

IBRA FELLOWSHIP REPORT

Introduction-

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Fellowship period- 29.07.2009 to 11.10. 2009
Place-Dept of hand, plastic and reconstructive Surgery,
Kantonsspital, St, St Gallen, Switzerland.**

Details of Fellowship

It is an honour to write this fellowship report which may help others to pursue this prestigious fellowship. I am thankful to Prof Joerg Gruenert of the Dept of Hand, Plastic and Reconstructive surgery, Kantonsspital, St Gallen, Switzerland for selecting me for this fellowship and being one of the finest hosts I have ever met in my life.

Kantonsspital, St Gallen is the largest Non University teaching hospital in Switzerland with a rich history of person like Prof Muller (of the AO Principle) .Prof Gruenert is one of the few people to have worked and assisted him in Bern.

We (I and my family) reached St Gallen after a long journey from India to which I belongs; at around 10 pm in the night on 29 June 2009. My fellowship started from the very next day although Prof Gruenert was away for some meeting. I met Prof Gruenert on the 1st of August.

Life in the Dept of Hand, Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery starts at 7. 40 sharp in the library cum seminar room .Everybody of the dept gathers there to discuss about the previous day admissions, emergency operations, cases posted for the same day OT. This discussion takes about 45 minutes. After that everybody disperses. My duty was mostly with Prof Gruenert and I was given the chance to assist in almost every case although I was mostly interested in orthopedic related cases. All procedures were very systematic with maximum utilization of manpower.

Every Tuesday morning we usually have grand round where everybody in the dept gives round with Prof Gruenert. He see and talks to every patients irrespective of the fact whether he or somebody else has operated that case. Personally he checks all the dressings, discussion are held during this time regarding case progression, future treatment plan and suggestion to improve the condition. This discussion really helps everybody in the dept and the patients are also the beneficiary as he or

she receives the best treatment. After that we go to the OPD where brief discussion is held initiated by one of the staff member according to the topic assigned to him.

I was in St Gallen in the summer season, but even in summer we used to get almost 2 to 3 cases of distal radius fracture every day, different types of complex hand injuries. Elective cases like Dupuytren, Carpal Tunnel syndrome were also very common which is a rarity in place like India from which I come.

I had a very -thorough knowledge of hand anatomy and its dissection layer by layer by the time I left St Gallen with due thanks to the excellent dissection of hand structures by Prof Gruenert himself. Also my plan of management for distal radius fracture has now totally changed from conservative management to more and more of operative treatment particularly the locking palmar plate that I saw in St Gallen.

Prosthetic replacement of small joints of Hand like the mp, ip joints was also new to me. I saw and assisted the implantation of the silicon prosthesis of the small joints for the first time and enjoyed it a lot. This surgery has made a big impact in my interest in Hand Surgery and today I love to perform hand surgery more then before.

The library cum seminar room in the hospital was the place I spend most of my time after 5 pm everyday where I got a lot of good journals and books like JBJS, JHS etc

Weekends were relaxing where we used to visit different parts of St Gallen like the famous church (a world heritage site) and its library and other parts of Switzerland like Rosach, Titlis, Zermatt, Zurich, Bern etc.

During the final part of my stay I had the opportunity to visit the IBRA head office at Basel with my host Prof Gruenert where we met Ms Lilana and representative of Med-Artis and take a quick view of the city and its famous church itself.

Finally my sincere thanks go to the whole of IBRA specially Prof Hermann Krimmer ,the chairman of the selection comitee,Prof Gruenert ,my mentor for selecting me, Ms Liliana who coordinated everything to make it happen, Ms Melanie always eager to help me out in meeting Prof Gruenert.

The staffs and the residents (specially Dr Lee, Dr Phillip and Dr Sonderegger) of the dept always helped me to overcome my deficiency in German language by explaining everything in English, giving me the

opportunity to see and assist in the OT and helping me to know more about hand surgery and Swiss culture itself.

One interesting fact I would like to mention here. After returning from the fellowship the first surgery I performed was a case of badly comminuted fracture of distal radius. The patient was waiting for my return for more the 2 weeks just to get operated by me. I fixed the fracture with a locking palmar plate with the technique I had learned from Prof Gruenert.what a coincidence!