



FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

Professor Ismail Bhorat

August 2025

Dear Colleagues

Greetings to you all! We are already heading now towards the end of winter- time has indeed flown. Hope you survived the cold and kept warm in those really affected areas and provinces. Much has happened in the last 3 months since my last newsletter and many exciting events yet to come. Our daughter society SASUOG held a very successful conference in the Eastern Cape in East London in June. The facilities there were superb and my personal view, and also backed up by the feedback received, was that this was a top class congress. The international faculty at the Congress was superb and contributed hugely to the scientific proceedings. Congratulations to Dr Samantha Budhram, Dr Nontsikelelo Gubu-Ntaba and team for organising this wonderful Congress. As part of the FIGO legacy project the Durban Obstetrics and Gynaecology Society (a SASOG affiliate) hosted in Durban the current President of FIGO Prof Ann Khiara and the President -Elect of FIGO Prof Frank Louwens from Germany (who will assume duties as FIGO President after the October FIGO Congress). This was a fantastic hybrid meeting and I hope many of you were able to join in online. Prof Louwen's "Teach the Breech" talk was phenomenal, jaw dropping and videos just stunning – if you haven't had the opportunity to watch his fantastic talk you will have another opportunity to do so at the FIGO Congress in October in Cape Town. I truly hope to see many of you in this once in a lifetime event hosted in our own country. Also a reminder that the International Society of Prenatal Diagnosis (ISPD) congress will also be held in Cape Town in November. ISPD is based in the USA and is a niche society rarely venturing out of the US and Europe and the fact it is coming to South Africa is a feather in the cap to our academics and country – what a wonderful opportunity to also attend this congress and keep up to date with all aspects of prenatal diagnosis.

The SASOG of 2025 is very different from previously – major structural changes have taken place to set SASOG on a new path of efficiency, delivery, accountability and financial independence by taking charge and responsibility of our own affairs. For the first time in SASOG's history responsibility for private practice is housed within SASOG and not outsourced to other entities, over which we had no control or accountability. The breakaway of GMG from SASOG at the end of last year gave SASOG a unique opportunity to address this with the formation of the SASOG Private Practice Business Unit (PPBU) under the astute leadership of Dr Sagie Naidu and Dr Peet Potgieter. The PPBU has become a powerful and strong unit within SASOG and a great structure and modus operadi for the PPBU has been developed that will be able to meet all the needs of private practice under the auspices of SASOG for years to come. The PPBU will be there fighting the good

fight on behalf of our private practice colleagues. Developing structural institutions are most important – leaders come and go but the ethos and function of the structure is what remains. 75% of our membership is made up of the private sector and we thus have a unique responsibility to address their needs, take accountability and where SASOG can fulfil its vision as the encompassing mother body.

The formation of the PPBU has augmented the functioning of the academic and scientific aspects of SASOG as many of the improved admin functions, IT developments and logistics that have been developed by the PPBU have also been extrapolated to SASOG. Our admin structure has been expanded and reconfigured that will hopefully in the coming months also cater for our daughter societies allowing our daughter societies to concentrate more on academic matters.

The new independent SASOG which came into existence at the beginning of the year encompasses all the scientific/academic activities that you have been accustomed to including all protocol and guidelines as set out in BetterObs and Bettergynae programmes, latest journal information through BetterObs Matters, advice on clinical matters, access to the medicolegal committee in case of queries, access to the Expert Opinion Panel for expert opinions, biennial National Congresses, CPD workshops, access to the SASOG App and website but in addition and most importantly a new **Private Practice Business unit (PPBU)**. All your needs under one house.

Whilst SASOG will continue to concentrate and expand and keep you up to date on scientific matters through various forums and platforms, the PPBU will concentrate on matters private practice involving funder negotiations, advocating for increased and fair payment for procedures and consultations leading to increased remuneration, tackling coding issues, practice administrative support, financial planning and legal support, regular webinars as part of PPBU CPD to keep you continuously informed and PPBU interactive platforms to try and resolve queries.

SASOG and our PPBU through its partnership with SAPPF is working as a collective standing up to existential threats facing private practice– especially immediate issues like the Draft Interim Block Exemption for tariff determination in the Healthcare sector and regulations specifically targeting Private sector Obstetrics. Funds have been ring-fenced for legal battles in this regard.

The **SASOG Protection Fund**, another initiative by SASOG, will be officially launched in the next few months and much more will be revealed soon. We are busy with regulatory aspects of the Fund currently.

Remember there is strength in numbers and we aim and envisage close to 100% membership- the bigger and more inclusive our SASOG base the stronger we will be able to function as an organisation for scientific matters, have a mandate to negotiate fees, protect private practice and deliver services to you. There is strength in numbers and I am urging all of you who are not already SASOG members to



please join the new independent SASOG. The fee is just R650 monthly, reduced substantially from what was paid last year.

There are massive advantages to being a SASOG member and please make sure you are a SASOG member. I want to re-iterate that being a GMG member does not automatically make you a SASOG member. SASOG introduced its own billing systems specific to and only to SASOG at the beginning of 2025. If you are on an old debit order system from previous years please ensure that you have changed over to the new SASOG debit order. From next year many of the activities that I have highlighted will only be available to SASOG members, including the SASOG Protection Fund.

Forward all together in a new united, independent, more powerful and stronger SASOG

For SASOG membership and debit order queries please contact:
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Warm regards

Prof Ismail Bhorat
SASOG President

