl and nine-year-old Joylene, attended an immigration hearing at the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) office at Mississauga's International Centre, where a judge denied the woman's request to defer their deportation order.

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A Toronto man has been charged with criminal harassment and uttering threats after allegedly sending repeated xenophobic and racist messages to two separate victims.

### [More layoffs hit Sask Polytechnic as international student enrolment drops](#)

Saskatchewan Polytechnic is cutting jobs for the second time this year to deal with declining tuition revenue as fewer international students come to the province for higher education.

### ['No safety rules': Concerns](#)

In recent months similar AI-generated content has flooded social media platforms, openly promoting violence and spreading hate against members of LGBTQ+, Jewish, Muslim and other minority groups.



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