

**Gastro Foundation**  
**AGA Post Grad 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 program, 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) were 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 stimulating 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 post graduate 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 DVD's 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 Professor Ojo (from Nigeria and currently the President of AMAGE), discussing forthcoming meetings in Sub-Saharan Africa.

We even managed to have a short sightseeing tour and lunch at a grand beach front hotel.

As is with most developing countries, there is a front of opulence and well development. But lurking behind it is the ugly face of poverty and inequality. Yet the ordinary Ghanian 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**