Information about Scholar and fellowship

Name of Scholar: Sadaaki Tsutsui
Country of Citizenship: Japan
Name and Country of Training Center Name of Fellowship Director:
Wrightington hospital: Professor Adam Watts
Guy's and St Thomas hospital: Mr Lorenzo Garagnani

Scholarship Type (Program B or C): Type B
3 Apr to 24 June, 2023

Professional and personal experience

[What were your professional and personal expectations of the scholarship?]
From a professional perspective, my specialty lies in hand, wrist, and elbow surgeries, particularly those related to trauma. I was hopeful that the scholarship would allow me to observe higher-level surgeries, discuss challenging cases with experts, and gain broader knowledge of the medical circumstances in the UK.

[What is the main focus of the IBRA training center (in general and of the department) you assisted in?]
The primary focus of the IBRA training centre where I assisted is split between two specialties: Professor Watts and his colleagues concentrate on elbow surgery, while Mr. Garagnani and his colleagues emphasize hand surgery.

[What did you do during your scholarship/how were you incorporated in the training center's daily routines/activities:]
Given the variation in the consultants' activities by day and week, I took each day as a learning opportunity for whatever was presented. Primarily, I focused on the elbow at Wrightington Hospital, and on the hand at Guy's and St. Thomas Hospital. However, depending on the week's schedule, I was allowed to observe surgeries on other parts of the upper extremity and even accompany consultants to private clinics, which made for a fulfilling experience.
It wasn't just about surgery; observing outpatient services offered valuable insights into different consultation methods and healthcare systems. Additionally, I had the opportunity to participate in two IBRA cadaver seminars on elbow and shoulder, hand and wrist at Wrightington Hospital, and the International Advanced Course on Elbow Surgery (IACES) in Madrid, which were held during my stay.

[How many surgeries have you assisted and which concrete technical modifications and methods have you seen?]
Although I was not permitted to scrub in, I observed numerous surgeries. According to my records, I attended 57 surgeries at Wrightington Hospital and 30 at Guy's and St. Thomas Hospital.

[Specify your 3 to 5 favorite procedures and/or new skills you could acquire]
- The Paraolecranon approach for Open Reduction Internal Fixation (ORIF) and Total Elbow Arthroplasty (TEA).
- Arthroscopic surgeries of the elbow.
- Biceps tendon repair.
- The Bruner incision approach for Dupuytren's contracture.
- Arthroplasty of the first Carpo-metacarpal joint.

[Which procedures can potentially be adopted in your future practice and how do they compare to your experiences at home]
Every procedure I observed is valuable, but the Para-olecranon approach is especially noteworthy. In the past, I used the Para-tricipital or Olecranon Osteotomy approach for Open Reduction and Internal Fixation (ORIF), and the Campbell approach for Total Elbow Arthroplasty (TEA). However, the Para-olecranon approach can cover the majority of distal humerus fractures and, if a fracture cannot be sufficiently fixed, we can alter our plan to TEA using the same approach.

[What was the most significant personal experience of the scholarship for you (e.g. cultural exchange etc.)?]
My most significant personal experience during the scholarship was being inspired by many consultants in the UK. This was not only in terms of surgical skills, but also in their breadth of knowledge, way of thinking, and their respectful attitudes towards staff and patients. Additionally, I gained insights into the UK's medical system, which is vastly different from that of Japan.

[Closing words]
During my stay in the UK, I had the privilege of meeting numerous consultants, fellows, and registrars. Each of them treated me with the utmost kindness and generosity, for which I am truly grateful. This experience has greatly excited my interest in working abroad, and it has inspired me to contemplate establishing an IBRA training centre in Japan, specifically focused on upper extremity surgery, in the future.

[Tips to future scholars (housing, traveling etc.)]
I spent six weeks residing at the Premier Inn in Wigan (M6 Jct 27), which is conveniently located only a 20-minute walk from Wrightington Hospital. The hotel staff was remarkably friendly and accommodating.

However, a word of advice for anyone considering staying there: Request a room on the 2nd floor - the topmost floor of the hotel. During my stay on the ground floor, the noise of footsteps from the floor above was quite disruptive, affecting my sleep.

As for transportation, I didn't rent a car, and although using buses and trains was manageable, it was occasionally inconvenient, especially for trips to Manchester.
In London, the tube provided easy access to both Guy’s and St. Thomas hospitals.
One thing to note about London is that accommodation costs in the central area can be very high. I would suggest looking for lodgings slightly outside the central area but within close proximity to local tube stations for convenience.

[Acknowledgement (thanking IBRA and the training center)]

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to IBRA for their generous scholarship, which provided me with an invaluable opportunity to learn and grow professionally. I would also like to sincerely thank Professor Watts, Mr Garagnani, and their respective teams for their dedicated mentorship and guidance throughout my stay. Their emphasis on elbow and hand surgery respectively, and their willingness to share their expertise, has greatly enriched my knowledge and surgical skills. I'm confident that the insights and skills I gained during this scholarship will significantly enhance my future practice and contribute to improving the quality of patient care I provide. I look forward to applying what I've learned and continuing to build upon this experience as I further my career in orthopedic surgery.

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