IBRA Scholarship report

- **Information about Scholar and fellowship**

Name of scholar: **Panagiotis Masouros**
Country of citizenship: **Greece**
Name and country of training center: **Universitätsklinikum, Cologne, Germany**
Name of fellowship director: **Dr. Lars Peter Müller**
Scholarship type: **Program B**
Scholarship date: **November 20th – 17th December 2021**

- **Professional and personal experience**

The institution is a level-1 trauma center, while the "Klinik für Orthopädie und Unfallchirurgie" is a recognized center for shoulder and elbow surgery, led by Prof. Dr. Lars Peter Müller. A lot of complex elbow cases are referred daily from other hospitals of the wider region, including malunions and other post-traumatic complications, primary and secondary arthritis of the elbow joint, instabilities, congenital disorders etc.

Universitätsklinikum, main building, arriving early in the morning

My personal expectations were to deepen my knowledge in elbow trauma and other related pathologies, to acquire new surgical skills, such as elbow reconstruction and arthroscopic guided fracture management and finally to meet and discuss complex elbow topics with renowned experts.

The daily schedule started with an on-line morning meeting to discuss the cases of the previous day and any other problems in the clinic. Every day, there were two operating theatres with a mean of three cases in each theatre. Besides, there was an outpatient clinic every day, with 2 days per week dedicated to shoulder and elbow. During my stay, I had the opportunity to observe or/and assist in more than 50 operations with the vast majority of them being elbow cases. This number becomes particularly impressive given the limitations due to covid-19 pandemic.

View of the city of Cologne from the doctors' office on the 11th floor

Most favorite procedures included: arthroscopic treatment of radial head fractures, LULC and/or MCL reconstruction for the management of post-traumatic instability, total elbow replacement for arthritic disease and hemiarthroplasty for comminuted distal humerus fractures. Other interesting cases included open or arthroscopic arthrolysis for the treatment of post-traumatic stiffness, resection of proximal forearm tumors and internal fixation of complex proximal ulna fractures based on a "fragment specific surgery" concept. I had the opportunity to learn the lateral para-olecranon approach for elbow arthroplasty, which I will certainly adopt in my future practice, as all triceps-related complications are avoided. The internal brace for LUCL reconstruction is another technique, which can be incorporated in my practice. Finally, I will potentially try to manage simple radial head or coronoid fractures with an all-arthroscopic technique.

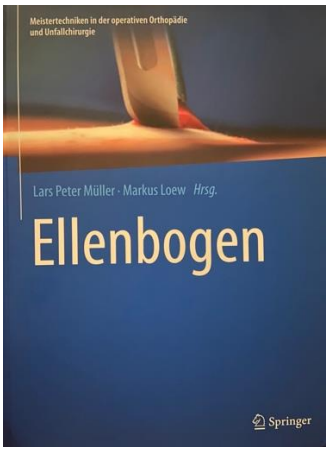
- **Tips to future scholars**

Cologne is a beautiful city, built on the banks of the Rhein River. It is the capital of the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, with an estimated population of 3.5 million in

the wider urban region. The Universitätsklinikum is quite close to the city center at a distance of about 10 min by bus. Finding an accommodation in this area will not be particularly difficult, though it can be relatively expensive in some cases. The city offers a lot of landmarks for sightseeing, short trips to the nearby region, cultural events, and a great variety of local and international cuisine.

- **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank Professor Dr Lars Peter Müller and his team for this unique experience. It has been a great honor and a great opportunity to work with such a world- renowned elbow surgeon. Besides, I would like to emphasize his hospitality and his willingness to explain and teach. Everyone belonging to the staff of the hospital was particularly kind and eager to help.



A present by Prof. Müller to me: The latest version of his extended textbook on elbow fracture management. A real treasure containing amazing intra-operative illustrations.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to the International Bone Research Association, as they made this dream feasible. It is of particular importance that IBRA offers this opportunity to younger surgeons to travel all over the world and meet the experts.