

**Name: Dr. Tarun Chabra**

**Clinical Fellow in Division Of Spine Surgery**

**Fellowship Period: 2<sup>nd</sup> January, 2019 – 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2019**

**Department of Orthopaedics & Traumatology ,University of Hong Kong**



### **Fellowship Report**

The Fellowship in Clinical spine of 6 months at the prestigious Duchess of Kent Children's hospital and Queen Mary Hospital was a significant milestone of my orthopaedic career. This fellowship has offered me a perfect opportunity to train in all types of spinal deformity in varying age group from pediatric to adult. I will be forever indebted to Dr. Yat WA Wong and Prof. Kenneth Cheung who gave me this opportunity to learn spine surgery in these reputed institute .

I was overjoyed, excited and at the same time very honoured when I received the appointment letter as Clinical Associate in the Department of Spine Surgery. And thus began a very wonderful, fruitful and memorable journey of my fellowship when I joined my department on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2019.



My duties and responsibilities during my fellowship period included of:

- 1) Scoliosis Clinic
- 2) Operation Theatre
- 3) MMRC and Back Pain Ward
- 4) Grand round presentation
- 5) Pre- operative meeting
- 6) Inter-hospital meeting

#### **Scoliosis Clinic:**

On Monday and Thursday, I attend the scoliosis clinic where I examine all the patients with spinal deformity. It offered me to do a thorough clinical screening of all the patients and learnt about the bracing protocol for AIS patients. I also got to learn in detail about congenital, neuromuscular and adolescent idiopathic scoliosis; their approach to examination, investigation and management protocol. Most important was the conversation with patient's family and the counseling for conservative and operative management. I have to mention the significant contribution of Sister Betty who was always there to help to translate for me and in making the patient and the family understand my plan of management.

#### **Operation Theatres(O.T):**

I attended O.T on every Tuesday and Thursday where I got the opportunity to assist, observe and learn spine surgeries from all the consultants. I learned the techniques of Deformity correction, Lumbar decompression –fenestration while preserving the midline, TLIF techniques, Cervical spine – open door laminoplasty, anterior and posterior fixations and C1 C2 fusion techniques. On the day before each O.T, I will study in detail the technique of the surgery to be performed and thereby have an idea to proceed with the surgery next day. During operative procedures if I have any doubts I could always ask the surgeon and they will always be there to teach, discuss and give their expert opinions. All the O.T staff were very nice and cooperative and helped me to get familiar with the O.T protocol. Our Anaesthetist, Dr.H.T Chan is a wonderful teacher who will always teach the anaesthesia residents in O.T and thereby I also learned from him about management of airway and central lines, positioning and co-ordination between the surgeon and anaesthesia team.



## MMRC and Back Pain Ward:

It was a wonderful opportunity to attend MMRC Rehabilitation Ward twice a week on every Monday and Friday where I will do the assessment for back pain patients and plan the treatment accordingly for them. This offered me to take a holistic approach for the treatment of the Back pain patients. I also got well versed with all type of physiotherapies and hydrotherapy (AI CHI) and learned a lot from the physiotherapist as well as the occupational therapists. I must say that team effort was very useful for the better outcome of the patients undergoing rehabilitation.



## Grand round presentation:

Every Wednesday I have to present the Grand round and I found the preparation for the Grand Round to be the most difficult part of my fellowship as language was a barrier between me and the patients but fortunately the ward sisters were always there to translate the language for me and help me in history taking and while examining the patient. I used to prepare for the cases beforehand with Dr. Paul where we will discuss about the patients in depth and formulate the plan for all the patients. The Grand Rounds are like an academic feast attended by all the doctors, nurses, physiotherapist and occupational therapist and I will be presenting the clinical picture of all the patients one by one. Dr. Wong and Prof. Cheung will then discuss in detail about the clinical assessment and the plan of management and when to plan for surgery. I have benefited greatly during all these interactions, learned a lot of new things while discussing rare and interesting cases and this has vastly enriched my clinical experience.





### **Pre operative meeting:**

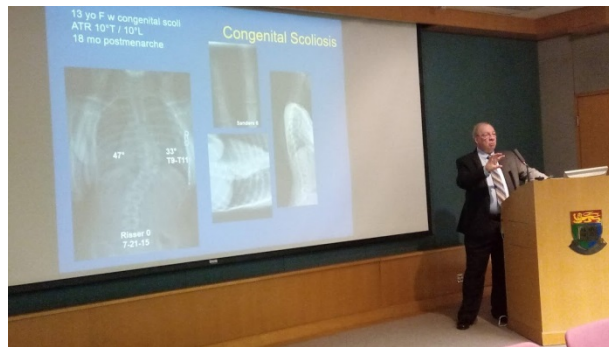
We have a Pre –operative meeting every Friday where all the cases which are posted for O.T at DKCH and QMH will be discussed in detail. I learned from these meetings how to plan the levels of fusion in scoliosis surgery, decompression/fusion in degenerative spine surgery .Critical analysis of Postoperative cases also gave valuable information about the procedures planned and performed.



## Inter Hospital meeting:

I have attended almost all the Inter hospital meetings which are held in different hospital every Saturday and it included topics of all sub-specialties and thereby keeps knowledge of other subspecialties also updated. It provides a very good platform of learning and training for every orthopaedician.

I was lucky to get the opportunity to meet two world renowned Spine Surgeon : Prof Randal Betz and Dr. Worawat Limthongkul. It was a treat for the eyes to see Prof. Randal Betz performing non-fusion surgery for scoliosis along with Prof. Cheung. Dr Worawat came for cadaveric course of OLIF technique and we learned about the technique from him.



I was also invited as a judge of Dr.SP Chow special group case presentation and became an examiner in the clinical competency test for the medical students. I enjoyed judging the presentations of the students and also shared few of my clinical experience with them.

## Exploring Hong Kong City:

The fellowship also offered me a opportunity to explore Hong Kong, a vibrant urban centre with sky scraper-studded skyline. During the weekends me and my wife enjoyed the Victoria Peak experience on the famous Peak tram and visited Madame Tussauds Wax Museum; took a ride on the Ngong Ping 360 Cable Car to Lantau island which is the home to Tian Tan the Big Buddha and Po Lin Monastery; had a great time at the Ocean Park which is a theme park with roller coaster rides, family and kids attractions and activities; also explored the bustling Cheung Chau island on two seater tricycle and enjoyed its famous seafood and mango dumpling. I also loved the spectacular Symphony of Lights at the Tsim Sha Tsui Water front ; experienced the lively Temple Street Night Market ; visited the impressive The Ten Thousand Buddhas Monastery in Sha Tin and took a ride on the Hong Kong Observation wheel (HK Ferris Wheel) which offered a bird's eye view of downtown Hong Kong.

This food loving City also offered me an array of dishes to try ranging from Clay pot rice, Rice and egg noodles, Noodles and Congee, Curry Fish balls, Dumplings , Dim sum, Tofu, Japanese Sushi ,Egg Tarts, Egg Waffles with ice cream and the list goes on.







### **Acknowledgments :**

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to Prof. Kenneth Cheung and Dr .Yat Wa Wong for their unwavering support, teachings and guidance during the tenure of my fellowship. My special thanks to Dr Paul Koljonen for his constant support and guidance while preparing for grand rounds , pre-op meetings and also for training and supervising me during the surgeries. Dr Kenny Kwan, Dr Jason Cheung and Dr. Cheung W Y also helped me a lot in both academic and surgical cases.

My deepest appreciation to Nurse Tam who always looked after me and shared so many of her home prepared delicacies with me and my wife. I also would like to thank Sister Mo for gifting me books to learn Chinese and traditional ink brushes also.

Last but not the least I would like to thank Ms April Cheung and Ms May Ng for their kind help in dealing with all the administrative work from the beginning and throughout the fellowship period.



## MEMORIES TO KEEP



