

ASGBI 2010 INTERNATIONAL BURSARY WINNER FEEDBACK REPORT
BY Dr NTIRENGANYA Faustin

A number of International Bursaries were available for international surgical trainees from poorly resourced countries who wished to attend the **ASGBI 2010 International Surgical Congress, 'The Challenges of Surgery,'** in Liverpool from 14th to 16th April 2010.

The purpose of the Bursaries was to provide support for overseas' trainees in the development of their training by providing the possibility of spending two days in a UK hospital and attending the International Surgical Congress.

We have been many to apply and I have been one of the 16 who was lucky enough to be selected. We came from 7 countries: Rwanda, where I came from, Kenya, Uganda, Zambia, Sri Lanka, India and Iraq. 16 of us managed to attend; one didn't because of VISA problems. We have been received cordially on Sunday 11th at Jury's Inn Hotel reception, by Miss Bhavnita and Mr Martin Greaney for greetings and introduction.

The first 2 days

Two days prior to the conference were dedicated to local hospital visits. 5 hospitals have been visited: Warrington, Wirral, Aintree, Countess of Chester and Royal Liverpool hospital

We were divided into 4 groups of 4. My group had been to Warrington on the first day and we visited Wirral before noon the second day before going to Royal Liverpool University Hospital where all of us meet for wonderful presentations made in the Liverpool Cancer Research Unit by Research and surgical trainees and consultants.

At Warrington Hospital

We arrived to the main entrance of the Warrington early in the morning! Mr Taylor was there to receive us and took the group to the surgical department. We have been introduced to the surgical staff and visited the department.

During that day we had a feel of how things are run on a daily basis. We visited the theatre where laparoscopic right hemicolectomy was done. We also assisted with a couple of laparoscopic cholecystectomies.

The team were very friendly, answering our questions relating to surgery in general, NHS and Surgical training in particular. Around noon, we had a good meal followed by a CME session at the education centre of the hospital- The topic of the day was: THE CAPTAIN OF DEATH!

We left the hospital at 5.00pm to meet other groups at the hotel for 6.00pm. We walked together through Liverpool to Radio City tower for a tour, skyline views and buffet supper with Mr Martin.

At Wirral Hospital

On Tuesday morning, Mr Martin took us to Wirral Hospital. On arrival, everything was already in place. An ID badge session took us a few minutes before entering the surgical department. In the department, Mr Martin introduced us to the staff and let us in the good

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hands of Mr. Muhammad Shafiq Javed, a good person and a talented surgeon. We passed all the before noon with him assisting on his operations- A laparoscopic CBD exploration, and a laparoscopic cholecystectomy. However we paid visits in nearby theatres where a laparoscopic prostatectomy was being done and an ileostomy being closed. We had good moments with Mr Javid explaining to us various concepts of surgery, surgical training in UK and had together a lovely lunch before taking taxi towards Royal Liverpool Hospital.

At RLUH, Miss Ganeh was there to receive us and interesting presentations on Breast cancer and breast reconstruction, Acute Pancreatitis and Minimally invasive retroperitoneal pancreatic necrosectomy, etc, have been presented by trainees and consultants of the surgical department. Fruitful discussions followed the presentations and an exchange of views and experience among trainees from different places has shown to be of a capital value. We enjoyed multiple cups of coffee between sessions!

The evening was free for us to enjoy the city.

ASGBI 2010 International Surgical Congress, 'The Challenges of Surgery,' in Liverpool from 14th to 16th April 2010 coinciding with the 90th Association's anniversary

The conference has been held in BT Convention Liverpool, a wonderful place really appropriate for an event of such importance. It was highly well organized and time kept. Sessions were held simultaneously, parallel and breaks were given in order to visit industry exhibition and numerous posters.

I have been personally impressed by the 90th anniversary guest lecture, Lord David Owen, **In sickness and in power: illness in heads of government during the last 100 years.** However, one would like to attend every session but it was not possible. The ones I managed to attend like the prevention of rectal cancer, medical management of the surgical patient, BJS papers which changed practice, inguinal hernia: which operation?, prostate cancer: puzzles and perils, modern approaches to surgical training, were so well done and delivering updated scientific information. I really benefitted from them.

The international development symposium was another important part of the conference. Chaired by Mr Olujimi Coker and Mr Robert Lane, Global challenges of surgery in developing world and challenges in surgical training in developing world have been discussed. Problems have been enumerated but more interestingly, some suggested solutions in order to improve surgical care and surgical training provided in developing countries.

In the evening of Thursday 15th April 2010 we've been invited as guests of the Association to the 2010 Gala Dinner at Sefton Park Palm House in Liverpool. The evening took the form of a drinks reception and dinner, followed by entertainment.

The conference has been closed on Friday 16th April 2010 at 15h30.

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CONCLUSION

This experience has changed my life, my way of seeing things and automatically my way of treating patients.

It was wonderful to see how things are done in hospitals elsewhere. The difference is there of course and it is so big, especially in means, personnel, equipment and infrastructure.

However with the few we have we can always improve. With an accurate organization of our services we can achieve a lot. We have to document everything we do, to do audit, to improve the quality of care we are providing to our patients.

The conference was well organised, interesting and I learnt a lot from different sessions. The fact is that in developing countries we still lack research because very few presentations were coming from those countries! We have also to improve on that.

Last but not least, let me thank the ASGBI for having made this trip possible and enjoyable, as just those few things which happen once in a life time! My special thanks to Miss Bhavnita, Mr Martin, Mr Taylor, Mr Javed for all they have done for us.

May God bless you.

Dr Faustin NTIRENGANYA