Report of clinical residential visit to The National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopedics, Rio de Janeiro,

09/05 – 03/06/2016

I m a 30-year old Resident for Hand- and Plastic Surgery at the University Hospital of Wuerzburg. For one month I had the opportunity to visit one of the best Hospitals in Brazil, the National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopedics (INTO), in Rio de Janeiro. After my successful application I was in periodically contact with Dr. Eduardo Vasquez, one of the Consultants of the Handsurgery Team. His support (for which I am grateful) was extremely useful in helping me deal with the formal procedures, making it very easy for me to organise my first trip to South America.

After a warm welcome from Dr. Anderson Monteiro, Head of the Department for Handsurgery, and his team, I started working at the Institution.

The National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopedics Jamil Haddad (Into) is a public hospital in the Centre of Rio de Janeiro. As a reference center for the treatment of diseases and orthopedic trauma of medium and high complexity it is a standard bearer for excellence in the area of hand- and microsurgery, orthopedics, traumatology and rehabilitation of the country.

INTO in its present form was founded in 2010 and occupies the building of the old Journal do Brazil, at Avenida Brazil, 500, which is part of the port area of the city. The facilities cover an area of 70,000 square meters.
INTO's outpatient area has 38 care rooms for all orthopedic specialties, which represents about 305,000 visits per year. The rooms have the infrastructure and advanced equipment for the specific diagnosis of diseases of each group. The rehabilitation unit has an area of two thousand square meters, which includes a pool for hydrotherapy. The estimated calls capacity is about 86.000 per annum. The team includes physiatrists, physical therapists, speech therapists, occupational therapists, psychologists, social workers.

The complex also houses a Day Clinic, used for patients who are undergoing rapid procedures. The surgeries are held in modern and comfortable rooms, under the supervision of a multidisciplinary team. There are three operating rooms and 18 beds for perioperative monitoring.

The centerpiece of the hospital is the operation theatre – 21 well resourced rooms, including one room for emergencies, and two with live satellite transmission equipment. This technology is used for the training and continuing education of health professionals, for example the IBRA workshops. Postoperative Patient are monitored in one of the 255 beds in hospital or at one of the 48 beds of the intensive care unit. The Hand Surgery Center is primarily based in the Day Clinic and performs about 40 surgeries a week, involving the treatment of traumatic injuries of the hand and congenital deformities of the upper limb, including muscle, neurotendinous and skeletal structures.

Due to my lack of fluent Portuguese I mainly was involved in the surgical procedures. The surgeons due to perform the operations that day meet in the morning at the Day Clinic. On Tuesdays there is a meeting of the entire surgical

staff in order to discuss severe or interesting cases, alongside a journal club. This gave me the opportunity to observe many types of hand and limb surgeries in children and older patients. The procedures had a wide range and the focus is on secondary reconstructions, for example tendon transfers or correction osteotomy of the distal radius, and congenital deformities, for example thumb duplication or syndactyly. Furthermore I had the chance to work with the plastic surgery team of Joao Recalde, a team specializing in brachial plexus injuries and muscle and nerve transfers.

As an added bonus, the 36th Brazilian Congress of Hand Surgery took place from 26th – 28th May in Sao Paulo. The IBRA organized a Satellite Symposium providing me with a chance to attend. Hence I was able to enjoy the fascinating presentations and talks of many eminent Hand Surgeons from North America, South America and Europe.

In conclusion I appreciate this unique chance to visit the INTO and Brazil with the financial and organizationally support of the IBRA.

It was a work-related and personally gain to work together with all of the staff of INTO. I learned more about congenital deformities and reconstructions and see many new surgical techniques.

Special Thanks goes Dr. Anderson Monteiro and Professor Rainer Meffert for giving me this opportunity. Also many thanks to the Hand and Plastic Surgery Team of INTO for all the explanations, translation, kindness and help. Furthermore I would like to thank José Manuel Vázquez and the IBRA Team for supporting me along my way.

I highly recommend this scholarship to everyone who is interested in Hand and Micro Surgery and like to extend himself in every way.

by Jacob Erdmann