

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear members

This year started with challenges similar to what we ended off with last year. The Discovery Health (DH) Value Endoscopy network (VEN) is now officially launched and with that came misery for some of our members. Patients of these members face co-payments even for in-room scopes. Consultations are underway to have these members back under a payment agreement with Discovery where the co-pays can be abolished.



Looming on the horizon is the next matter concerning DH. The Dyspepsia care pathway will go live soon where DH patients will not automatically get a gastroscopy before *H. pylori* was tested and treated appropriately. Only when symptoms fail to resolve after a period of 30 days will gastroscopy be allowed without co-payment. This will affect all of us. The way we practise endoscopy will change following these interventions.

A reminder that SAGES is no longer involved in the approval of biologics for DH.

On a more positive note, we will from this year, in addition to the Solly Marks Scholarship, have an Aspen research grant for R100 000. The advertisement is in this issue of the journal, and

we encourage everyone (including members in private practice) to apply.

Despite all the discussions and engagements, it appears the issue of the NHI stubbornly does not want to go away. We eagerly await the finance minister to enlighten us as to how it will be financed. A lot of uncertainty but very little we can do to change the outcome.

We would like to thank Prof Adam Mahomed for his years of service as an editor of the SAGES journal and we look forward to Dr Neo Seabi taking on the 3rd issue of this journal SAJGH later this year. We welcome her as a new editor and for her input in providing interesting topics and views.

The SAGES Congress is in Durban this year, 31 July to 3 August 2025 at the Coastlands Umhlanga Hotel. VG Naidoo is the LOC chairman and promises a full programme filled with topics for the practising gastroenterologist and includes a full-day programme for our colleagues in Paediatric Gastroenterology.

Finally, in the last week we have laid to rest one of our own, a stalwart and fighter for gastroenterology. Keith Newton was a past-president of SAGES and served our society with distinction and diligence. He had a long struggle with colon cancer. May his soul rest in peace.

Enjoy this edition of our journal.

Ernst Fredericks 
SAGES President



SAGES
South African Gastroenterology Society

SAGES CONGRESS
in association with The South African Society of Paediatric Gastroenterology and The South African Gastrointestinal Nurses Society

31 JULY TO 3 AUGUST 2025
COASTLANDS UMHLANGA HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTRE
DURBAN - SOUTH AFRICA

IMPORTANT DATES
Call for abstracts OPEN
Deadline for abstracts 16 May 2025
Early registration closes 30 April 2025
Scholarship application deadline 30 June 2025

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