

SAGES President Address

Dear Colleagues

I would firstly like to take this opportunity to welcome the newly elected SAGES council. The mix of familiar and new faces ensure that we build on institutional memory while invigorating the society. A special thanks to our past president, Ernst Fredericks who captained the ship with distinction and continues to play a pivotal role on council.



Our flagship event is always the annual congress. The 2025 congress in Durban was well received with lots of positive feedback. The amazing efforts of Eastern Sun Events, Karin Fenton and the local organising committee in bringing it all together are warmly appreciated. Beyond the scientific program and smooth organisation there was a warm collegial spirit during the congress which was most pleasing.

SAGES has been involved in several issues related to medical aid funding. The impact on our members in private practice and their patients has not been inconsequential. In light of current and future challenges, a private practice committee has been set up to deal directly with these issues. In addition, consultations are underway to partner with other professional societies to address common issues in relation to the private healthcare landscape and beyond. There is strength in unity.

On the academic front, SAGES continues to support research through scholarships and addressing matters related to training through the Heads of Department committee. The

Gastroenterology Foundation's contribution to training deserves recognition and applause. The G-ECHO teaching sessions are well attended and a big thank you must go to the organisers, fellows and the supervisors who make it happen. The interest in point of care transabdominal ultrasound for gastroenterologists was quite evident after the pre-congress ultrasound workshop and the emergence of intestinal ultrasound. There is a need to build on this going forward.

SAGES is guided by the needs of its membership and depends on its membership to contribute to the ongoing maintenance and building of the society. We remain a relatively small society and it is thus imperative that we support each other going forward.

Regards and best wishes

VG Naidoo



N Talley, VG Naidoo, Y Pumpalova

Introducing SAGES Council 2025–2027

President:	VG Naidoo <i>Inkosi Albert Luthuli Central Academic Hospital, UKZN, Durban</i>
Past President:	Ernst Fredericks <i>Retired, Namibia</i>
President-Elect:	Neo Seabi <i>Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital, Wits, Johannesburg</i>
Secretary:	Mark Sonderup <i>Groote Schuur Hospital, UCT, Cape Town</i>
Treasurer:	Wayne Simmonds <i>Universitas Hospital, UFS, Bloemfontein</i>
Council members:	Martin Brand <i>Steve Biko Academic Hospital, UP, Pretoria</i>

Eduan Deetlefs <i>Private Practice, Cape Town</i>	
Vikash Lala <i>Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital, Wits, Johannesburg</i>	
Yonela Qubekile <i>Inkosi Albert Luthuli Central Academic Hospital, UKZN, Durban</i>	
Mashiko Setshedi <i>Groote Schuur Hospital, UCT, Cape Town</i>	
Co-opted:	Peter Barrow <i>Private Practice, Johannesburg</i>
Gastro Foundation:	Bilal Bobat <i>Private Practice, Johannesburg</i>



L-R: Ernst Fredericks, Vikash Lala, Yonela Qubekile, VG Naidoo, Neo Seabi, Mashiko Setshedi, Mark Sonderup
Missing: Wayne Simmonds, Martin Brand, Eduan Deetlefs, Peter Barrow, Bilal Bobat

Picture taken at the SAGES Congress 2025 in Durban