

### **IUGA Observership Grant Report 2013**

Observer: Dr Sharifah Zureena Syed Abdul Jalil, Specialty Trainee Year 6 Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Northern Ireland, UK

Host site: Professor Hans Peter Dietz, Nepean Hospital, Sydney University, Penrith NSW Australia

Date: 19th August-20th September 2013

I was privileged to be given this opportunity by IUGA to visit a centre which excels in research specifically in 3D/4D Transperineal Ultrasound. My intention was to obtain the skills necessary to practice independently and share this with colleagues. I am also fortunate that a follow on research project will involve the skills obtained during this Observership from IUGA.

Professor Dietz frequently has observers in his unit and the programme has been established for about five years. I attended urogynaecology clinics, perineal clinics and urodynamic sessions. Patients had standardised interviews, clinical examination and 3D/4D transperineal USS. Although observers are not currently allowed to perform USS under supervision in government hospitals in NSW, this could be done in the private setting with the patient's consent. Theatre sessions occur once a week. I learnt the rationale behind use of mesh in POP based on the data generated by the unit - primarily in patients with levator avulsion. This is best diagnosed on 3D/4D ultrasound although it could easily be done on palpation by trained gynaecologists or urogynaecologists. It is rather unfortunate that I could not observe a Puborectalis Sling (PRS) insertion - this is currently an ongoing RCT at the unit which hypothesises a reduction in recurrence of prolapse by reducing the hiatal area through insertion of a mesh to support the puborectalis muscle. Despite this, I witnessed how this research is conducted with the patients well informed about all aspects - with sufficient time to go through the information and ample opportunities to ask questions.

The unit is also an active research centre with randomised controlled trials, research fellow activities and several PhD candidates. It is not surprising that observers are encouraged to get involved in a research project during the five-week visit. I was introduced to a working desk of my own(!) in a well equipped research room and conducive environment. I completed a project looking at the diagnosis of Levator muscle avulsion using tomographic ultrasound imaging. As a result I not only learned the use of 4D View Software for post processing 3D/4D ultrasound images but also gained an abstract out of the observership. The team was most helpful with any questions I had and provided plenty of support for a novice like me.

Travelling Down Under also gave me some opportunity of sightseeing to those iconic places like the Opera House, Harbour Bridge, Taronga Zoo and Sydney Tower. Nepean Hospital has a close proximity to the picturesque and scenic Blue Mountains, the early mornings frequently greeted by birds of which the Rainbow Lorikeet is my favourite.

I can reassure that observers to this unit will gain experience, insight into the use of ultrasound and also gain lifelong friendship and a network within urogynaecology. It is also worth knowing that ultrasound is part of the diagnostic spectrum in assessing our patients to ensure they get the best care that we can offer.



From L-R: Dr Rodrigo Guzman Rojas (research fellow), Dr Marie Wallwork (registrar), Dr Ixora Kamisan Atan (subspecialty trainee and PhD candidate), Sharifah Z S A Jalil (observer), Professor Hans Peter Dietz