



# CAPE LONG DISTANCE SWIMMING ASSOCIATION

Website: [www.clds.co.za](http://www.clds.co.za)

April 2023

## **CLDSA medical requirement for swims of over 20km - Required from 1 July 2023 Onwards**

In October 2022 CLDSA communicated with members regarding the introduction of a new requirement for swimmers to complete a medical assessment, for swims of more than 20km. The medical assessment requirement came about after the CLDSA committee and CLDSA Medical Officer noted a need to bring CLDSA in line with other international marathon swimming associations, and to ensure that CLDSA is making recommendations to protect the safety of swimmers choosing to take on very long swims under the CLDSA banner. The safety of swimmers is of paramount importance to the CLDSA.

CLDSA is lucky to have two extremely experienced medical doctors on the committee, both of whom are specialists in cold water swimming. After consultation with these experts a medical form was drafted setting out the requirements for the medical. The requirements and standard of the medical were based on the advice and professional experience of the CLDSA Medical Officer.

A number of Members reached out to the Committee with comments and queries on the medical, and a decision was taken to withdraw the medical requirement to allow for further consultation and engagement with members. During the period of November 2022 to February 2023 comments were received from members and a consultation meeting was held (in February 2023), where stakeholders provided their input and had the opportunity to engage with the CLDSA Medical Officer, Dr Sean Gottschalk. Thank you to the members who contributed.

The outcome of this consultation process is an updated version of the CLDSA Medical Requirement Form (see on the CLDSA website).

Key points to note:

- It is strongly recommended that the medical assessment is completed by a physician (preferably a sports physician with cold-water/long-distance endurance sports experience). Alternatively (and based on the availability of specialist physicians), the swimmer's personal physician or a GP can complete the assessment.
- The medical will still apply for swims of over 20km, regardless of the expected time in the water, water temperature or swim route.

- A resting 12-lead ECG is required. This is not required by all international marathon swimming associations, but the CLDSA Medical Officer feels that this is important and prudent, and in the interests of the swimmer's safety. A 12-lead resting ECG can be done by a physician or many GPs.
- If you are planning a swim of more than 20km, CLDSA recommends that you should have your medical completed in advance, as it will be valid for a full 12 months and can be used for multiple swims during the year. Completing the medical in advance will avoid any last-minute rush to have the assessment once your swim window is confirmed.
- If you are planning a marathon swim under a different swimming association rules which require a medical, we suggest that you have any additional medical forms completed at the same time as your CLDSA medical to save on admin and cost (the Dr. should be able to complete one medical in order to sign forms for multiple swim associations, e.g. both CLDSA and CSA forms for English Channel swims, or even ISA medicals for ice swimming, at no extra cost).
- You will be required to submit your completed medical form (at least one week prior to your proposed swim date) to the CLDSA Medical Officer via a specific mailbox ([medical@clds.co.za](mailto:medical@clds.co.za)). Your information will be saved securely and will be reviewed only by the CLDSA Medical Officer.
- The requirement for the swim medical will come into place from 1 July 2023, for the new swim season.

Should Members have any further queries these can be directed to [swims@clds.co.za](mailto:swims@clds.co.za). We wish safe and enjoyable training to members and prospective members that are training or planning for marathon swims, and we look forward to following your swim attempts.

Yours in swimming,

CLDSA Committee