

Poznań, 27 October 2015

Final report and evaluation of EBCOG-supported Fellowship

In the beginning I would like to thank you very much for supporting my three months clinical fellowship in Medisch Spectrum Twente in Enschede, the Netherlands.

My main focus during the fellowship was gynaecology and oncology. I followed the patients in the outpatient clinics, observed some minor gynaecological procedures and assisted to surgeries. In the beginning I was a bit anxious about the language barrier but thanks to the excellent level of English of the medical staff and their incredibly friendly and open-minded attitude, this problem was solved. However, to benefit more from the fellowship, I embarked on learning Dutch and soon I was able to maintain a basic conversation with the patients in their native language as well. Apart from the medical knowledge I gained, I consider that an extra benefit of my stay in the Netherlands.

I was very lucky to have the opportunity to complete the fellowship in a country that is completely different from Poland (my home country) in terms of attitude to the patient, liberalism of opinions and law and organisation. First of all, I was able to identify many differences on the organisational and financial level, such as: the provision of some gynaecological services by other doctors (e.g. the general practitioner collects pap-smears) and midwives (normal pregnancy follow-up), fully digital medical documentation, lack of written consent, system of exchange of digital letters between the doctors and many others. Secondly, I observed an attitude to the patient based on providing detailed information about their condition and therefore very much involving them in the process of decision-making and treatment. This results in the patients being increasingly conscious and, in my opinion, contributes to better compliance with the advice of the physician. Thirdly, I was able to learn about and witness several procedures that are actually prohibited by Polish law, e.g. female sterilisation, abortion on demand, or much more liberal IUD use. I have to admit it was very eye-opening and allowed me to look at things from a totally different perspective. And finally, I was impressed by how smoothly and quickly new protocols based on strong scientific evidence are introduced and followed. Already during the fellowship my home department made some amendments in the protocols of perioperative care, therefore my fellowship has had a direct impact on the improvement of patient care.

Furthermore, I took part in various multidisciplinary meetings (e.g. oncological board, ultrasound abnormalities discussion) which were very enriching and broadened my understanding of some complex issues. Apart from that, I had the opportunity to benefit from regular educative meetings including weekly phantom exercises, short lectures and even very professionally prepared simulation training in emergency situations in obstetrics. I was impressed with the quality and quantity of training the Dutch residents receive and I was very glad I could benefit from that too.



About one third of my stay I spent in the operating room. Prior to my arrival I was advised by the head of the department to register with the General Medical Council as a medical doctor and therefore I received a full license to practise. I assisted to a number of surgical procedures and sometimes I was even allowed to be the operator. I had the opportunity to observe various operations that are not commonly performed in my home department and to compare the technique of those that are.

Overall, I am really grateful for the opportunity to complete part of my specialty training in a foreign country. This fellowship has definitely provided me with new knowledge and experience as well as inspired me to strive for the best.

I strongly encourage EBCOG to continue to support international exchange among the trainees and I highly recommend this clinical fellowship to the young gynaecologists and obstetricians.

Kind regards,

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