

## My short-term observership in Birmingham Children's Hospital

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I visited the Birmingham Children's Hospital (BCH), UK, for two months (February and March 2015) as an observer in the cardiovascular unit. I had a wonderful time with the medical staff at the hospital. Thank you very much for this wonderful opportunity. It was a great honor for me.

Unlike many Japanese congenital cardiovascular units, the hospital had more than one consultant doctor. I was deeply impressed that, although every consultant works and behaves as an independent doctor, they can also work together as a team. I saw close cooperation and excellent communication, not only among the surgeons, but also with consultants in specialties such as cardiology, and critical care. It seemed that everyone, including the co-medicals, respected each other and worked together for the children. All the medical staff were friendly and kind. I am grateful to them for their instruction and for answering my questions.

I met many doctors from other countries. There were two more observers from Turkey during my stay and a couple of international registrars. It was a good opportunity to learn how different things are in other countries and cultures. It was also a splendid chance to get to know other young surgeons, which increased my motivation for my training in Japan. Talking with people was very interesting. Some of their questions were truly surprising and made me consider Japanese culture from a different point of view.

I met two female surgeons at BCH. One was a consultant doctor with a child. Another was a registrar from the Philippines. As a female surgeon myself, I think a lot about continuing my career as a surgeon, and their experiences and careers were encouraging.

Two months is quite a long time—long enough to observe almost all the typical congenital cardiac surgeries I wanted to see, and some of the surgical complications. There were many severe cases, and I witnessed many good decisions. I also got to see many great surgeries. Moreover, it was a very good chance to learn from their troubleshooting processes. Case conferences, M&Ms, teaching sessions, and journal clubs were held weekly, and these, too, were very informative. I realized that there were some national differences in the disease as well as differences in attitudes towards some of the severe cases. I learned that there are many ways of thinking. All these experiences will be of great help to me in my future career.

During my two-month stay, there was a hands-on seminar on the RVOT. I appreciated that they gave me a chance to give an English presentation on making an RVOT conduit. It increased my understanding of RVOTR and my communication skills.

The accommodation was very comfortable. I stayed at the University residence, which is very nice and clean and just a five-minute walk from the hospital. I was quite happy with it.

Once again, thank you so much for giving me this great opportunity.



In Paris,

That was one of the most exciting experience which was a fellowship exchange program between AEPC and JSPCCS in 2015. I'm writing now in Japan and remember *le séjour à Paris*.

When I was elected to the exchange program member for Paris, I was very happy but I worried about the language. I didn't know French at all at that time (and of course I can't speak French at all now). I was thinking how I would learn from them without the language before visiting. Now that I came back Japan, I really feel that the fears turned out to be nothing.

The Necker - Enfants Malades hospital, needless to say, is one of the largest volume institute of congenital heart surgery in Europe, which has a long history. I have been in Paris for only one month, but have learned so much important things about the field of congenital heart surgery. I was able to see a lot of surgical treatment and postoperative treatment in such a short period. The number of arterial switch was more than 10, and more than three cases of modified Konno and so on. Sometimes I could attend the operation and felt some parts of the surgery at that time. I could learn not only so many important things but also broad/wide views of congenital heart surgery, and also even my life in the future.

Meanwhile the staying in Paris is so wonderful. There was an incident of the terrorism at that time. It made my family and my colleagues worry about. However, the short urban life was also so exciting.

Now that I have such a wonderful experience in Paris, I would like to say that visiting Necker Hospital and learning there is my big recommendation, very confidently, for all members in JSPCCS (even if the stay is short).

Finally, I really appreciate to have such a wonderful opportunity staying Paris. The member and executives of AEPC/JSPCCAS, Prof. Vouhe and Prof. Raisky, Dr. Gaudin and Dr. Calvaruso, nurses in the OR and ICU, Dr. Sakamoto and my colleges in my hospital, and my wife and children.

Hiroki Ito MD

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# Short-term study in Padova

Hiroki Mori, MD

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Department of Pediatric cardiology

This paper reports on my short-term study in Padova University.

I stayed in Padova for about one month from end of April 2015. This is my first experience to stay abroad. So, I had little bit worry about this stay. But all staffs in Padua were very kindly assisted my stay. I am very grateful to them.

They rented a pleasant dormitory for me. The dormitory was very convenient, because it was near the hospital. Talking about daily life, it was somewhat difficult to communicate to others only in English. But English was enough to manage most of matters, especially in the hospital.

Padova University has a long history. The origins date back to 1222. I saw some museums associated with cardiovascular biology. *The anatomical theater* is famous ancient building built by Gerolamo Fabrici. William Harvey studied in *the theater*, and his portrait is put on the museum.

*Pathological museum* is set up in department of pathology. Many valuable pathological specimens are put in the museum. They have been collected them from 1800s. And I saw the many specimens of congenital heart disease.

As I have explained, Padova University has played important roles in medicine for a long time. Studying in this university satisfied my curiosity.

Not only to have long history, they also perform advanced therapeutic/diagnostic approaches, for example, 4dimensional echocardiography, cardiac catheter, cardiac MRI.

Catheter interventions were impressive because some catheter devices are not available in Japan, such as ventricular septum defect occlusion device, paravalvular leakage occlusion device, Melody® Trans

catheter Pulmonary Valve. Particularly, transcatheter tricuspid valve replacement using Melody® valve was astonishing. Fortunately I heard the talk from prof. Peter Ewart from Germany.

I also joined in the round their ward and weekly meeting. It seemed to have many valuable suggestions.

My stay was very short to make concluding research, but these experiences motivated me to research.

### Acknowledgement

I express my sincere gratitude to AEPC and JSPCCS for giving me such a wonderful chance. Also I wish to acknowledge Prof Ornella Milanesi and all staffs at Padova University for their assistance.



With Prof. Ornella Milanesi at museum of pathology.

12 May 2015

May 9, 2015

AEPC-JSPCCS Young Investigator Exchange Program

Association for European Paediatric and Congenital Cardiology (AEPC)

Japanese Society for Pediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery (JSPCCS)

To Whom It May Concern

Upon request of AEPC/JSPCCS, I had accepted **Dr. Pawel Wlasienko** from Medical University of Warsaw as an exchange investigator from February 1st, 2015 to February 28th. This letter is to report that he had successfully completed the whole course of the exchange program under my supervision.

Details of the medical-scientific activities

During a 4-week stay at the National Center for Child Health and Development, Tokyo, Japan, Dr. Pawel Wlasienko was engaged in wide-ranging medical-scientific activities. On weekdays, Dr. Wlasienko started his days from 8 am, accompanying the daily morning hospital ward round by the cardiology team including pediatric cardiac surgeons. After the morning round, he participated cardiac catheterization on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays as an observer. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, he was invited to the operative theater to observe surgeries on various complex congenital heart defects. He attended our journal club on Tuesday morning. He also took part in our daily conferences where we made discussion on hospitalized patients' diagnosis and treatment plans. On Monday and Thursday afternoon, he went to the outpatient clinic of the Division of Fetal Medicine to observe fetal ultrasonographic examinations. On Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday afternoon, he involved in echocardiography, exercise test, and inpatient care with clinical fellows of Cardiology Division. In addition, he gave two mini-lectures on fetal echocardiography and fetal cardiac intervention to the doctors of Cardiology Division.

Special activities outside our institute

Dr. Wlasienko attended the 21st Annual Meeting of Japanese Society of Fetal Cardiology, which was held in Tokyo on February 13th and 14th, 2015. Dr. Wlasienko delivered a small-lecture entitled "Polish experience on the fetal cardiac intervention" at the symposium on fetal intervention.

On February 20th, he visited Kanagawa Children Medical Center, and observed outpatient clinic by fetal cardiologists.

On February 26th, he visited Tokyo University Hospital, and observed fetal echocardiography and cardiac catheterization.

Assessment of personal performance

I found Dr. Pawel Wlasienko highly competent. He was very punctual, genial, and behaved modestly despite the fact that he was full of inquisitive spirit. Although English is not his mother tongue, he speaks English so fluently that there was no problems in communication. He exercised his excellent performance when he delivered a presentation entitled "Polish experience on the fetal cardiac intervention" at a symposium of Annual Meeting of Japanese Society of Fetal Cardiology. Although I asked him to make a presentation the day before the symposium,

his presentation was well-organized and highly informative.

Dr. Wlasienko specializes in fetal cardiology. He is a junior member of AEPC, and belongs to fetal cardiology working group. One of his research focuses is screening for congenital heart defects during first trimester. I had very fruitful discussions with him at the daily conferences. His comments during journal clubs and conferences were highly insightful, which was based on his outstanding expertise in fetal cardiology. His distinguished performance was sure to pose positive effect on my team members. Since Dr. Wlasienko's work in his home country is focused on fetal diagnostics and clinical genetics, his experience in postnatal follow-up of patients with congenital heart defects seemed not so abundant. However, he was full of inquisitive spirit and highly motivated, and learned a lot about the long-term clinical course of children with heart diseases.

#### Daily life in Tokyo

Dr. Pawel Wlasienko stayed in a dormitory room for trainees which was located within the campus of our institute. Accommodation was free of charge by the courtesy of the administrative office. We made a point of having lunch together on weekdays, and chatted over various topics. Once a week, we invited him to a dinner at nearby Japanese restaurant, and casually discussed various socio-cultural topics in order to facilitate mutual understanding. On weekends, he enjoyed numerous tourist spots in Tokyo, including Asakusa, the Imperial Palace, and the National Museum.

In conclusion, the Dr. Pawel Wlasienko's visit to our institution was very fruitful, which certainly had positive impact not only on Dr. Wlasienko himself, but also on my team. We promised a reunion in Prague at AEPC annual meeting on May. One of the members of Cardiology Division will go to Warsaw on his way to Prague and make a courtesy visit to Medical University of Warsaw.

Sincerely,

Hiroshi Ono, MD  
Division Head  
Division of Cardiology, National Center for Child Health and Development  
Tokyo, Japan



May 15, 2015

Professor Eero Jokinen

President of Association for European Pediatric Cardiology

Dear Professor Eero Jokinen,

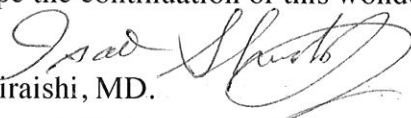
On behalf of Japanese Society of Pediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery, I hereby certify that Dr. Miriam Michel visited our institute as an international exchange doctor from Association for European Pediatric Cardiology and Japanese Society of Pediatric Cardiology and Pediatric Cardiac Surgery (March 29, 2015 – May 2, 2015).

Dr. Michel worked very hard with us and saw many pediatric patients with congenital heart disease before and after cardiac surgery, severe cardiac failure due to dilated cardiomyopathy, intractable cardiac arrhythmia after surgical operations, and Kawasaki disease. We also discussed a lot about diagnosis and treatment of cardiac arrhythmias, particularly junction ectopic tachycardia (JET) that often happens after open-heart surgery. She proposed a clinical research of JET in Japan in collaboration with AEPC and JSPCCS, which will be scheduled to start within a couple of months. She participated almost all the daily and weekly conferences in our institute including those in collaboration with pediatric cardiac surgeons, adult cardiologists, and obstetricians. Dr. Michel also participate the 79<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Japanese Circulation Society, which was held in Osaka International Conference Center from April 24 through 26. She said that conference was very instructive for her future clinical research.

A friend of her, Dr. Andreas Entenmann from Children's Hospital in Innsbruck, also visited our institute on from April 27 through May 2. We discussed about pacemaker implantation to pediatric patients with intractable arrhythmias.

Overall, the visit of Dr. Michel Miriam to our institute in Osaka was a very successful, instructive and enjoyable one for both of us.

I do hope the continuation of this wonderful exchange program with AEPC and JSPCCS.

  
Isao Shiraishi, MD.

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## Report of the AEPC-JSPCCS Exchange program

Dr. Sergej Prijic

From University of Belgrade and Mother and Child Health Institute of Serbia to Mt. Fuji Shizuoka Children's Hospital

Period : from February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015 to February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015

He came to our institute on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015.

Directly from the airport, he came to our office with very warm smile. He had immediately been familiar to our team and had very active time with us.

He attended our all CV center conference and commented aggressively. And he also participated echo-lab, catheter-lab and the international meeting of Mt. Fuji Network Forum that we held in Shizuoka.

I believe that he spent a great time with us and he had a valuable experience difficult to get by the other program.

Lastly, I attach his photos with us and I hope that we will be able to have more communication and collaboration between AEPC and JSPCCS. Thank all of you for giving the opportunity.

Sincerely yours,

Kisaburo Sakamoto



