



**Media Statement**  
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**For Immediate Release**

**The Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University Department of General Surgery first in the country to use a HAST Technique on a patient**

The SMU department of general surgery is proud to be the first in South Africa to make use of the Hot Axios Stent Technique (HAST) to relieve a patient suffering from jaundice, due to an obstruction of bile duct. Although this technique has been in use for several years overseas, it was used for the first time to relieve bile duct obstruction in both the private and public sectors, in South Africa by SMU specialists.

The leading light in this pioneering work is Dr Christopher Ziady, a veteran gastro-enterologist who examined a patient at the Dr George Mukhari Academic Hospital (DGMHAH) presenting with a large Pancreatic Cancer, which could not be operated on.

The 58-year-old patient had deep Jaundice, itchy skin, loss of appetite, pain and had lost weight. Having examined this patient, Dr Ziady reckoned that the most appropriate treatment for such a patient was to afford him relief from these debilitating symptoms, to enable him to have appetite and to improve on his nutrition.

The normal treatment for such a condition was to place a stent into the bile obstruction to relieve jaundice, by means of an Endoscopic Retrograde Cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) procedure, which he had attempted previously to the patient. "This resulted in failure because the tumour had spread into the wall of the small intestine and destroyed the opening of the bile duct", said Dr Ziady.

"We then sought an alternative to this failed treatment. An endoscopic ultrasound examination that was conducted on the patient confirmed the HAST was an appropriate alternative treatment", Ziady continued.

A suitable size Stent was selected and was placed by means of Endoscopic Ultrasound (EUS) Scope and the entire procedure took only 5 minutes. In most instances, other methods of Stent placement took up to one and half hour.

Not only is the technique efficient and safe, it also cuts down on recovery time spend in the hospital as the patient heals quicker than surgical technique. The patient can also be treated as an outpatient.

The successful general surgery department at SMU is headed by internationally acclaimed surgeon Professor Zach Koto.

**Issued by the Marketing & Communication**

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