

## **IBRA Scholarship**

Fellow: Xander Jacobs MD, resident Plastic Surgery

Original Institution: Department of Plastic, Reconstructive and Hand Surgery  
VU University Medical Centre, Amsterdam

IBRA institution: Policlinico di Modena, Italy

Fellowship director: Dott. Prof. Antonio Landi

Date of Scholarship: 15/05 – 28/5/ 2014

Description of Scholarship: Limbs Surgery Fellowship

The fellowship at the department of Hand surgery and Microsurgery of the Policlinico di Modena can be highly recommended. During my stay for 2 weeks, I was able to see a wide variety of pathologies of the upper extremity and I enjoyed staying in Modena very much.

The Policlinico di Modena is a large hospital in the region Emilia Romagna. It is a referral centre for this region with 4 million people. But a lot of patients outside this region also visit the clinic because of the well-known high standard care for upper extremity surgery.

All the staff members, under the direction of Dott. Antonio Landi, are very hospitable, approachable and keen to teach and share ideas. In fact, the whole department, including the nurses at the ward, the theatre teams, made me feel welcome from day one.

My daily activities were very flexible. For the main part I participated in the OR, where I was able to see many surgeries of a wide variety:

- Acute traumas of the hand, wrist and forearm. A lot of fractures, tendon, nerve ruptures and complex multi tissue lesions with soft tissue loss.

- All types of SL problems. Primary repair, dorsal capsulodesis and a very interesting technique to repair the SL ligament with 'bone-ligament-bone', performed by Dott. Norman Della Rosa, who is a very skilled arthroscopic wrist surgeon.
- All kinds of congenital deformities, such as releases of syndactyly, were they cover the skin defects with a 'Hyaluronic acid scaffold'. On this subject they recently wrote a very interesting paper in the Journal of Hand Surgery.
- Tendon transfers because of spasticity after brachial plexus injuries.
- Osteoarthritic deformities, nerve entrapments, soft tissue and bone tumours, etc etc.

Besides the theatre there were a lot of things to learn and see. The ward rounds, 3 times a week, with Dott. Antonio Landi was very interesting. He shared his big amount of knowledge and experience by a bed-side teaching manner, of who I learned a lot. You are also able to join every outpatient clinic you want. I was also able to join the monthly outpatient clinic for paediatric cases for the upper extremity. This is a multidisciplinary team with Orthopaedic surgeons, Paediatricians, Hand and Wrist therapists and a Psychologist. Here I was able to see complex congenital deformities of the hand and wrist. Besides all of this I was very lucky to join the yearly-organized course in 'functional and biomechanical anatomy' at the impressive University Department of Anatomy in Bologna. In the morning there were different lectures and in the afternoon anatomy dissection on fresh frozen cadavers.

Besides the hospital Modena is a wonderful city to stay. It has a beautiful old city centre, which is not too big, so you feel at home quite quickly. Like the rest of Italy, Modena has a rich history, which goes back to the ancient times. The beautiful old Cathedral of Modena at the piazza Grande is a great example of this period. You should definitely make a visit to the city Bologna, just 25 minutes by train from Modena. It is home to the oldest university in the world (1088). During your stay you should not miss a visit to the Ferrari museum, drink some fine 'Lambrusco wine' and enjoy the world famous 'Balsamico di Modena'.

This fellowship was a valuable experience for me professionally. It deepened my knowledge because of the helpful teachers and the high numbers of interesting cases.

Besides this it is very interesting to see a very good and well-organized health care system for upper extremity abroad. Special thanks to Dott. Antonio Landi, Dott. Andrea Leti and Dott. Lorenzo Garagnani and all the other team members for making it a great experience as well as to the IBRA for giving me this opportunity.