



THE  
GASTROENTEROLOGY FOUNDATION  
OF SOUTH AFRICA

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**CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF  
THE GASTROENTEROLOGY FOUNDATION  
OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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2006 - 2016

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THE  

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GASTROENTEROLOGY FOUNDATION

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OF SOUTH AFRICA

**The Gastroenterology Foundation of South Africa was established in 2006 and was initiated through generous contributions from the pharmaceutical industry.**

# **Mission Statement**

**The aim of the Gastroenterology Foundation is to contribute towards the continuing medical education of medical and surgical Gastroenterologists and Hepatologists in South Africa.**

**In addition, the Foundation encourages research by awarding grants and assisting in the financing of fellowships.**

**“In learning,  
you will  
teach and in  
teaching you  
will learn.”**

**Phil Collins**

# 10-Year Assessment

## This year the Gastroenterology Foundation of South Africa celebrates its 10th anniversary.

It is an appropriate time, therefore, to reflect on the achievements the Foundation has made over the past 10 years. It is an exciting time to be in South Africa and indeed in the whole of Sub-Saharan Africa. Looming over the horizon and well within our reach lies the birth of the Sub-Saharan Society of Gastroenterology and Hepatology.

By all accounts the Foundation has been a success – but how does one measure the accomplishments of an educational trust such as the Gastroenterology Foundation of South Africa? Perhaps an audit of the number and quality of abstracts received at the Annual SAGES Congress might be an appropriate place to start but our achievements have been much broader.

To begin with, the focus of the Foundation was on the continuing medical education of the practising gastroenterologist. An article in the South African Medical Journal in 2004, by Prof Sandie Thomson, highlighting the deterioration of academic gastroenterology in South Africa caught my eye. This article brought to our attention mentorship as an issue, and this was where we needed to start. Our attention quickly turned to the fellows in training.

Over the last 10 years we have awarded a number of fellowships: 13 in research, over 350 travel awards to local and international meetings, and 2 international fellowships – one to Brown University and another to Oxford university. Many of our fellows have benefitted from time spent at Vrye University Medical Centre in Amsterdam and we are grateful to Prof Chris Mulder for his support and interest in our postgraduate fellows over many years.

The Spier Postgraduate Meeting is an annual three-day event held in February and devoted to the fellows in training throughout the country. All medical and surgical gastroenterology fellows are invited together with paediatric gastroenterology fellows and those training in Hepatology. In addition, most heads of Departments are invited to attend as faculty. The Spier meeting in 2016 attracted 36 fellows and 22 university heads of departments and was the largest to date.

Beginning in 2012 the Foundation sponsored and facilitated meetings with regard to the registration of Hepatology as a subspecialty. In 2016 Hepatology was successfully registered as a sub-specialty in South Africa together with a number of Hepatology training positions to follow.

The establishment of a number of subspecialty interest groups has sustained the practising Gastroenterologist and those interested in Hepatology. The Liver and IBD Interest Groups are perhaps the most consistently hosted and well attended. Notable visits in 2015 were Prof Ann Griffiths from Toronto Sick Kids and Prof Gyongyi Szabo, Past President of the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD). Interest groups in a variety of subspecialties such as Acid Peptic Disease, Gut Microbiota, GI bleeding of obscure origin and Paediatric Gastroenterology are held at various times throughout the year according to interest.

Most gratifying of all is the successful collaboration with international societies, namely the American Gastroenterology Association (AGA) and the European Association for the study of the Liver (EASL). Thanks to the collaboration with Dr Peter Holt, past councillor at the AGA and presently at Rockefeller University, the Gastro Foundation brings the AGA postgraduate course to South Africa annually. Prof Markus Peck, past president of EASL, was instrumental in bringing the best of EASL to Africa in 2015. These courses are now being held in various centres in sub-Saharan Africa.



We have collaborated and have worked closely with SAGES since we share common goals. The Foundation hosts the AGA post graduate course at the annual SAGES conference together with a day devoted to Hepatology. In 2015 we hosted the first Best of EASL in Africa at the SAGES conference in Durban. The Twilight Symposium at SAGES offers an update on a broad range of topics given by our visiting speakers. Since the symposium is held at the end of a conference day, the occasion presents an opportunity for colleagues to catch up with each other whilst enjoying a glass of wine.

It is an indeed a great privilege, on behalf of the Foundation, to honour Prof Michael C Kew with a Festschrift at the SAGES congress this year. This symposium will celebrate the formidable body of world class research that he has produced and his reputation as an international leader in the field of liver cancer.

Of course, it is our travels into Africa and collaboration with a number of sub-Saharan African colleagues that has truly been an inspiration and a source of great satisfaction to all. In 2015 we hosted the Best of the AGA Postgraduate Course in Ghana and in July this year hosted the best of EASL in Lagos, Nigeria. The hospitality, humility and depth of intellectual resource in SSA are most exceptional.

In 2015 we hosted a three-day symposium coinciding with the opening of the Lagos University Teaching Hospital WGO Training Centre which included the best of the AGA Postgraduate Course and a Spier-like fellows meeting with a morning devoted to the WGO Train the Trainers course.

## So where to from here and what can we expect from the Foundation in the next decade?

A glaring deficiency in the Foundation's activities is luminal GI with a clear need, particularly in SSA, to develop endoscopic skills. We have, in this regard, reinitiated talks with the United European Gastroenterology (UEG) to plan a variety of endoscopy courses.

In September 2016, in collaboration with the Ethiopian Gastroenterology Society, we will announce the sub-Saharan GI Hepatology working group at a meeting which will host the AGA post graduate course, the Best of EASL, a GI Endoscopy/ Capsule meeting and a Spier-like meeting for 30 sub-Saharan fellows. In addition, guidelines for SSA, for the screening, surveillance and treatment of chronic viral hepatitis B and C will be presented under the auspices of the newly founded SSA working group. Further guidelines, much needed for SSA will follow.

**I am confident that a sub-Saharan GI Hepatology Society of Gastroenterology and Hepatology will be up and running in 2 years with a strong constitution and earnest committee.**

I am most grateful to all our colleagues who have supported the foundation over the last 10 years, and to the Trustees who have contributed in making the Gastroenterology Foundation of South Africa a success. We are mindful of the generosity we have received and continue to receive from the pharmaceutical and device industry.

I look forward to the transformation of a Gastroenterology Foundation of sub-Saharan Africa in the near future.

**Chris Kassianides**  
Chairman

# Trustees

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The Gastro Foundation is autonomous, directed by a group of trustees chosen from a broad spectrum of academic experience.



**Dr Chris Kassianides**

**Founder and Chairman of the Gastroenterology Foundation of South Africa and a member of SAGES council.**

Following his graduation from the University of the Witwatersrand medical school in Johannesburg, South Africa in 1979, he completed his fellowship with the College of Physicians and joined the Liver Unit of the National Institutes of Health in Washington DC where he spent a number of years researching the antiviral therapy of Hepatitis B and C viruses. This was followed by GI Fellowships at Georgetown University in

Washington DC and Cornell Hospital in New York City and a visiting lectureship at the Prince of Wales hospital in Hong Kong.

He returned to SA in 1991 and is presently a Gastroenterologist in private practice in Johannesburg.



**Prof Reidwaan Ally**

Prof Reid Ally graduated from the University of the Witwatersrand with an FCP in 1986. He was appointed adjunct Professor of Medicine in 2001. He is the current Head of Gastroenterology (Wits), Principal Physician and Head of the Medical Unit at the Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital. He is the Director of the African Institute of Digestive Diseases and Past President of the South African Gastroenterology Society (SAGES).

His mission is to promote Gastroenterology as a dynamic/scientific subspecialty, especially to the younger physicians, and to improve relations/needs between academic and private gastroenterologists. He

has a special interest in maintaining the SAGES Academy of Digestive Diseases (SAGES ADD) as a centre for training in Gastroenterology within sub-Saharan Africa and encouraging industry and research and development participations.



### Prof Michael C Kew

Prof Michael C Kew is currently Emeritus Professor and Honorary Professor of the University of the Witwatersrand and Honorary Professor in the Department of Medicine at the Groote Schuur Hospital in Cape Town. He spent his career as a physician and Hepatologist in Johannesburg (apart from short periods at the Royal Free Hospital in London and the National Institute of Health in Bethesda). Apart from his clinical and teaching duties, Prof Kew was actively involved in research.

His early research interest was in heat stroke in the gold mining industry in the Transvaal, but his lifelong research interest was in hepatocellular carcinoma, a devastating cancer of the liver which occurs with great frequency in the sub-Saharan Black African population. He has written a textbook of hepatocellular carcinoma as it occurs in the Black African and has written approximately 75 chapters on the tumour in books devoted to the diseases of the liver. He is the author of a great many articles in medical journals on the results of his research into cancer of the liver in the Black African.



### Prof Jake Krige

Prof Jake Krige is the past head of the HPB Surgery and Surgical Gastroenterology units at Groote Schuur Hospital which is a major referral centre for HPB and GI surgery in Southern Africa. He is the editor of the South African Journal of Surgery, has served on the editorial board of seven journals and is a member of eight international and South African surgical societies. In 2002 he received the prestigious University of Cape Town Distinguished Teacher Award.

He has been an invited speaker at surgical symposia in England, USA, Australia, France, Egypt, Greece, Israel, Japan, China, Sweden, India and the Czech Republic and has presented scientific papers at international meetings in England, USA, Germany, France, Italy, Australia, Holland, Hong Kong, Egypt, Greece and Spain. He is the author or co-author of 56 invited book chapters, 175 original peer-reviewed articles, 56 editorials and invited commentaries and 210 peer-reviewed published conference papers. Among his published works are three citation classics.





### Prof Jose Ramos

President of the Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary Association of South Africa (HPBASA) and Head of HPB Surgery at the Wits University Donald Gordon Medical Centre. Prof Jose Ramos was born in Mozambique and immigrated to South Africa in 1963. He graduated from University of the Witwatersrand with an MBBCh and obtained the FRCS Primary at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow in 1985 and before training as a surgeon at the Johannesburg Hospital from 1986 to 1991.

Prof Ramos obtained an FCS(SA) in 1991. He attained sub-specialty registration as a Surgical Gastroenterologist in 1995. He did postgraduate fellowship training in Los Angeles, Rennes, and Paris, having been awarded the Michael and Janie Miller Fellowship and later the Hoechst-Marrion-Roussel Fellowship. He has been in full-time private practice since 2001 and is currently at the University of the Witwatersrand Donald Gordon Medical Centre. He is a Senior Lecturer at the University of the Witwatersrand and an Honorary Consultant at the Johannesburg Hospital. In May 2010 he was promoted to Adjunct Professor by the University of the Witwatersrand.



### Prof Sandie Thomson

Professor and Head of the Division of Gastroenterology, University of Cape Town, since January 2011. Prof Thomson completed his undergraduate training at Aberdeen University, Scotland followed by General Surgery training in the Royal Air Force whilst on a short service commission and later at Aberdeen University. He spent two years as Fellow in Surgical Nutrition at Harvard and was awarded ChM thesis on Indirect Calorimetry in surgical patients.

A surgical appointment at the University of Natal followed and he spent the next twenty-two years at this institution working in its affiliated teaching hospitals, initially conducting research in trauma and subsequently in surgical aspects of gastroenterology. He established a Surgical Gastroenterology Unit at the now University of KwaZulu-Natal in 2005 and continued to develop sub-specialty surgery and the infrastructure to support it.

Prof Thomson has special expertise in laparoscopic and flexible endoscopy in particular ERCP with periods of specialised training at Cape Town and at Duke University during an American College of Surgeons International Scholarship in 1993. Previous appointments at UKZN: Academic Head Surgical Gastroenterology UKZN 2006. Professor of Surgery, Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine, College of Health Sciences, UKZN. 2002 Principal Specialist, HOD, Addington Hospital UKZN, 1999. Associate Professor, Senior Consultant Surgeon, Addington Hospital, UKZN 1993. Specialist and Senior Specialist Surgeon 1987 – 1993 King Edward VII Hospital, UN. Prof Thomson is involved in the administration of postgraduate research and acts as an external examiner. He is a Past President of SASES, SRS, SAGES, WGO Tele-education project leader, College of Surgeons of the CMSA; Examiner, Council Member, Past Secretary and Senator.



### John Platter (Patron)

John Platter is a retired Stellenbosch wine farmer and wine writer who founded the eponymous Platter's South African Wine Guide with his wife Erica in 1980. He came to the country in 1974 as a foreign correspondent for the American news agency, United Press International, after covering events in 40 countries in Africa, Europe, and the Middle East for 12 years. Platter has judged at numerous wine events around the world, has served on the South African Wine and Spirits Board, the South African Wine Trust, and has contributed to international wine books, including the Oxford Companion to Wine.

'It's a singular privilege to become a patron of the Gastro Foundation and to support its crucial role in funding world-class higher medical education for bright, dedicated young South Africans,' Platter said. 'The early outcomes of these initiatives are bearing fruit already. South Africa must not falter in its duty to its gifted young doctors – and to the nation - to sustain its distinguished international place in medicine and at the frontiers of research. As a beneficiary of early diagnosis and quality interventions to survive cancer, I've encountered at close quarters the critical importance of advanced education. The cliché is true: the well-being of the nation depends on it,' he says.

# Meet the Team

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Our team is proud to serve you. Together, we are fully committed to playing a positive role in the future of Gastroenterologists and Hepatologists in South Africa. Meet our team members:

- Chris Kassianides - Chairman
- Karin Fenton - Secretariat
- Bini Seale - Cornucopia Communications, Event Management
- Juliet Desilla - Cornucopia Communications, Event Management



*Karin Fenton, Chris Kassianides and Bini Seale,  
November 2015*



*Bini Seale and Karin Fenton*



*Juliet Desilla and Karin Fenton in Lagos*

# Launch of the Inaugural Meeting

The Gastroenterology Foundation of South Africa was inaugurated at the SAGES congress in Port Elizabeth in 2006 and the first meeting of the Gastro Foundation was held in Johannesburg over the weekend of 10th and 11th February 2007. The programme was aimed at the practicing medical and surgical Gastroenterologists and Hepatologists in South Africa.


Prof Joseph Sung, Chairman of the Department of Medicine of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, was the invited speaker. He addressed clinical aspects relating to acid peptic disease and the use of IV PPI therapy, the controversies surrounding the use of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs and the topical issue at the time of the withdrawal of Vioxx.



*Chris Kassianides, Joseph Sung,  
Reid Ally and Jose Ramos*



*Joseph Sung and the late  
Solly Marks (UCT)*



THE  
GASTROENTEROLOGY FOUNDATION  
OF SOUTH AFRICA  
Non-Gain Trust IT4253/2006 – Established 2006

## INAUGURAL MEETING 2007

*Recent advances in Gastroenterology and Hepatology  
A meeting designed for the practising  
gastroenterologist in South Africa*


**DATE:**  
Saturday 10 - Sunday 11 February 2007

**VENUE:**  
The Pharmaceutical Society, Rosebank, Gauteng

**INTERNATIONAL SPEAKERS:**  
Professor Pauline Hall, Australia  
Professor Joseph Sung, Hong Kong

**PRELIMINARY TOPICS:**  
*Failed PPI therapy. What to do?*  
*HIV and the liver*  
*Biologics in IBD*  
*Step up vs top down therapy?*  
*Managing pregnancy in IBD*  
*NSAIDS*  
*VIOXX withdrawal justified?*  
*Are the new COXIBS different?*  
*Colonoscopy vs virtual Colonography – is it time?*  
*Preoperative DXT for rectal Cancer – indications*  
*Management Issues*  
*What to do if you are reported to HPCSA*  
*What to do if your funder fails to approve therapy etc*

**For more information go to [www.gastrofoundation.co.za](http://www.gastrofoundation.co.za)**



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P O Box 13241, Mowbray 7705, South Africa  
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Fax: (+27) (21) 447 0582 Email: [karin.fenton@uct.ac.za](mailto:karin.fenton@uct.ac.za)

# Contributions to Continued Education

## Travel Grants

Travel to national and international congresses is an important priority for young fellows in training. This helps them gain insight into current trends in research and allows them to interact with international experts in their field of interest. The Foundation has encouraged attendance and presentations at local and international meetings by awarding travel grants.

### Travel Grants 2006

Travel awards awarded in 2006 included:

- Ten young investigators, all of whom had abstracts accepted, were funded to attend SAGES 2006 in Port Elizabeth.
- Four gastroenterology fellows attended the Dutch postgraduate course in October 2006.
- Dr Dion Levin of Groote Schuur Hospital, Cape Town, was awarded a travel grant to gain expertise in endoscopic ultrasound (EUS) in London.



*Yusuf Nanabhay, Mashiko Setshedi, Deepu George and Neo Seabi in the Netherlands*



*Elongo Fritz, Dion Levin, Chris Kassianides, John Shaw, Sharan Rambarran, Vukani Manzini and Brenda Olivier all received Gastro Foundation travel grants to attend the SAGES Congress in 2006.*

## Travel Grants 2007

Neo Seabi from the Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital spent three months in Amsterdam in February 2007 and gained the glamorous title of "The African Queen".

Mashiko Setshedi, from Groote Schuur Hospital, spent 3 months in Amsterdam later in 2007.

She was joined by fellow South Africans for the Amsterdam Live Endoscopy symposium organised by Prof Paul Fockens.



*Max Lagaud, Casper Troskie, Pieter de Bruyn, Mashiko Setshedi, Kugan Govender, Chris Mulder and Lucien Ferndale*



*Mashiko Setshedi spent three months with Chris Mulder at the Vrije University Medical Centre in Amsterdam in 2007.*

## DDW, USA 2008

Dion Levin and John Shaw were given travel grants to attend DDW in 2008.





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## Travelling Fellowship awarded to Dr Mashiko Setshedi

Awarding the Fellowship to Mashiko Setshedi, Chris Kassianides, Chair of the Foundation had this to say: "There are many medical graduates, such as myself, who have benefited enormously from a post-graduate education abroad, and this is precisely what the Gastroenterology Foundation strives to do – broadening the minds of our bright young medical graduates to pursue research opportunities abroad."



Mashiko, a graduate of the Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine at the University of KwaZulu-Natal did her postgraduate training in Internal Medicine at the King Edward Hospital in Durban. In 2005 she moved to Groote Schuur Hospital where she completed her training as a gastroenterologist. She spent three years at Brown University in the USA and returned to South Africa to take up a position at Groote Schuur Hospital. She is presently a Nuffield scholar at Oxford University.

Dr Mashiko Setshedi was awarded a 3-year Fellowship to Brown University – her Ph.D. thesis was funded by the Gastro Foundation. The topic was 'Impairments in Signalling Cascades Mediating the Progression of Liver Disease from Chronic Hepatitis to Hepato-cellular Carcinoma in Animal and Human Models. 2011'

Mashiko recalls her award at the time:

"I barely knew Chris Kassianides in 2008 when we had a chance encounter and happened to talk about what I planned to do. I said I wanted to do a Ph.D. (mind you at that time I really hadn't worked out the details of this), and without skipping a beat he offered to fund it. To be honest I wasn't quite sure how and why that had happened; it seemed so quick and so random. Nonetheless, a short 6 months thereafter, I was off to Brown University with full funding in hand for my studies, becoming the first recipient of a travel fellowship from the Gastroenterology Foundation of South Africa, thanks to Chris. Seven years later, I am still humbled by Chris's unwavering support of me, his dedication to training in Gastroenterology and the vision that gave birth to the GFSA. I have no words, save to congratulate the Foundation for the outstanding work it has done and continues to do for gastroenterology in South Africa and now continent-wide. May the GFSA grow from strength to strength!"



## Oxford Fellowship awarded to Dr Naayil Rajabally 2007

"The year in Oxford as a Senior Clinical Fellow will remain one of the highlights of my career and training. The fellowship had a strong focus on Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) since the department of Gastroenterology, based at the John Radcliffe Hospital, is a large tertiary IBD referral centre caring for around 3500 IBD patients and has a translational unit attached to it. The integration of science and clinical care makes the unit a leading centre for IBD in Europe and provided me with an excellent opportunity to consolidate my knowledge in this field. The large pool of IBD patients also meant that the unit was involved in several trials, which gave me exposure to this important aspect of IBD patient care.

All aspects of patient care follow strict protocols in the UK. This has prompted me to establish similar standards in the services that I provide to my patients in South Africa and I trust that today my patients are also benefitting from this. In addition, using cutting-edge equipment in a world-renowned unit instilled the confidence in me to incorporate new technology in my patient care.

After a successful year of learning, I left the City of Dreaming Spires with memories of having worked at a top institution with world experts.

I would like to thank the Gastro Foundation for the travel grant awarded to me for this fellowship."

Naayil Rajabally



*Naayil Rajabally, Simon Travis (Oxford) and Chris Kassianides*



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## Scholarships Awarded

The Gastroenterology Foundation is pleased to have awarded a number of R50 000 scholarships since its inception.

### 2006 Scholarship

Elongo Lekunze Fritz, Gastroenterology and Hepatology Unit, University of Pretoria  
Human Immune Virus (HIV) enteropathy.



### 2007 Scholarship

Dr Gill Watermeyer, GIT Clinic, Groote Schuur Hospital, University of Cape Town  
The Protective Role of Previous Helminth Infection in Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD).



## 2007 Scholarship

Schalk van der Merwe, University of Pretoria

Exploring the role of adipose tissue inflammation in the development of Non-Alcoholic Fatty liver disease.



## 2008 Scholarship

Dr Naayil Rajabally, IT Clinic, Groote Schuur Hospital, University of Cape Town

A prospective study of *Clostridium difficile* infection to investigate the impact of the JAP 1 strain in a tertiary referral hospital.



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## 2011 Scholarship

Dr Naayil Rajabally, GIT Clinic, Groote Schuur Hospital, University of Cape Town

Diagnostic value of a three-stage testing strategy for *Clostridium difficile* in a tertiary institution in South Africa.



## 2011 Scholarship

Dr Nazeer Chopdat, Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital, African Institute of Digestive Diseases Soweto South Africa, University of the Witwatersrand (WITS)

Analysis of bile juice and liver tissue by molecular PCR methods to determine the aetiology of HIV cholangiopathy, and evaluating the role of Ursodeoxycholic acid as a therapeutic modality.



## 2012 Scholarship

Claire Hoving, University of Cape Town

Investigating the immune response in a mouse model of ulcerative colitis.



*Gill Watermeyer collecting the prize on behalf of Claire Hoving*

## 2013 Scholarship

Dr Claire Warden, Colorectal Clinic, Groote Schuur Hospital, University of Cape Town  
Peripheral tibial nerve stimulation for treatment of faecal incontinence.

## 2014 Scholarship

Dr Sabelo Hlatshwayo, GIT Clinic, Groote Schuur Hospital, University of Cape Town  
The Clinical Epidemiological and Demographic Features as well as Underlying Genetic Predisposing Factors of Coeliac Disease in a South African cohort.



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## 2015 Scholarship

Dr Gill Watermeyer, GIT Clinic, Groote Schuur Hospital, University of Cape Town

Is CD73 expression in tissue granulomas of value in distinguishing intestinal tuberculosis from Crohn's disease in a South African cohort?

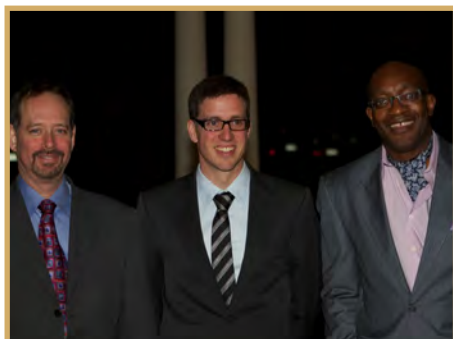


# The Gastro Foundation and SAGES Congresses

Over the last 10 years, we have collaborated closely with SAGES. We share a common vision and work closely to fulfill the needs of our training fellows and practicing Gastroenterologist and Hepatologists. The Foundation hosts the AGA post graduate course at the annual SAGES conference together with a day devoted to Hepatology. In 2015 we hosted the first Best of EASL in Africa at the SAGES conference in Durban.

In 2012 the first Twilight Symposium at SAGES was held - at the end of a conference day and offered an update on a broad range of topics given by our visiting speakers.

In 2008, the Gastro Foundation hosted a workshop at SAGES entitled 'All you wanted to know about research – but were afraid to ask.' Research is an important focus of the foundation and in 2009 the Gastro Foundation began a series of symposia, for fellows, in an attempt to stimulate interest in research. Included were topics on 'how to write a paper and get it published', 'how to choose a mentor' and 'how to choose a research subject'.



*Steven Brant, Marty Makary and Patrick Okolo  
2010 all from Johns Hopkins University, USA*



*Paul Fockens, Stevan Brant, Marcia Canto,  
Marty Makary, Michael C Kew, Chris  
Kassianides, Jake Krige, Jose Ramos, Reid Ally*



*David Epstein, Dion Levin,  
Paul Fockens (AMC, Netherlands) and Sean Burmeister*

## SAGES 2011

During SAGES with EHPBA 2011, Sandie Thomson gave the first Gastro Foundation lecture. The topic was 'Academic Scholarship: Without splicing and dicing DNA'.



*Prof Sandie Thomson (UCT)*

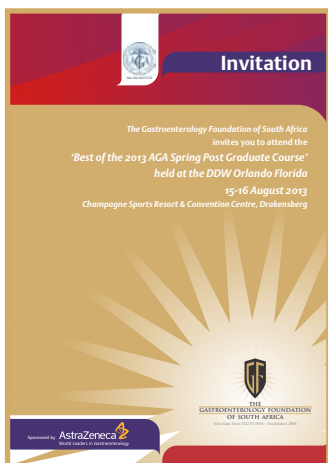


*Prof Sandie Thomson Presenting the Gastro Foundation lecture at SAGES 2011*

## SAGES 2012



## SAGES 2013



*Stephen Onyango, Keith Newton,  
Wangechi Wanjohi*

## SAGES 2014





## SAGES 2015



*Current SAGES President: Keith Newton (UKZN) and Karin Fenton, Durban 2015*



*Christo van Rensburg (Stellenbosch) and Keith Newton (UKZN)*



*Massimo Pinzani, Tom Hemming Karlson, Chris Kassianides, Bob Baigrie, Frank Tacke*

## SAGES 2016

Highlights of the 2016 SAGES conference include:

- the 2016 AGA Spring Post Graduate course,
- a Twilight Symposium with guest speakers Prof Joseph Sung and Dr Peter Irving,
- a Festschrift Symposium in honour of Prof Michael C Kew.



## Festschrift Symposium in honour of Prof Mike C Kew

It is indeed a great privilege for the Foundation to honour Prof Michael C Kew with a Festschrift Symposium at the 2016 SAGES conference. This symposium celebrates the formidable body of world-class research that he has produced and celebrates his reputation as an international leader in the field of liver cancer.



Introduction to Prof Michael C Kew	Jay Hoofnagle
Prof Michael C Kew and the Royal Free Hospital	Massimo Pinzani
Hepatitis B in Africa: Phylogeography and clinical reference	Anna Kramvis
Eradicating HBsAg and cccDNA – the current and the future direction of HBV management	Geoff Dusheiko
Towards eradicating HBV and HCC	Wendy Spearman
Hepatitis C: can we treat our way out of a global infection?	Mark Sonderup
The molecular aspects of HCC	Mashiko Setshedi
Is HCC different around the globe?	Adrian Di Besceglie and Lewis Roberts
HBV-related HCC: Liver Tx vs resection	Jose Ramos and Jean Botha

# The Spier Meeting

## Spier Post Graduate Training for Fellows

A major focus of the Foundation is the three day Spier post graduate meeting which has been held annually since 2010. This is an important time for close interaction between fellow and mentor and allows for formal post graduate teaching in both medical and surgical aspects of Gastroenterology and Hepatology.

The Spier weekend in 2016 attracted 36 fellows and 22 heads of departments and was the largest attended to date. Six years of fun and learning

### Spier 2010

Speaker Vijaj Shah was the international guest speaker at the first Spier meeting in 2010.



*Vijaj Shah and Chris Kassianides*



*Spier 2010 group*



*Spier 2010 early morning run*

## Spier 2011

Prof Chris Mulder was the international speaker for the 2011 Fellows Weekend.



*Spier 2011 early morning run*



*Sharan Rambarran, Damon Bizos,  
Veronique Nicolaou, Henderson Kabambe  
and Hilda Smith*



*Damon Bizos, Kay Karlsson and Jose Ramos*



*Neliswa Gogela, Kgaogelo Ntshwana  
and Monique Marais*



## Spier 2012



*Fellows Weekend 2012 - faculty*

## Spier 2013



*Fellows weekend 2013*



*Stephen Grobler, Christian Jeske, Mags Govender, Chris Kassianides, Sandie Thomson, Claire Warden, Keith Newton, Sharan Rambarran and Vivian Simmons*



*Nazeem Motala, Bilal Bobat, Neliswa Gogela, Allan Rajula and Tumelo Roestoff*



*Sandie Thomson and Keith Newton*

## Spier 2014



*Dr Cathryn Edwards from the UK honoured us as the guest speaker at this year's Fellows weekend.*



*Mashiko Setshedi, Chris Kassianides*



*Spier 2014 faculty*

## Spier 2015



*The international guest speaker at our Fellows weekend was Prof Paul Fockens (Netherlands).*



*Nigerian Fellows with Karin Fenton and Bini Seale*

Spier 2016



*Dr Cathryn Edwards from the UK honoured us as the guest speaker at this year's Fellows weekend.*



*Spier 2016 faculty with Ethiopians*



# Interest Groups



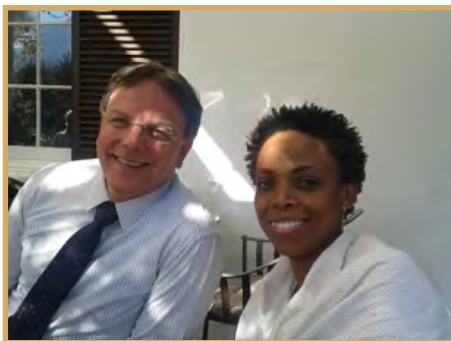
The establishment of a number of sub-specialty interest groups has sustained and updated the practising Gastroenterologist and those interested in Hepatology over the past 10 years. The Liver and IBD Interest Groups are perhaps the most popular and the most established. Notable visits in 2015 were Prof Ann Griffiths from Toronto SickKids and Prof Gyongyi Szabo, past president of the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD). Interest groups relating to Acid peptic disease, Gut Microbiota and GI bleeding of obscure origin and Paediatric gastroenterology are held at various times according to the emerging topics at the time and the need to update colleagues on controversies that may be present.

## IBD Interest Group Meeting

The Gastro Foundation has hosted two IBD meetings a year since 2010, with regular visitors. Gerard Rogler, University of Zurich, Switzerland, and chair of the Scientific Committee of ECCO has been a frequent visitor - much admired and much appreciated.



*Gill Watermeyer, Chris Kassianides, David Epstein and Gerard Rogler*



*Gerard Rogler and Mashiko Setshedi*



*Gerard Rogler with Reid Ally*



*Kay Karlsson, Anell Meyer and Celeste Kock*





*Kay Karlsson, Daniel Surridge  
and David Epstein*



*H Bhaga, Wisdom Mudombi, Jonathan Bolon,  
Reena Kara, Veneshree Naidoo  
and Melvin Mbao*

At an IBD meeting at the Inanda Club in July 2016, Kay Karlsson presented an update on the use of FMT in IBD. Gill Watermeyer delivered, in her superlative way, advice on discontinuing Biologic therapy in IBD. David Epstein, much admired in South Africa, rolled out his IBD Registry and updated us on current practice management.



*David Epstein, Gill Watermeyer  
and Ernst Fredericks*

## Paediatric Gastroenterology Interest Group



*Sanjay Lala, Alta Terblanche, Gill Watermeyer, Etienne Nel, Chris Kassianides, Ronalda de Lacy, Rob Brown, Liz Goddard, Ferring Rep and Karin Fenton 2013*

## IBD and Paediatric Gastroenterology 2015

Prof Anne Griffiths, Paediatric Inflammatory Bowel Disease Specialist visits Cape Town in September 2015.

Data from the South African Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) Registry shows an exponential increase in Crohn's disease and Ulcerative colitis over the past 40 years in South Africa. With increasing IBD prevalence more and more children are being diagnosed with both Crohn's disease and Ulcerative colitis and are seeking care.

In South Africa children and adolescents with Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis often find themselves in 'no man's land' in terms of care. Firstly IBD is often not thought of, let alone recognised, in children and there are often prolonged delays in diagnosis. Secondly adult gastroenterologists, familiar with IBD, often feel uncomfortable managing children and many refuse to see children. Paediatric gastroenterologists are few and far between (18 registered in SA) while general paediatricians may not have the experience required to manage IBD.

Dr David Epstein, a Cape Town gastroenterologist with an interest in IBD started seeing children



*Anne Griffiths (Canada) with Paediatric Gastroenterologists*

in 2009 and has a growing paediatric IBD (PIBD) practice. In 2010 he made contact with Prof Anne Griffiths at SickKids Hospital, Toronto for guidance and advice. Over the past five years, he has been in regular contact with Anne and one of his more challenging patients travelled to Toronto in 2014 for an opinion at Sick Kids. An invitation was extended to Anne to visit Cape Town in 2015.

Prof Anne Griffiths is Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Toronto, the inaugural holder of the Northbridge Chair in IBD, Co-Lead (with Dr Alex Muise) of the SickKids IBD Center of Excellence, and since 2008 Head of the Division of GI/Hepatology/Nutrition. She has authored over 200 peer reviewed publications and over 40 book chapters and has lectured internationally on paediatric IBD. Her unit sees 120 new paediatric IBD patients a year.

Anne's programme was aimed at raising PIBD awareness amongst paediatricians, educating our community in PIBD care and facilitating PIBD networks across the country. She held focused meetings with both adult and paediatric gastroenterologists at Groote Schuur Hospital and Red Cross Hospital and delivered lectures to general paediatricians on PIB and adult physicians on Paediatric to Adult Transitional Care. Her programme culminated with a Gastro Foundation sponsored Paediatric IBD Symposium on Saturday 12th September 2015.

The Paediatric IBD Symposium was a resounding success. It was attended by paediatricians, adult gastroenterologists, paediatric surgeons, dieticians and IBD nurses. Gastro Foundation must be commended for getting almost every Paediatric Gastroenterologist in the country to Cape Town for the meeting. The programme included talks on PIBD by Anne Griffiths, a fascinating overview of paediatric nutritional challenges facing SA in 2015 delivered Dr Etienne Nel, Exclusive Enteral Nutrition by dietician Kath Megaw and PIBD case presentations.

Anne spent a morning visiting the Klein Drakenstein Paediatric Research Centre in Paarl. This is a large mother/child cohort study funded by the Gates Foundation and the Wellcome Trust, run by Prof Heather Zar from Red Cross Hospital.



*Chris Kassianides, Anne Griffiths  
and Etienne Nel*

Prof Zar's protocol includes a gastroenterology component with longitudinal faecal microbiota analyses in relation to childhood health outcomes. The meeting was followed by a tour of a Paarl East township where mother/child pairs are recruited for the study.

I would like to thank Chris Kassianides and The Gastro Foundation for supporting Anne's visit, which has gone a long way in raising the profile of PIBD in Cape Town. The gastroenterology community is extremely fortunate in having Karin Fenton and Bini Seale working behind the scenes. These meetings seem to 'materialise' and this was my first glimpse of the organisational skills and effort required to make it all happen.

Anne's visit can best be summed up by this email received from her shortly after her visit to Cape Town.

"I had an absolutely wonderful week in Cape Town! I doubt that anyone has had such a rich experience in the space of 5-6 days, enjoying the natural beauty of the region and the charm of the people, getting insights into the history and current affairs of the nation, and learning (for me) new medicine! It was a pleasure meeting all the adult and paediatric team members. Such a friendly and welcoming group! I hope I can stay in touch with many of them, and certainly, will be happy to offer any advice about patients at any time."

David Epstein

## Microbiota Interest Group

With the increasing importance of gut microbiota in the pathophysiology of gut and liver diseases, the Foundation formed a Gut Microbiome interest group in 2014. Prof Eamonn Quigley, our first invited speaker to this group, gave a comprehensive yet practical approach to gut microbiota. With the current interest in Faecal Microbiota Transplantation (FMT) in the treatment of IBD, the Gut Microbiota group has merged with the IBD interest group. Prof Eamonn Quigley (USA), seen here in 2014 at the Gastro Foundation Microbiota Interest Group meeting



*Wim de Villiers, John Platter, Chris Kassianides and Eamonn Quigley*

## Liver Interest Group

### Inaugural Liver Interest Group UCT circa 1992

The Liver interest group holds a special place in the foundation. The Chairman Chris Kassianides, received his initial training as a Hepatologist and the seeds of the Foundation were initially sowed by the first Liver Interest Group founded by Prof Pauline Hall and Chris Kassianides over 20 years ago. The liver interest group has, in a short space of time, established important networks with sub-Saharan African (SSA) hepatologists and this has facilitated contact with SSA gastroenterologists.

This has fast-tracked a network of gastroenterologists and hepatologists in SSA that has established in a short time an SSA GI Hepatology working group that will ultimately lead to the sub-Saharan Society of Gastroenterology and Hepatology.



*Back: Ernie Song, Richard Kirsch, Henry Hairwadzi, AK Cariem, Richard Hift*

*Front Row: Steven Price, Alan Patterson, Chris Kassianides, Pauline Hall, Ralph Kirsch, Wendy Spearman, Enid Shepherd, Stuart Saunders*

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## Liver Interest Group 2011

### 5th Liver Interest Group Cape Town 2014

Viral hepatitis in Africa



*Sub-Saharan Africa group at the Liver Interest Group meeting in 2014*



*Chris Kassianides, Mark Sonderup, Wendy Spearman,  
Richard Hift (UKZN) and Mike Kew*





Mary Afihene (Ghana), John Regwasha  
(Tanzania) and Funmi Lesi (Nigeria)



Chris Kassianides and Mike Kew

## 6th Liver Interest Group meeting December 2015

*if the surfeit of delicacies,  
or the wine of my country dared to disturb my health  
or equilibrium of my poetry,  
from you,  
dark monarch,  
giver of syrups and of poisons  
regulator of salts,  
from you I hope for justice:  
I love Life: Do not betray me! Work on! Do not arrest my song.*

*Chilean Nobel Laureate, Pablo Neruda 'Ode to the Liver'*

The Gastroenterology Foundation certainly paid homage to the ills of betrayed livers by focusing on Alcoholic and Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease at the annual Liver Interest group meeting at the Crystal Towers Hotel at the beginning of December 2015. The Liver transplant team at Wits Donald Gordon Medical Centre is in the process of presenting its 10 year audit data. I was able to present some of it at the South African Transplant Society conference in October this year. Alcoholic Steatohepatitis and Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver disease were the second and third most common cause of liver transplantation at our centre, underlining the importance of the focus of this meeting.

We were fortunate enough to have the Liver Interest group meeting attended by Prof Gyongyi Szabo, President of the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD) and Professor and Vice Chair for Research in the Department of Medicine of the University of Massachusetts Medical School, USA. Additionally, we played host to colleagues from the rest of the African continent who added much needed local perspectives. Their presence also alluded to the Gastroenterology Foundation's future endeavors in taking the Foundation from a local to a continental organisation, educating gastroenterologists through sub-Saharan Africa.

Dr Chris Kassianides opened the meeting with updates from the recent AASLD meeting held in November in San Francisco in 2015, leaving me with the question of whether we could see the eradication of Hepatitis C in the not too distant future considering the ever increasing



*Funmi Lesi, Mike Kew and Olusegun Ojo*

armamentarium along with the ever decreasing complexity of treatment making these drugs more available to those that need it. Dr Corn  Kruger asked why NAFLD is less prevalent in the South African black population and used some of his research to postulate different epigenetic mechanisms that may be at play.

Prof Fumni Lesi from Nigeria then dropped the 'N' and discussed alcohol-related liver disease. The different types of alcohol consumed in different societies vary considerably along with the alcohol content of traditional brews. Palm wine popular in West Africa can have an ethanol content of 37% which puts it into the same weight category as heavy hitters such as vodka! Additionally, cofactors such as Southern Africa's high Hepatitis B prevalence and potential high iron and aflatoxin ingestion may contribute to the burden of disease.

Prof Szabo gave a fascinating basic science lecture on the Gut-Liver Axis in alcoholic liver disease and showed how intestinal integrity was compromised with heavy ethanol use leading to bacterial translocation and inflammation triggered by Pathogen Associated Molecular Patterns (PAMPs) which are part of the innate immune system triggering an inflammatory response. Additionally, alcohol can lead to bacterial dysbiosis, resulting in a pro-inflammatory gut microbiome.



*Bini Seale, Yaw Awuku (Ghana),  
Mary Afihene (Ghana),  
John Rwegasha (Tanzania) and Karin Fenton*



*sub-Saharan Group on Signal Hill*

Prof Wendy Spearman focused our attention on the growing problem of childhood obesity and with it, the problem of paediatric NAFLD. Management of the threat of NAFLD is surely where the hepatologists' focus needs to be considering the massive advances in the treatment of Hepatitis C.

Once again, a highly successful event hosted by the Gastroenterology Foundation with an excellent turnout. It certainly was a coup to attract such a prominent speaker fresh from the AASLD conference. The bar has been raised for next year!

Dr Bilal Bobat, Consultant at Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital and Wits Donald Gordon



*Gyongi Szabo with Funmi Lesi (Nigeria)*



*Gyongi Szabo with Chris Kassianides*



*Henry Kioko (Kenya), Abate Shewaye (Ethiopia) and John Rewgasha (Tanzania)*



*VG Naidoo, Lina da Cunha (Mozambique) and Betty Musau (Kenya)*



*Neo Seabi with Betty Apica and Gyongi Szabo*



## Acid Peptic Disease Interest Group

### Multidisciplinary approach to Extra-Oesophageal Acid Reflux Disease

Extra-oesophageal reflux disease is an increasingly recognised complication of acid reflux. In view of the increased morbidity and lack of understanding a nationwide series of symposia were held in 2011, under the auspices of the foundation, in order to highlight aspects of the pathophysiology and approach to treatment.

Prof Michael F Vaezi, Clinical Director of the Division of Gastroenterology, Hepatology, and Nutrition at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in the USA launched the symposium at the Sandton Convention Centre on Saturday 10 September 2011 with meetings in Port Elizabeth, Nelspruit, Bloemfontein, and in Cape Town. The meetings were attended by general practitioners, physicians, ENT surgeons, gastroenterologists and surgeons.

Prof Vaezi presented an in-depth discussion of the mechanisms, diagnostic modalities and therapeutic options in patients who present with symptoms suggestive of extra-oesophageal acid reflux disease. Case presentations highlighted these important points.



*Prof Michael Vaezi (Professor of Medicine in the Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology at the Vanderbilt University Medical Center.)*



*Michael Vaezi, Caroline Lee, Corne Kruger, Chris Kassianides and Lance Maron*



*Acid Peptic Disease group pic Cape Town*



*Derek Burns and Solly Marks*



*Harold Bloch, Michael Vaezi  
and Phillipus Bornman*



*A lighthearted moment with Chris Kassianides  
and Michael Vaezi*

## Balancing the GI and CVS RISK in NSAID THERAPY

A generous grant for AstraZeneca in 2013 presented the opportunity for the foundation to bring together gastroenterologists, cardiologists, physicians, and anaesthesiologists to address the importance of balancing GI and Cardiovascular risk in patients on long-term NSAID therapy.

Loren Laine, past president of the AGA and Chris Hawkey, a world authority on NSAIDS, participated in the symposium which attracted over 120 delegates to the convention centre in Cape Town.

Loren Laine and Yvonne Shererer travelled to Cape Town to be present, while Chris Hawkey presented via video conference link from the UK.



*Fellows at the meeting: Erica Murunga, Robert Nel, Wayne Simmonds, Bilal Bobat, Shiraaz Gabriel, Paul Dempsey, Tarisai Nyahoda, Leanne Prodehl, Nadine Harran and Wangechi Wanjohi (Kenya) 1st Best of EASL 2015*

## Obscure GI Bleed Interest Group

- Saturday 26 May 2012: The Hyatt, Rosebank, Johannesburg
- Saturday 1 June 2013: Oyster Box, Durban
- Saturday 8 June 2013: Mount Nelson Hotel, Cape Town

Saturday morning meetings on obscure GI Bleeding in both Durban and Cape Town hosted by The Gastroenterology Foundation.

The Durban meeting was held at the Oyster Box in Umhlanga. Dr Keith Pettengell opened the academic session with a clear and well thought out talk on overt and occult bleeding. He covered definitions, different patient presentations, and an investigation algorithm with a sense of the yield of these investigations. This was followed by a comprehensive talk on the pros and cons of both capsule and double balloon endoscopy by Dr Eduan Deetlefs for investigating these patients. These concepts were then demonstrated by Dr Stephen Grobler who presented case studies and the subsequent findings on capsule endoscopy. He also discussed some of the new innovations with the capsule to improve detection.

A hearty brunch was had by all, after which we heard about iron deficiency anaemia, the pathophysiology of iron absorption and different treatment options available to us for iron replacement. Newer agents not yet available were also discussed. To finish the morning a thought-provoking talk was given by Elsabe Klinck on the therapeutic substitution of products in the healthcare sector.



The following weekend the meeting was repeated in Cape Town at the Mount Nelson Hotel. We went from hot and sunny in Durban to cold and wet in Cape Town but with an equally warm welcome. The talks were well received with good discussion and again the responsibility of funding by medical aids was a hot topic for debate.

Kay Karlsson  
Wits Donald Gordon Medical Centre

*Stephen Grobler,  
Mandy Watermeyer  
(Takeda),  
Eduan Deetlefs,  
Keith Pettengell,  
Chris Zaidy, Kay Karlsson,  
Chris Kassianides and  
Reid Ally  
(Johannesburg 2012)*



*Cape Town Faculty–  
Obscure GI Bleeding  
2013: Eduan Deetlefs,  
John Wright,  
Elsabe Klinck,  
Chris Kassianides,  
Kay Karlsson,  
Chris Zaidy,  
Sandie Thomson, Keith  
Pettengel and  
Stephen Grobler.*

*Durban Faculty –  
Obscure GI Bleeding  
2013: Keith Newton,  
TE Madiba,  
Stephen Grobler, Chris  
Kassianides,  
Kay Karlsson,  
Elsabe Klinck,  
Eduan Deetlefs and  
Keith Pettengel*





# Collaboration with International Societies

Most gratifying for the Foundation is the successful collaboration with international societies, namely the American Gastroenterology Association (AGA) and the European Association for the study of the Liver (EASL). Thanks to the interest and determination of Dr Peter Holt, past councilor at the AGA and presently at Rockefeller University, the Gastro Foundation brings the AGA Post Graduate Course to South Africa annually. Prof Markus Peck, past president of EASL, was instrumental in bringing the best of EASL to Africa in 2015. These courses are now being held in various centres in sub-Saharan Africa.

## AGA

### 1st Best of AGA 2012 was held in JHB, Durban and Cape Town

Accompanying Peter Holt for the first AGA post graduate course was a much-admired faculty consisting of Maria Abreu (Miami), Ronnie Fass (Cleveland), Paul Martin (Miami) and Gary Falk (Pennsylvania).



*Allan Rajula, Peter Holt and Wisdom Mudombi*



*Peter Holt and Chris Kassianides*



*Maria Abreu, Ronnie Fass, Gary Falk, Peter Holt and Paul Martin*



## 2nd AGA Post Graduate course held at SAGES/ISUCRS 2013 in the Drakensberg

Accompanying Brendan Spiegel (LA), chairman of the AGA postgraduate course for 2013, was William Tremaine (Mayo Rochester) and Neena Abrahams (Mayo Arizona). They facilitated the second AGA post graduate course to South Africa.



*Mike Kew, Chris Kassianides, William Tremaine, Neena Abrahams, Brendan Spiegel, Jose Ramos, Jake Krige, Reid Ally and Sandie Thomson*



*Best of AGA 2013 at Champagne Sports Resort, Drakensberg*

Since 2013 the best of the postgraduate course has been chaired by visiting speakers to SAGES and using local experts as chairs and moderators.



*Neena Abrahams with Wangechi Wanjohi and Edna Kamau from Kenya*





*Adam Mahomed and Chris Mulder*



*Bernard Insam, James Garisch, Andy Girdwood, Eduan Deetlefs, Jose Ramos*

## AGA 2014



## AGA 2015



## Best of EASL



*We are grateful to Prof Markus Peck for his enthusiasm and foresight in bringing EASL to Africa*

Markus Peck – past Secretary General and past President of EASL, Professor of Medicine, Department of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Endocrinology and Nephrology, Klinikum Klagenfurt am Wörthersee, Klagenfurt, Austria

Prof Peck served as Vice-secretary of EASL from 2011 to 2013 and has been Secretary General of EASL since April 2013. He also serves as the Secretary General of the Austrian Association for Internal Medicine.

The first Best of EASL Africa was held in at the SAGES ASSA meeting in Durban in 2015. Wendy Spearman of Groote Schuur Hospital presented this report on the event:

“The Faculty included international speakers Prof Massimo Pinzani, Director of the UCL Institute for Liver and Digestive Health and the Royal Free hospital; Prof Tom Karlsen, leader of the Norwegian PSC centre and Molecular Hepatology at the University of Oslo; Prof Frank Tacke of RWTH Aachen University, where he is the leader of a molecular liver research laboratory.

Speakers from South and sub-Saharan Africa included Prof Funmi Lesi from Lagos and Corne Kruger, Mashiko Setshedi, Mark Sonderup and Wendy Spearman from Cape Town.

The morning session started with approaches to the patient with elevated transaminases and cholestasis – an important introduction for fellows and practising hepatologists in the initial assessment of patients with liver disease. This was followed by talks on the standard evaluation (Prof Pinzani) and management (Prof Tacke) of NAFLD. Corne Kruger then gave a local perspective on NAFLD.

Obesity is increasing in southern sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) with the highest incidence in South Africa where 13.5% of men and 42% of women are obese. It is important to recognise the morbidity and all-cause mortality associated with NAFLD and the need to treat the associated risk factors.

The afternoon session concentrated on Viral Hepatitis. Mark Sonderup discussed screening and staging of Hepatitis C – including who to screen in the South African context and importantly staging as this determines the duration of therapy with the new DAAs as well as the need for ribavirin. Prof Tacke then discussed new DAA therapeutic options for HCV and emphasised the need to choose DAA combinations and treatment duration based on the presence of treatment naïve or treatment experienced; non-cirrhotic or cirrhotic compensated or decompensated. In SSA, it will be important to have DAA combinations that are pangenotypic.


This was followed by a talk on Chronic Hepatitis B: whom to treat and new strategies for finite treatment. In SSA, where Hepatitis B remains endemic despite the availability of an effective vaccine, it is essential for all physicians to have a practical approach to HBV treatment. Exciting future developments include drugs directed at various sites of the HBV life cycle and therapeutic vaccines. Wendy Spearman gave an overview of HBV/HIV co-infection in Africa, which in contrast to the developed world outnumbers HCV/HIV co-infections. HIV promotes chronicity of HBV infection, liver fibrosis and increases the risk of hepatocellular carcinoma. Liver-related mortality is 2x higher in HBV/HIV than in HCV/HIV coinfections and HAART improves overall survival even in cirrhotics.

The last session of the symposium addressed the important topics of HCC screening, diagnosis, and management (Prof Lesi), screening for portal hypertension and complications of cirrhosis (Prof Pinzani) and autoimmune liver disease (Prof Karlsen). Unfortunately, HBV despite being vaccine preventable, still remains the major cause of HCC in Africa. This talk emphasized the need for policies regarding regular screening

and early diagnosis in order to have any therapeutic impact in patients presenting with HCC. Prof Pinzani gave an excellent overview of the efficacy of invasive and non-invasive methods of screening for portal hypertension – the development of portal hypertension has important prognostic and management implications. This was followed by an overview of the pathophysiology of portal hypertension and complications of cirrhosis, highlighting the concept of cirrhosis associated immune dysfunction (CAIDS) and that advanced chronic liver disease is the result of a chronic inflammatory syndrome and not just a simple haemodynamic disturbance. The final talk addressed management of autoimmune liver disease (AIH, PSC, and PBC). This area of Hepatology is usually neglected, there are few randomised control trials and liver symposia tend to concentrate on viral hepatitis. In South Africa, AIH and PSC are frequent indications for liver transplantation

Overall, the attendance was excellent, this is testament to the increasing interest in Hepatology that the Gastro Foundation has fostered through its Liver Interest Group meetings, AGA Postgraduate courses and now 'Best of EASL in Africa'.

'Best of EASL in Africa' was a great success and we hope that this will become a regular feature at SAGES.



THE GASTROENTEROLOGY FOUNDATION OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Best of EASL – Africa**

to be held at ASSA SAGES: Durban | Saturday, 8 August 2015

The Gastroenterology Foundation welcomes you to attend the first Best of European Association for the Study of the Liver (EASL) meeting in Africa. Visit [www.assasages.co.za](http://www.assasages.co.za) to register for the congress

In partnership with

**Best of EASL – Africa**

- Approach to elevated transaminases
- Approach to the cholestatic patient
- Standard evaluation of NAFLD
- Management of NAFLD
- NAFLD in Africa – does it differ?
- Screening & Staging of HCV
- New treatment options for HCV

- Chronic hepatitis B: whom to treat & new strategies for finite treatment
- HBV/HCV co-infection in Africa
- HCC screening, diagnosis and therapy
- Screening for portal hypertension in cirrhosis
- Complications of cirrhosis: update 2015
- Management and treatment failure of autoimmune & cholestatic liver diseases

**International Speakers**



**Dr. Tom Hemming**  
Karlsen,  
University of Oslo



**Dr. Massimo Pinzani**  
University College of London



**Dr. Frank Tacke**  
RWTH Aachen University



*Massimo Pinzani (University College of London),  
Tom Hemming Karlson (University of Oslo) and  
Franck Tacke (RWTH Aachen University)*



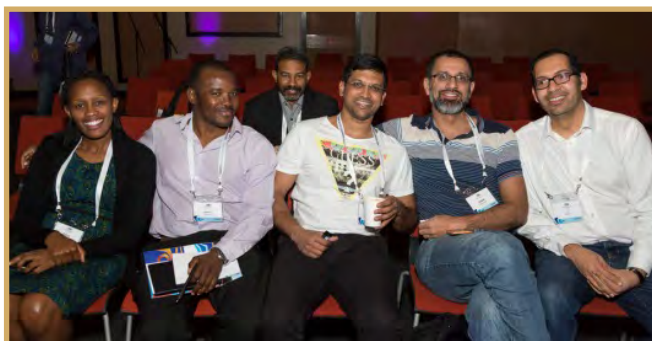
*Frank Tacke, Wendy Spearman and Tom  
Hemming Karlson*



*Betty Apcia (Uganda), Mike Kew,  
Christopher Opia (Uganda) and  
Emmanuel Musabeyezu (Rwanda)*



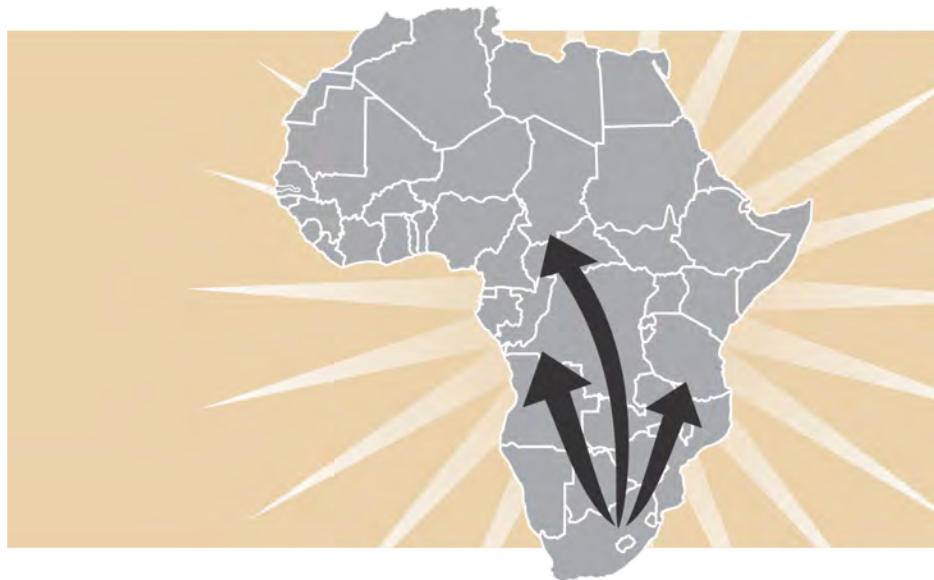
*VG Naidoo and Wisodm Mudombi*



*Adam Mahomed and Fellows  
Edna Kamau (Kenya), Joshua Sibanda, Mahmoud Khierallah  
(Sudan), Zaheer Adham, Adam Mahomed, Ismail Moola*

# Travels Into Africa

## Beginning in 2015



### First meeting Best of AGA Ghana: March 2015

Gastro Foundation AGA Post Graduate Course in Accra, Ghana April 2015

For several years now GIT fellows from various countries in sub-Saharan Africa, had been trained in South Africa. Because of this outreach programme, excellent relationships had been established. With the help of AstraZeneca, the Gastro Foundation arranged a meeting at the Mövenpick Hotel in Accra. Chris Kassianides, Mark Sonderup, Wim de Villiers and I made up the South African faculty and co-chaired with local opinion leaders. The audience (participants) was made up of 17 gastroenterologists from Nigeria and 60 doctors (physicians, surgeons, and gastroenterologist) from Ghana. The South African faculty were Chris Kassianides, Mark Sonderup, Wim de Villiers and myself.

On the Friday evening, I gave a talk on Peptic Ulcer Bleeding, including H-pylori and the American and European guidelines of management of this infection. This was well received by the audience and stimulated much discussion, mainly regarding their lack of equipment/skills to stop ulcer-bleeding and the availability of drugs. On the Saturday we presented the 2014 DDW postgraduate course. We showed 14 DVDs, using 6 groups of moderators (a South African, partnered with a 'local specialist'). We covered topics from the oesophagus, large bowel, pancreatic-biliary and the liver. The DVDs were well received, provoking much discussion. The moderators were excellent, initiating discussion on the topic as well as the local experience. After a long day, we had comments from the participants regarding the course. All had felt very pleased in the knowledge gained and appreciative of the effort. They expressed the need for continuous CPD within the environment, especially as regards epidemiology of these diseases. Under the guidance of Dr Mary Afihene and Prof Nkrumah, the president of the newly formed



Ghana Association for the Study of Liver and Digestive Diseases (GASLIDD), we had a wonderful 2 day meeting, both informative and social. The attendees were enthusiastic, engaging and just eager to learn. What an experience for us!

At the closing Chris, on behalf of the Gastro Foundation thanked AstraZeneca, Mary Afihene, Karin and Bini, the faculties and all the participants for making our first visit to Ghana a memorable and worthy experience. We also met with Prof Ojo (from Nigeria and currently the President of AMAGE), and discussed forthcoming meetings in sub-Saharan Africa. We even managed to have a short sightseeing tour and lunch at a grand beachfront hotel. As is with most developing countries, there is a front of opulence and development. But lurking behind it is the ugly face of poverty and inequality. Yet the ordinary Ghanaian is proud, honest, happy and appreciative. I guess there is corruption in all countries (maybe not the UK, Germany etc.), however the local men/women in the street went about doing their work/chores in a thankful manner – a humbling experience. For a first visit and not knowing what to expect, we were enlightened and will continue to pursue this kind of outreach. All of this is made available through Chris's unending effort to materialise the vision of the Gastro Foundation ie sharing knowledge, encouraging/motivating colleagues and helping sub-Saharan Africa.

Reid Ally



*Karin Fenton and Wim de Villiers*



*Mary Afihene and Chris Kassianides*







*Eberee Amonmeze (Nigeria) and Karin Fenton*



*Wim de Villiers, Nicholas Adjei and Taiba Afaa*

## Lagos, Nigeria: 2015

The Gastroenterology Foundation of South Africa

In association with WGO and SOGHIN invites you to attend

Post Graduate Hepatology Course

Post Graduate Fellows Training

Lagos University Teaching Hospital, Nigeria

South African Faculty

Dr Chris Kassianides Prof Reid Ally

Prof Damon Bizos Dr Mark Sonderup Prof Sandie Thomson

If the truth be told, I was told not to go to Lagos by none other than a Nigerian colleague. Unless of course I was assured of an armed escort and had handlers all the time. I thought it a bit dramatic however similar themes emanated from other colleagues. Then the Nigerian elections happened and we were told that the trip may be delayed because of election violence and instability. They say between two extremes lies the truth and this is likely the case in this instance. So it was that we left on our West African adventure. Getting through the airport is somewhat taxing. Just forget what you know about typical airport arrival activity – this is very different. Multiple stops, checks, forms, emigration at many desks... then your luggage. Exiting the airport one is

struck by AK47 wielding soldiers, a reminder of Boko Haram and its nefarious intents. Let's just say Lagos is another world. The airport is an experience, outside waiting for your ride is equally another experience. More people thronging there than at a typical football or rugby match in South Africa.

**Slipping into the hotel through the stifling tropical heat was a welcome respite.**

Nigerians are very friendly people and make you feel at home. Chris Kassianides believes it's due to their genetically higher levels of the endogenous cannabinoid neurotransmitter, Anandamide. Even so, despite many problems in their country they are friendly and ebullient.



I'm thinking that we can do with some anandamide some days.

Our 3-day meeting started off with a Post-Graduate half day teaching session focusing on Liver disease in Africa completed by a twilight symposium on Hepatitis C. On Saturday the new WGO GI training centre was inaugurated completed by a superb talk by Patrick Okolo in the evening. Sunday we spent doing 'Spier' type training of their fellows at various stations. Of the trip, I personally enjoyed Sunday the most. The eagerness and desire to learn expressed by the Nigerian fellows was extremely gratifying and made teaching an absolute pleasure.

We left for the airport early as we were told again about the 'traffic. We got to the airport within 25 minutes. In any event

departure from Lagos was a little gentler than arrival although equally convoluted and unnecessarily complicated. I had my core body temperature measured twice within 10 meters of 2 points in the airport. I'm proud to say, despite provocation, I remained cool, at least in centigrade.

Nigeria was an unexpected surprise in that one anticipated something and experienced something completely different. The expansion into Africa by the Gastroenterology Foundation is correct. It is demonstrating enormous benefits and building much-needed bridges. I believe we have the capability, if not the responsibility, to share our expertise with our colleagues on the continent we call home.

Mark Sonderup

In 2015 we hosted a three-day symposium coinciding with the opening of the Lagos University Teaching Hospital WGO Training Centre which included the best of the AGA Post Graduate Course, a Spier-like fellows meeting with a morning devoted to the WGO Train the Trainers course.

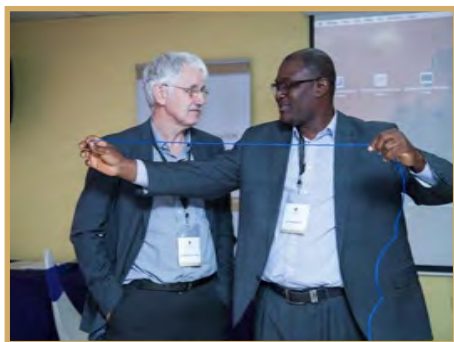




*Chris Kassianides and Funmi Lesi*



*Nigerian Faculty, Fellows with the team*



*Train the Trainer*



*Fatai Oloukoba and Sandie Thomson*



*Reid Ally, Musa Mohamed Borodo  
and Abraham Malu*



*Chris Kassianides and John Okolo*



*Remi Oluyemi and Mark Sonderup*



*Monique Anderson and Prof Borodo (Nigeria)*



## GASLIDD Inaugural meeting October 2015



The Ghana Meeting: a melting pot of academic excellence, a vibrant and generous people with an illustrious history.

I was fortunate to attend and present, as part of the South Africa faculty, the 1st Scientific Conference and Annual General Meeting of the Ghana Association for the Study of Liver and Digestive Diseases, with the catchy acronym, GASLIDD.

A pre-conference programme preceded the meeting, which by all accounts was well organised and executed. We arrived in Kumasi on Thursday morning, in time for the actual conference, which kicked off with abstract presentations. Following the abstracts were the plenary sessions, where a variety of Gastroenterology and Hepatology talks were presented by the Ghanaian and international faculty members. What came out strongly from the discussions was that Hepatitis B and hepatocellular carcinoma are indeed a plague in West Africa, and pose similar management challenges to those we face here in South Africa. This for me emphasises the urgent need for epidemiological and molecular study in this area. Specifically, we need to combine our efforts and collaborate on these key issues, in order to effect an understanding of HBV in our patients, which as we know is different phenotypically from patients in developed nations. This will allow us to formulate investigation and treatment guidelines that can impact on HBV in our setting. The fellows' session, where clinical cases were presented, was similar in format to that conducted at the Spier weekend and generated much provoking and insightful discussion. Furthermore, rather than run in parallel, as originally planned, we conducted these concurrently with Train the Trainer (TTT) sessions, which made sense for both the fellows and faculty alike, in terms of the ability to interact with each other and share ideas from both sides. Arguably, this session was the one to beat, from the feedback received.

The sessions on Friday were equally interesting and instructive, but for me the highlight was the opening ceremony, which was a star-studded dignitary affair that was covered by the Ghanaian media. I quite enjoyed the formalities, which were heralded by the singing of the national anthem. The welcome address was done by Dr Nkrumah, who in my mind, is the grandfather of gastroenterology in Ghana, much like our own beloved Prof Solly Marks. The guest lecture was delivered by Prof Lewis Roberts, himself a Ghanaian (although currently based at the Mayo Clinic), which I thought was quite fitting. He gave a philosophical but thought-provoking lecture on building gastroenterology in Ghana.

Apart from an inspired and enjoyable academic programme that was of the highest quality, we were also very well looked after. Dr Mary Afihene, who is the newly sworn-in President of GASLIDD, (congratulations Mary), arranged for us to be taken on a couple of tours.

Finally, I have been to many meetings and the Ghana meeting ranks amongst one of my favourites. And the fact that they put together a well-attended world-class inaugural meeting is commendable. I am grateful to the Gastroenterology Foundation for inviting me to be part of this memorable meeting. I wish to congratulate GASLIDD and wish them many more triumphs going forward."



*Gastro Foundation faculty at GASLIDD 2015*

# Further Travels into Africa

Of course, it is 'our travels into Africa' and collaboration with a number of sub-Saharan African colleagues that has truly been an inspiration and a source of great satisfaction to all.

Chris Kassianides, chairman of the foundation, applauds the efforts of Prof Olusegun Ojo 'Segun' president of AMAGE and sings his praises in the partnership that he has provided with the development of the SSA GI Hepatology working group



*Prof Olusegun Ojo, Professor of Pathology and Consultant Histopathologist, Gastroenterology and Liver Pathology Unit, Department of Morbid Anatomy, Obafemi Awolowo University and Teaching Hospital*

## Best of EASL in Lagos, Nigeria.

In July 2016 Prof Frank Tacke (Aachen University) and Prof Mark Thurst (Imperial College London) held the Best of EASL at the SOGHIN conference in Lagos, Nigeria.

The poster features the logo of The Gastroenterology Foundation of South Africa at the top. Below it, the text reads "Best of EASL - Lagos" in a blue banner. Further down, it states "to be held at NECA Hall, Alausa, Ikeja, Wednesday, 20 July 2016". A paragraph follows: "The Gastroenterology Foundation welcomes you to attend the Best of European Association for the Study of the Liver (EASL) meeting in Lagos." At the bottom, there are logos for SOGHIN and EASL Africa.

This poster is divided into two main sections. The top section, titled "Best of EASL - Topics", lists several bullet points: "Screening, transmission, prevention, access to care - strategies to combat liver diseases", "Approach to the patient with liver diseases - practical management", "Standard evaluation of fatty liver disease", "Non-alcoholic fatty liver - new developments", "Alcoholic liver disease - new developments", "Hepatitis B and HBV/HIV coinfections: clinical presentation and diagnosis", "Hepatitis B: EASL guideline and new strategies for cure", "HCC screening, diagnosis and therapy", "Hepatitis C: therapeutic options in Africa", "Hepatitis C: EASL guideline and new options", "Approach to the patient with liver cirrhosis", and "Acute-on-chronic liver failure". The bottom section, titled "International Speakers", features two portraits with names: "Prof Mark Thurst, Professor of Hepatology, Imperial College, United Kingdom" and "Dr Frank Tacke, Director, Hepatology, University, Germany".





*EASL Lagos 2016*

## Announcement of the SSA GI Hepatology Working Group

In September 2016, in collaboration with the Ethiopian Gastroenterology Society, Dr Chris Kassianides and Prof Segun will announce the formation of the sub-Saharan GI Hepatology working group at a meeting which will host the AGA Post Graduate Course, the Best of EASL, a GI Endoscopy/Capsule meeting and a Spier-like meeting for 30 sub-Saharan fellows. With the announcement of the GI Hepatology working group comes a first – guidelines for the screening, surveillance, and treatment of chronic viral Hepatitis B and C in sub-Saharan Africa. Further GI Hepatology guidelines, much needed for sub-Saharan Africa, will almost certainly follow. The hospitality, humility, and depth of intellectual resource in sub-Saharan Africa is truly astounding.

We are confident that a sub-Saharan GI Hepatology Society of Gastroenterology and Hepatology will be up and running in 2 years with a strong constitution and earnest committee and we look forward in the near future to the transformation of a Gastroenterology Foundation of sub-Saharan Africa.

We are pleased to announce the inaugural meeting of the sub-Saharan GI-Hepatology Working Group to take place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in October this year. This conference will include:

- Best of AGA Post Graduate Course 2016
- Best of EASL, Addis Ababa



## Sub-Saharan Africa GI-Hepatology Working Group

Dr Chris Kassianides (South Africa) and Prof Olesegun Ojo (Nigeria)	
Prof Reid Ally (South Africa)	Dr Yaw Awuku (Ghana)
Dr Funmi Lesi (Nigeria)	Dr Philip Lam (Mauritius)
Dr Abate Shewaye (Ethiopia)	Dr Henry Kioko (Kenya)
Dr Mary Afihene (Ghana)	Dr John Rwegasha (Tanzania)
Prof Christian Tzeuton (Cameroon)	Dr Betty Apica (Uganda)
Dr E Musabeyezu (Rwanda)	Dr Papa Mbaye (Senegal)
Dr MJ Kouakou-Lohoues (Ivory coast)	Dr Lina da Cunha (Mozambique)
Dr Barbara Scholz (Namibia)	



*Funmi Lesi, Mark Thurz, Musa Borodo, Sandie Thomson, Frank Tacke, Chris Kassianides, Reid Ally*



*SOGHN 2016 congress faculty*

# Messages

It gives me great pleasure to congratulate Chris Kassianides and the Gastroenterology Foundation on their tenth anniversary. Chris's tireless efforts to organise continuing medical education to gastroenterologists in South Africa has been a great boon to the profession and the recent extension of this to other African countries is laudable. His contribution to the training of gastroenterology trainees is acknowledged and much appreciated.

On behalf of SAGES I say well done and may you go from strength to strength over the next 10 years.

Keith Newton  
President, South African Gastroenterology Society

The Gastro Foundation has gone to great lengths in advancing education and training of fellows in South Africa. As a recipient of this training, I can attest to the quality of training congresses that allowed knowledge to be shared. The enthusiasm of the experienced faculty and their willingness to train the younger generations was much appreciated.

Kind regards

Dr C Warden  
MBCHB FCS MMED (Surg) Cert Surgical Gastroenterology, Senior Consultant, Colorectal Surgery, Specialist Pelvic Floor Service Groote Schuur Hospital, Cape Town

I wish to congratulate the Foundation on its 10th anniversary. It is the man behind the Foundation however, that should be lauded. On your vision, hard work and infectious enthusiasm, I applaud you Chris and wish you and the Foundation many more successes going forward. One exceptional decade down, looking forward to the next.

Mashiko Setshedi

The GFSA has become the foremost organisation driving gastroenterology and hepatology education in South Africa. It has morphed into a quite remarkable entity that now serves both South Africa and beyond into sub-Saharan Africa. Chris and the trustees can be proud of what has been achieved in just a decade. It underpins the point that if you can dream it you can do it. Well done GFSA, well done Chris. I don't believe you always receive the recognition that is deserved.

Mark Sonderup

My first contact with the Gastro Foundation was in February 2015, six months into my fellowship training in Colorectal Surgery at the Groote Schuur Hospital, Cape Town. I was only just coming to terms with a new culture and very different approach to the practice of general surgery, especially colorectal surgery. I was invited to the all-expense-paid Gastro Fellows Weekend, where I met with gastroenterology trainees from across South Africa, and a few from other African countries – including Nigeria, my country. I also got to meet and study, first hand, some of the greatest names in the field. It was at that conference that I truly found my feet and finally got the big picture of gastroenterology. I also made a lot of new friends (relationships I believe will be of benefit to the African continent in the future). I have been a participant on two occasions, and the good memories will not fade in a hurry.

I have been blessed with very supportive people at Gastro Foundation, and great role models too; the likes of Dr Chris Kassianides, Prof Paul Goldberg, and Prof Jake Krige, to mention a few. If only Karin Fenton could be cloned and placed in every gastroenterology programme on this planet, what a beautiful 'Fenton' world that would be!

As I come to the end of my training, I can confidently say that Gastro Foundation and what it stands for have been one of the great pillars which propped me up over a truly challenging – but exciting – two years!

Kunle Oke



I was honoured to train in gastroenterology at Stellenbosch University under Prof Christo van Rensburg. I did my fellowship from 2013 to 2015. The Gastro Foundation played a very important role throughout my training. The numerous conferences and interest group meetings supported or organised by the Foundation were a very important part of my training. The Fellows Weekend was a unique and incredible learning experience. On a personal level I was a grateful recipient of a generous subsistence grant in 2014. In 2015 the Gastro Foundation partly sponsored my trip to DDW in Washington DC. I was able to present an abstract at the DDW poster session. I conclude by saying, thank you and long live Gastro Foundation.

Eric Murunga

I would like to thank the Gastro Foundation; for me it was fundamental in my path finding mission to organise my thoughts around the very vast subject of Gastroenterology. Through it I now have a clear picture about the gastroenterology services available in South Africa and Africa as a whole at the quaternary care level and primary care level, the potential for expanding these through sharing of expertise by interactive congresses and other basic workshops.

Dr Joshua Sibanda

MBChB, FCP (SA), Cert Gastro Phys (SA), CMJAH, Wits

The Gastro Foundation has helped me to broaden my horizons to international fields and allowed me to present my research overseas. I have made important international contacts both in South Africa and other countries with some of the visiting experts brought right to our doorstep. From the terrifying Saturday mock exam at the Fellows Weekend to meeting the people who wrote the books, the Gastro Foundation has helped me to see more of the possibility of what can be done.

Thanks a lot

Daniel Surridge

I am the living witness for what you have done so far.

You tried to bring African GI professionals with full engagements in upholding the scientific wealth we Africans have. I am sending this message a few metres' distance away from where the African head quarter is situated. I feel proud as an African scholar and the effort that you have demonstrated to bring all African GI specialists together to address issues. I have enjoyed your recent Fellowship Weekend which was held at Stellenbosch.

It was splendid. I enjoyed every part of it. I learnt a lot. I would like to pass my congratulatory message on your 10th anniversary on behalf of myself and my GI specialist colleagues here in Ethiopia. Congratulation once again.

Rezene Berhe

Gastroenterologist, Secretary of Ethiopian Gastroenterology Metrology Association, Director for Academic Affairs, CHS, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia.

When I finished my physician exam I was faced with the decision of super specialising or going straight into private practice, a scenario common to most people at that time in their career

I was doing my final rotation as part of my physician time in gastroenterology and was given an opportunity to attend SAGES and also the Gastro Foundation Fellow Weekend.

It was at the Fellows Weekend in Spier that really directed my future career.

I met the most wonderful dedicated mentors and individuals that were willing to give time for others to develop in the field of gastroenterology.

I then started my fellowship in gastroenterology and must admit that the Gastro Foundation has supported me in various stages of my development. I can truly say that with the mentorship and dedication of the members of the Gastro Foundation I am where I am today.

I would like to take this opportunity to say THANK YOU and may this foundation grow from strength to strength in the future. I am proud to be associated with the Gastro Foundation.

Dr Nazeer A I Chopdat  
MBBch (Wits) FCP (SA) Cert Gastro (SA),  
MRCP Gastro (RCP UK), Specialist Physician,  
Gastroenterologist, Ahmed Kathrada Private  
Hospital, Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital

Throughout my registrar and sub-specialty training (and even after!) the GF has offered a collection of support: financially assisting with minimal questions asked, academically with inspiring lectures and captivating workshops and emotionally with a kind word and a pat on the back. This foundation symbolises academic excellence and assists us all to achieve what is internationally expected. Thank you GF for all that you have done, are doing and will continue to do in the future.

Nadine Harran  
Wits



On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Gastro Foundation, I would like to convey my very best wishes on behalf of the American Gastroenterology Association.

Your organisation has elevated the postgraduate education and training of bright and eager young physicians headed for a superior career in gastroenterology. You recognised that physicians in South Africa and indeed throughout Africa often do not have the resources to travel to the Americas or to Europe to be immersed in the forefront of clinical and investigational gastroenterology. Instead, you have organised eminent physicians from other countries to come to South Africa to lecture, to teach and to encourage. You now are extending this programme to much of Africa.

As a previous chair of the International Committee of the American Gastroenterology Association I arranged in 2012 to bring the Best of the 2012 AGA Postgraduate Course to Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town. I can attest to every one's excitement and enthusiasm in participating in these courses.

To me, this programme represented the great potential of the outreach of the AGA to areas of the world that otherwise could not gain from the best that our organisation can provide.

I wish you the best for your efforts in the next decade.

My best.

Peter Holt  
Past Chair International Committee AGA



It is with a great pleasure that I write to congratulate Dr Chris Kassianides, the Members of the Board of Trustees and Staff of the South African Gastroenterology Foundation (SAGF) on the occasion of the 10th Anniversary of the Foundation. Without a doubt, almost every Gastroenterologist in the AMAGE Region especially in Africa, south of the Sahara, has benefitted in one way or the other from the laudable activities of the SAGF.

Personally, I became acquainted with the SAGF in the last five years or so and, more closely, when I became the President of the Nigeria's National body of Gastroenterologists, the Society of Gastroenterology and Hepatology in Nigeria (SOGHIN). I was deeply impressed by the focus and clarity of mission of the Foundation which to me, at the time, was to promote and foster the development and the knowledge and practice of Gastroenterology and Hepatology South Africa and to bring it to par with global standards. SOGHIN, under me, was assisted by SAGF to engage with the South African Gastroenterology Society, and older and better-established Society.

In recent times, I have observed the growth and evolution of the vision of SAGF to an admirably higher and nobler level still – to assist the growth of the knowledge and practice of Gastroenterology in 'middle Africa' – a region that roughly approximates the vast swathes of sub-Saharan Africa and where Gastroenterology practice is still in gestation, not to talk of infancy. I have been deeply impressed by the methodical development of this vision and the superlative attention to detail in the laying of the strategy for its implementation.

Coming across Dr Kassianides as I did, one could not but marvel at such a selfless commitment to the education and professional development of others. I had first thought that he was acting as a default (South African) patriot would until I came closer to him, on becoming the President of the Africa Middle East Association of Gastroenterology (AMAGE) in 2015, and I saw that he was driven by a steely inner vision for the development of Gastroenterology that transcended national borders. His love of knowledge-for-its-own-sake makes me, an academic by trade, look up to him. I am also very thankful to have come across Karin Fenton, whose knowledge and dexterity in organising academic meetings, is legendary.

Going forward, I join everyone in wishing the SAGF a more successful next 10 years and offer her an unstinting support of the AMAGE Governing Board in her work in sub-Saharan Africa.

Long live SAGF, Long live AMAGE

Prof Olusegun Ojo

President Africa – Middle East Association of Gastroenterology (AMAGE)

Congratulations to the Gastro Foundation on its 10th anniversary celebration.

It has been a pleasure to be associated with the Foundation which has built bridges across the continent in Gastro and Hepatology.

Best wishes for the future.

Dr Betty Musau

Gastro Society of Kenya



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It is my great pleasure, on behalf of Mozambican Gastroenterologists, to express our acknowledgment to Gastro Foundation for accepting us, as part of their own medical community.

Through Gastro Foundation, we have had the possibility to meet and be in contact with different African Gastroenterologists therefore giving us the opportunity to exchange knowledge, to share our common problems and provide us with a platform to find solutions together.

Gastro Foundation has shown its great sensibility and deep preoccupation with less favourable countries, giving them the opportunity to share and develop skills in order to become the more autonomous.

We address a special mention to Dr Kassianides who does not measure his efforts to keep Gastro Foundation active and helping other countries.

To Karin, a person without whom nothing could happen, our most sincere acknowledgments.

All the best, looking forward to assist the 10th Anniversary of Gastro Foundation.

Lina Cunha  
Mozambique

Like all Medical specialties, the clinical and academic services as well as research out puts in the field of Gastroenterology and Hepatology has a long way to go in Africa. But the beginning is encouraging and the future looks bright.

The launching of Fellowship programmes through north-south and south-south collaborations and networks as well as establishment and collaboration of notational societies are the main driving forces and building blocks in promoting this field in Africa. This in turn will result in better clinical diagnosis and patient treatment outcomes. It will also contribute to quality research outputs and academic activities. The launching of WGO training centres in some African

countries like Ethiopia, Egypt, SA, Sudan, Nigeria, etc has also augmented the services, research, and teaching in this specialty.

In Ethiopia, we established our national society in 2008, launched Fellowship programme in 2011 in collaboration with Toronto and Bergen universities and have produced 12 Gastroenterology/Hepatology specialists since then. The graduates, in turn, are contributing to the establishment of additional GI Fellowship programmes in the country and to the promotion of our GI Society. We have also established the Addis Ababa WGO Training Center in 2015. These building blocks have significantly contributed to the development of the services and academics as well as research out puts.

The South African Gastro Foundation has been exemplary in spear heading such south-south collaboration and networking. Our Faculty and GI Fellows in Ethiopia have been enjoying and benefiting from such collaboration and participating in professional conferences and short course trainings organised and sponsored by the Gastro Foundation SA.

The series of Best of AGA and Best of EASL organised in SA, Nigeria, Ghana, and also due in Ethiopia, are best examples of such professional collaboration and networking organised and sponsored by the Gastro Foundation. Various interest group professional conferences and board meetings and guideline development meetings were also are some other examples of professional activities organised by Gastro Foundation so far.

We are all motivated and encouraged by the leadership of the Gastro Foundation led by dedicated and devoted leaders and staff.

Congratulations and best wishes to all the leaders, staff, and stake holders of the Gastro Foundation!

With kind regards,

Dr Abate Bane Shewaye  
Associate professor of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Addis Ababa University Medical School, Ethiopian Gastroenterology Association, July 5, 2016, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



My first exposure to Gastro foundation was in March 2012 where I had the opportunity to be part of Gastroenterology Fellows for a boot camp at Spier Hotel. I had a good time with fellows and consultants at the social and academic levels. I attended many training sessions as a fellow at Groote Schuur Hospital with Gastro Foundation support.

After my training in South Africa they have sponsored me to attend liver interest meeting from Ghana on two occasions. Gastro Foundation actually brought the AGA training session to Ghana, which was attended many doctors from Nigeria and Ghana. This foundation gave enormous support to the Ghana Association for the study of Liver and Digestive Diseases during its first scientific meeting.

I am currently back in my country Ghana but with the training opportunities offered me by Gastro Foundation I am confident to lead in training and speak on issues bothering on gastroenterology in Ghana.

I wish the Gastro Foundation a happy tenth anniversary and may it continue to affect the lives of many more Gastroenterology Fellows and practitioners across Africa and beyond.

Dr Yaw Asante Awuku  
University of Cape Coast, Ghana

#### Goodwill Message from WGO Lagos Training Centre

It is indeed a great pleasure and honour for the WGO Lagos Training Centre and Society for Gastroenterology and Hepatology in Nigeria (SOGHIN) to rejoice with the Gastroenterology Foundation of South Africa (GFSA) as they celebrate 10 years.

The World Gastroenterology Organization (WGO) established the Lagos Training Centre in April 2015 as the 17th WGO Training Centre Worldwide, and the first in West Africa. Its main goal is to strengthen Gastroenterology training and education in Nigeria and West Africa.

As we reflect over the last 10 years of the GFSA, it is evident that it has achieved and surpassed the founding objective of enhancing the continuing medical education of Gastroenterologists and Hepatologists in South Africa. This is demonstrated by the current partnerships and collaborations with sub-Saharan Africa.

We are proud to be associated with GFSA and treasure this partnership that has led to professional relationships with international Hepatology associations, and training workshops both in Nigeria and South Africa. In 2015, over 40 Nigerian Gastroenterology Fellows benefitted from GI training organised in Lagos by GFSA. This experience has impacted significantly on their clinical and research capabilities. We also commend your participation at the opening ceremony and GI endoscopy workshops of the WGO Lagos Training Center in April 2015.

We applaud the efforts of Dr Chris Kassianides and the GFSA trustees for their commitment in establishing, and sustaining these collaborations in Nigeria and other parts of the sub-Saharan Africa.

We wish you great success in this conference and futures endeavours and look forward to taking gastroenterology training to greater heights in the sub-region.

Dr Olufunmilayo Lesi  
Director, WGO Lagos Training Center, Lagos, Nigeria

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When Chris Kassianides presented his 'crazy idea' to start the Gastro Foundation 10 years ago it took many, including myself, by surprise.

Why would he consider establishing another entity parallel to SAGES? I thought. Would this not distract from the academic role of SAGES that we so desperately strived to protect? What an odd fellow, I thought. Chris always vehemently defended this and was convinced that such an entity would be more efficient in raising money. Chris was right I now have to confess... he raised more money than SAGES ever could... this was used by the Gastro Foundation to support many aspects of academia especially related to his passion – the liver. The Gastro Foundation served during the last 10 years to bring eminent Hepatologists to SAGES meetings and to support young investigators in their quest to find that elusive first grant they needed to start research careers. This is exactly what happened to me back in 2007... We met at an Italian restaurant over seafood linguine and Kanon Kop Paul Sauer 2005 (a particularly good year) so I could convince him of the merit of my idea. Of course he had to check this with Prof Mike Kew and the rest is history as they say...

The Gastro Foundation has become so important that it would be difficult to imagine South African Gastroenterology without this Foundation. My hat off to you Chris and the Gastro Foundation – may there be many more years to come!vehemently

Prof Schalk W. van der Merwe MD, MSc, PhD

Associate professor of Medicine Department of Gastroenterology and Hepatology and  
Department of Clinical and Experimental Medicine, Laboratory of Hepatology University  
Hospitals Campus Gasthuisberg, University of Leuven, Belgium

I saw the birth of the South African Gastroenterology Foundation and I am happy to see the achievements of this great organisation over the past 10 years. Chris Kassianides is the heart and the soul of the Foundation and an example of how professional competence, service and altruism merge into a unique effort able to lead to great progress. Thanks to the South African Gastroenterology Foundation, the whole sub-Saharan Africa is now on the world map of Gastroenterology and Hepatology. Congratulations to the Foundation and to its founders.

Prof Massimo Pinzani, MD, PhD, FRCP

Professor of Medicine, Sheila Sherlock Chair of Hepatology, Director, UCL Institute for Liver and Digestive Health  
University College London, Royal Free, London,



Congratulations to the Gastro Foundation on its Tenth Birthday! I well remember the pleasure with which ECCO celebrated its first decade, since any organisation in embryo has to traverse the challenges of the early years – and those whose unstinting hard work behind the scenes make it happen, know too well the uncertainties faced on the journey. At least that was true for ECCO – but I dare say the sunny uplands of South Africa were not so widely different! The Foundation has been a coming together, of the academic aspiration and the clinical care, which are not always as conjoined as might be imagined, committed to promoting the highest standards in Gastroenterology.

In 2008 I was privileged to be the Mark Moshal Lecturer at the SAGES conference, to be inspired by the motivation amid a challenging environment to deliver care, develop collaboration and to make lasting friendships. The Foundation, then barely a toddler, already showed signs of sturdiness after an awkward infancy. As the Foundation enters adolescence, its parents, relatives and friends can be proud of how strong it has become. Foundation Fellowships, excellence in training standards and promoting research have become a byword. The future of the Foundation will depend on the entire family, working together for the benefit of South African Gastroenterology, from whom others can learn.

Oxford was delighted to host one of the first Foundation Fellows in Naayil Rajabally. Naayil was an ambassador for South Africa and we look forward to the next! My belief is that the causes of chronic inflammatory, non-communicable diseases will be found in areas of the world where the pattern of disease is changing from a traditional infection-based dominance to a Western distribution of disease. This is because the evolution of IBD that occurred 50 years ago in the West is now happening in front of our eyes in places such as Africa. Change is difficult, but creates opportunity: the Foundation is perfectly placed to create collaboration, take advantage

of that opportunity and to change our understanding.

Many happy returns!

**Prof Simon Travis DPhil FRCP**  
Translational Gastroenterology Unit  
Nuffield Department of Experimental Medicine  
University of Oxford

On behalf of the World Gastroenterology Foundation and as a past President of the World Gastroenterology Organization may I congratulate the Gastroenterology Foundation of South Africa on 10 spectacular years of growth and fantastic contributions to South African, and now African, gastroenterology. Always mindful of the needs of its population, as well as those of the members of the South African Gastroenterology Society with which it works so closely, the Gastro Foundation has been incredibly effective in raising money and most prudent in putting that money to work in a manner that supports clinical care, research and education. I have been particularly impressed by the foresight of the Gastro Foundation in, firstly, identifying areas of clinical need and research opportunity and, secondly, prioritising support for the next generation of South African and African gastroenterologists. Your success augurs well for the future of the specialty and the patients that it serves across the continent. I salute you and congratulate all who have contributed to this success. On a personal note, may I say what a privilege it has been to participate in your activities and to see, at first hand, the impact that you are making. Here's to many more years of success for the Gastro Foundation.

Personal best wishes to all

**Eamonn M M Quigley**  
MD, MACG, is the David M. Underwood Chair of Medicine in Digestive Disorders, Chief of the Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology and Professor of Medicine, Weill Cornell Medical College at Houston Methodist Hospital, Houston, Texas, and a Principal Investigator at the Alimentary Pharmabiotic Centre (APC) in Cork, Ireland.

I am delighted and honoured to have been asked to contribute to this booklet acknowledging the Gastroenterology Foundation of South Africa on the celebration of its 10th anniversary. It is a great personal pleasure to congratulate the Chairman and Trustees, Chris Kassianides and his colleagues, Jake Krige, Jose Ramos, Reid Ally, Mike Kew and Sandie Thomson on this notable achievement. It takes careful planning combined with vision, innovation, commitment and very hard work to ensure the success of any foundation, and the Gastroenterology Foundation of South Africa is no exception. Raising donations in excess of R21m and the award of research grants, overseas and local travel scholarships and bursaries to fellows, and establishing a number of national CME meetings, are a testament to the achievements over this first decade.

The important collaborative initiatives which have been developed with so many other countries in sub-Saharan Africa promise to go from strength-to-strength together with the increasing number of collaborative activities with AGA, WGO and other large organisations. These collaborations will lead to enhanced training throughout Africa with far reaching benefits in countries with still fledgling gastroenterology services. The pledges from pharma are welcome and far sighted and will, hopefully, be increasingly matched by similar donations from philanthropic donors. Experience suggests that prospective donors often seek evidence of commitment to financial support from the members of the society and so the foundation should encourage the SAGES members to meet these expectations! My good wishes for a successful 2016 SAGES and for continued support and success for the Foundation as they embark on their second decade.

**Richard Hunt**

Prof Emeritus, McMaster University,  
Vice Chair WGO Foundation



A decade of medical education in gastroenterology and hepatology is no small feat and we are proud to have been a part of the 10-year achievement of The Gastroenterology Foundation of South Africa. We hope that by bringing the 'Best of EASL' to Durban last year, we have contributed to the scientific understanding of Gastroenterologists and Hepatologists not only in South Africa, but across the globe. Congratulations to everyone who has played a role in the growth and evolution of The Gastroenterology Foundation. On behalf of EASL, we wish your organization continued success and development in the years ahead.

Prof. T-H. Karlsen, M. Pinzani, F. Tacke



July 5, 2016

The American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD) congratulates the Gastro Foundation of South Africa on their 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

AASLD commends the Gastro Foundation for their impressive outreach and collaborative efforts in the field of hepatology for countries and physicians in the Sub-Saharan Africa region. We celebrate the Foundation's many accomplishments over the past ten years in the areas of gastroenterology and hepatology, and support your commitment to provide critical continuing medical education for Medical and Surgical Gastroenterologists and Hepatologists throughout the Sub-Saharan African region. AASLD applauds your endeavors to increase access to quality health care and reduce the burden of liver disease in South Africa and abroad.

A review of the past ten years of fighting liver disease in South Africa and around the world should continue to inspire us all with the growing possibilities of today. Never before has it been as possible to identify, treat, and cure as many liver diseases as it is today and even better therapies are right around the corner.

As we celebrate the Gastro Foundation's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we extend our hand in continued collaboration to achieve a world free of liver disease.

Best Wishes,

Keith D. Lindor, MD, FAASLD  
AASLD President

Gyongyi Szabo, MD, PhD, FAASLD  
AASLD Past President





Autorisation n°  
135/R/MINAT/DAP/SDLP  
Du 23 Février 1989

## SOCIÉTÉ CAMEROUNAISE DE GASTRO-ENTÉROLOGIE

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July 05, 2016

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E.C. NDAM NDJITTOYAP

Président :  
C. TZEUTON

Secrétaire Général  
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Secrétaire Général  
Adjoint :  
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Trésorier :  
M. TAGNI SARTRE

Trésorier Adjoint  
I-DANG BABAGNA

Conseillers :  
M.S. BIWOLE  
A. NSANGOU

Comités Régionaux  
M. KAMDOUM  
A. MALONGUE

### To Gastro Foundation of South Africa.

As the President of The "Société Camerounaise de Gastro-Entérologie" , former president of Francophone African Society of Continuous Education in Hepato-gastro-enterology and and former Vice-President of AMAGE, we are very proud of the great job done by The Gastro Foundation of South Africa.

The ongoing work in the field of viral hepatitis in Sub Saharan Africa is a great humanitarian work to help the fight against these silent killers.

To mark their 10th anniversary, we send them our congratulations and thanks, wishing they have the strength necessary to continue this work for the health of our people in Africa.

Happy anniversary and very warm regards from all the members of "Société Camerounaise de Gastro-Entérologie".

Professor Christian TZEUTON.



## SOCIETY FOR GASTROENTEROLOGY AND HEPATOLOGY IN NIGERIA (SOGHIN)

LOGOS, NIGERIA



7/6/2016

THE CHAIRMAN BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
GASTROENTEROLOGY FOUNDATION OF SOUTH AFRICA  
CATE TOWN, South AFRICA

Dear Sir

### TEN YEAR ANIVERSARY SOLIDARITY MESSAGE

On behalf of the entire members of the Society for Gastroenterology and Hepatology of Nigeria (SOGHIN) I write to congratulate the foundation. Under your able leadership the tremendous achievements you have recorded in the area of postgraduate training in gastroenterology in South Africa in particular and many parts of Africa inclusive of Nigeria. Your unique personalised training of postgraduate fellows (called residents in Nigeria) brings out ample opportunities for self-correction among fellows while your "Best of AGA" and "Best on EASL" programs have not only provided up to date learning opportunities to postgraduate doctors in South Africa but to other African countries too.

While further congratulating your foundation on these giant strides, SOGHIN looks forwards to further fruitful collaboration with the Gastro Foundation in uplifting the Practice of gastroenterology and hepatology in Nigeria and the rest of Africa

Please accept once more the Warm and Highest consideration of SOGHIN during this period of your well-deserved 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations

Kind regards

Prof Musa Muhammed Borodo

President,  
Society for Gastroenterology and Hepatology in Nigeria (SOGHIN)



## **GHANA ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF LIVER AND DIGESTIVE DISEASES**

**Email:** [gaslidd2014@mail.com](mailto:gaslidd2014@mail.com)

P.O. BOX KB 908, KORLE BU, ACCRA, GHANA.

7 July, 2016

THE CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
GASTROENTEROLOGY FOUNDATION OF SOUTH AFRICA  
CATE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

Dear Sir,

### **TEN YEAR ANNIVERSARY GOODWILL MESSAGE**

On behalf of the Ghana Association for the Study of Liver and Digestive Diseases, I write to congratulate the Gastro Foundation, South Africa on the occasion of her 10th year anniversary celebration.

We wish to acknowledge your immense contribution to postgraduate training and education in gastroenterology and hepatology in Ghana and across Africa. Worth noting are programmes you have been involved in Ghana which include AGA postgraduate course, sponsorship and provision of resource persons to our meeting and training the trainer course during the GASLIDD conference in Kumasi 2015.

Also, your numerous invitations to meetings in South Africa as faculty and participants is commendable.

GASLIDD looks forwards to future fruitful collaboration with the Gastro foundation in promoting the learning and practice of gastroenterology and hepatology in Ghana and Africa at large.

Please accept the highest assurance of our warm regards during this period of your anniversary celebrations and beyond.

Warmest regards,

GASLIDD president



Congratulations!

Ten years on from its inception the Gastroenterology Foundation continues to support and enhance the medical education of Medical and Surgical Gastroenterologists and Hepatologists in South Africa. I am delighted to offer warm congratulations to the Foundation and its Trustees in this its 10th Anniversary year, on its foresight and dedication to the promotion of post graduate medical and surgical training.

At this years Spier Weekend, as visiting Lecturer, I was privileged to take part in a vibrant conference aimed at delivering the Gastro Foundation ideal – the educational development of Gastroenterology Fellows. The weekend offered a combination of didactic learning, small seminar groups based on clinical problem solving and the opportunity to network with professional colleagues throughout RSA and beyond. It reminded me of the potential which post graduate training has to drive standardisation of clinical specialty practice and patient care in RSA and emphasized the importance of South African Leadership in promoting and influencing education and training throughout sub-Saharan Africa. The influence of the Gastroenterology Foundation in this respect has been notable and ranks amongst its other most important achievement that of promoting and influencing the wider Gastroenterology and Hepatology agenda through fostering international links and educational initiatives.

Most of all my memory of this weekend (which seems now to be a National Institution in itself) is of the huge amount of fun that was experienced by Fellows and Faculty and the great opportunity for networking, professional support and informal mentoring it offered. The role of professional Societies in promoting mentorship is vital and the opportunity to create transformational change for doctors at all stages of career development cannot be overestimated.

With these achievements in mind, I hope that the Gastroenterology Foundation can look to the next 10 years in which the promotion of sub specialty training remains a focus for its activity and which will bring opportunity to broaden the education and research horizons of Fellows through international collaboration. The vision of supporting medical and surgical Fellows in our great specialty of Gastroenterology must not be lost or less supported. Congratulations and good wishes for the next decade!

**Dr Cathryn Edwards**  
MA D.Phil FRCP  
Consultant Gastroenterologist  
President Elect British Society of Gastroenterology