**British Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons Travel Grant Report**

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Unit visited: Department of Otolaryngology- Head and Neck Surgery,

 Universitatkilnikum Hamburg- Eppendorf
 Hubertus Wald Comprehensive Cancer Centre

 MartinistraBe 52

 20246 Hamburg
 Germany.

Dates of visit: 22nd May to 10th June 2016 (three weeks)

Description of visit:

I have a sub specialty interest in head and neck surgery and keen to further my knowledge and skills in all aspects of this discipline. I have a special interest in the field of transoral robotic surgery (TORS) for head and neck cancer and intend to further my knowledge base and clinical exposure in this field. My three week visiting fellowship to the Otolaryngology- Head and neck surgery department at the University of Hamburg- Eppendorf was a fantastic starting point to lay down the foundations in trans oral robotic surgery and develop interdisciplinary skills by working amongst and learning from my German ENT colleagues.

I contacted the unit about six months in advance- this was important to organize the relevant time slot and organize things at my end. I initially intended to attend the unit for longer, but staffing circumstances in my local unit and arrangements needed for my forthcoming one-year Australian fellowship needed me to curtail this plan.

About the host unit:

The Universitatkilnikum Hamburg- Eppendorf, is the only university teaching hospital and also the largest hospital in Hamburg with 1460 beds and 121-day care places. The hospital also serves as a regional trauma centre with an in house helipad. The ENT unit has dedicated forty-two inpatient beds, ward based treatment room, outpatient clinics which see over 1000 patients a year. There are two operating theatres running each day dedicated to the department. One additional day surgery list per week. The team includes five Oberartze (consultant), four specialists, twelve specialty trainees and allied health staff.

Clinical experience:

During my time in Hamburg, I worked as a Visiting Clinical Fellow under the direct supervision of Dr Balazs B. Lorincz M.D., Ph.D. who is the Head and Neck Fellowship Director at the unit and also the daVinci Trans Oral Robotic Surgery (TORS) Proctor. I was exposed to a variety of head and neck procedures. This entailed thyroid, oncologic ablative and microvascular reconstructive and robotic head and neck procedures. The TORS unit and the two daVinci *Si* robots are based in the Martini clinic. I spent around thirty hours going through the exercises of the simulator training. This, as anyone else who has spent time on the simulator is taxing, has a steep learning curve and eventually rewarding.

I attended the weekly Head and Neck MDT which happens on Wednesday afternoon. I was impressed with the excellent interaction between the surgical and Oncology teams. We also had discussions regarding the planning on treatment consoles.

 Reflections

Without any doubts I am pleased to say my three weeks “mini” Fellowship was a fantastic overall experience. This is a friendly and a welcoming department with a bunch of talented surgeons. I managed to squeeze a good operative exposure and spend good time on the robotic simulator. Alongside the robotic exposure, participating in procedures such as laryngectomies and lateral temporal bone resection would be useful to my following Head and Neck fellowship and career.

Hamburg is a beautiful city, with great architecture, excellent transport facilities, museums and parks and open spaces. I managed to visit some of the museums and try out the local cuisine during the visit.

The time spent in Germany and subsequently in Australia; the robotic surgical experience gained and multidisciplinary training at both these units shall hopefully help me add robotic surgical work to my Head and Neck surgical repertoire, on my return to the UK.

I am very grateful to BAOMS for supporting my visit with the travel grant.

Breakdown of costs:

Travel- 125.71 £

Accommodation costs- 1130 £

Subsistence- 620£