

## Gastroenterology Fellows Ultrasound Workshop in Durban

Interest in point of care ultrasound (POCUS) in daily clinical practice has grown globally in both general and specialist practice. Uptake by clinicians is restricted by lack of training, availability of equipment and concerns about its impact on workflow. Organs of particular interest to the gastroenterologist can be readily viewed with ultrasound as part of the clinical assessment. This can facilitate efficient decision making at the bedside. With this in mind, the South African Gastroenterology Society (SAGES) organized a transabdominal ultrasound workshop aimed at gastroenterology fellows that was held on 31 July 2025 at Inkosi Albert Luthuli Central Hospital in Durban, South Africa.

The format was an introductory lecture on ultrasound basics followed by participants breaking up into groups of four to rotate between three ultrasound stations. Each station had an experienced ultrasound expert as a facilitator and used a live healthy volunteer model. The three stations independently focused on hepatobiliary, pancreas and intestinal. In the first round most of the demonstration was done by the facilitators. In the second-round participants were given maximum hands-on time to demonstrate what they had learnt from the first round with guidance from the facilitator. Participants were fully engaged in the process of developing confidence with something unfamiliar. In addition, local gastroenterologists with POCUS experience provided clinical input at each station. The feedback session at the end of the workshop was overall very positive. Facilitators were pleased with how quickly most participants progressed but emphasized the need for regular practice. Participants found it



valuable and expressed enthusiasm to start applying what they learnt. There was universal agreement that there's a need for more intense practical ultrasound workshops for clinicians. Many found the intestinal ultrasound station particularly difficult and suggested that more time is dedicated to this.

The assistance of Mr Wesley Abboy from Mbuso Medical Supplies with organization of facilitators, equipment and volunteer models is highly appreciated. SAGES is immensely grateful to WGO for the educational grant that made this outstanding workshop possible and look forward to ongoing support. No doubt we need to keep going as it is clear that wider application of POCUS will enhance patient care especially in resource limited settings.

**Dr VG Naidoo**  
SAGES President



Ultrasound workshop group



Ultrasound workshop stations

## Ultrasound workshop review

The South African Gastroenterology Society (SAGES) hosted a basic transabdominal ultrasound workshop on 31 July 2025 at Inkosi Albert Luthuli Central Hospital in Durban, South Africa. The course was designed for gastroenterology fellows and served as an introduction to point-of-care ultrasound (POCUS) in gastrointestinal practice.

The program focused primarily on the liver, pancreas, and intestine ultrasound. For me, as a gastroenterology fellow, it was both informative and highly relevant, offering practical insights into areas not routinely practiced at my home institution in Cape Town. The liver and pancreas sessions were engaging, while intestinal ultrasound proved the most technically challenging, highlighting the need for continued practice and exposure.

What stood out most was how the course emphasized the potential of POCUS to enhance patient care and support clinical decision-making. By equipping fellows with the foundational skills to perform focused abdominal ultrasound, this workshop laid the groundwork for broader integration of POCUS into gastroenterology in South Africa.

Equally valuable was the opportunity to meet and interact with other fellows in training from across South Africa. Beyond the technical learning, the workshop created a collegial environment where ideas, experiences, and challenges could be shared openly.

Building these connections was both motivating and reassuring, as we discovered common ground in our training journeys. The friendships and networks formed during the course will undoubtedly serve us well, not only in preparation for our fellowship examinations, but also as we transition into practice as colleagues and future gastroenterologists.



I found the course exciting and encouraging, and I believe it represents an important step toward expanding ultrasound skills among gastroenterologists. Special thanks are due to Dr. V.G. Naidoo and his team, whose streamlined and well-structured teaching made the course clear, practical, and impactful.

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