

Dear members

SAGES has no further involvement in the Discovery Health biologics approval process. This relationship was terminated by mutual agreement at the end of August 2024.

As you are all too aware, Discovery Health has embarked on extensive cost-cutting measures at the beginning of this year. As a society we were most impacted by the access to biologics for our IBD patients. Furthermore, IBD patients were subjected to a one-sided treatment algorithm. Discovery Health paid little respect to clinical appropriateness and scientific treatment guidelines recommended by us and other international societies. Co-payments have become the order of the day and the many patients that can't afford these additional payments go without medication.

After numerous meetings, discussions and deliberations no common ground could be reached unfortunately. However, I must admit that the relationship with Discovery Health was cordial and accommodating on all levels. They were approachable and always available for discussion of issues of mutual concern.

More of the same is on the cards for the near future. Discussions are afoot for limiting endoscopy utilization. Failing to reach consensus on this issue, Discovery Health will implement its own interpretation of how and when scopes are indicated.

As a society we will continue to engage all role-players to advance the cause of gastroenterology. We will fight for issues important to the well-being of our patient and access to equitable healthcare.

Ernst Fredericks
SAGES President