

APOA-Depuy Spine Travelling Fellowship

26th October to 15th November, 2014

Singapore

(26th October – 1st November 2014)

Arrival - Day 0

(Sun, 26th October 2014)

We arrived in Singapore on a Sunday. The airport transfer was right on time although we was not informed about the arrangement. We were brought to the Park Royal hotel where we stayed the week. This hotel is located in a strategic location in the north region and only a 10 minutes drive from NUH. The neighbouring Rochester Mall sited next to the lush greenery of Rochester Park, provided an exceptional dining experience. It is also located next to the huge Star Vista shopping mall and also the Buona Vista Mass Rapid Transit (MRT), which is only 2 stops away from the NUH MRT station. It's a brand new hotel. We were placed in a twin sharing room initially, but upgraded to a lovely suite with 2 separate rooms from Tuesday onwards. It was unfortunate that even upon arrival, the programme for the rest of the week was not made available to us for reference.



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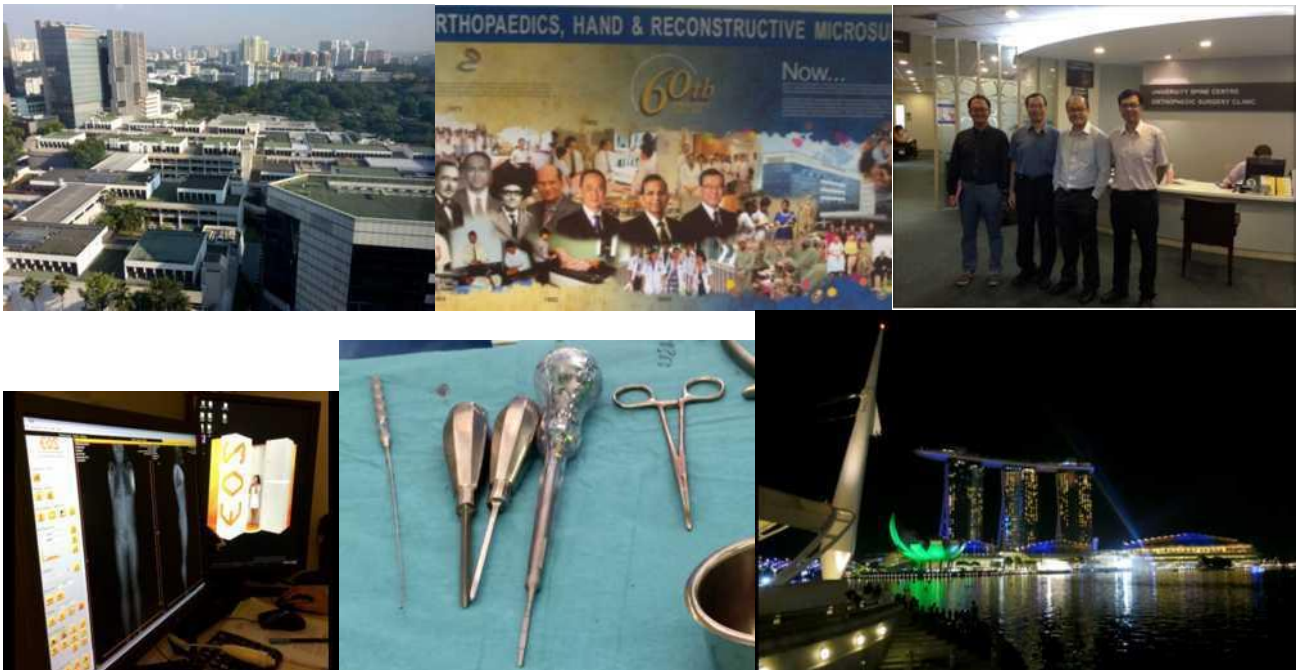
Day 1

(Mon, 27th October 2014)

On our first day, as we were unaware of the programme for the day, we arrived late to the National University of Singapore Hospital. Due our delayed arrival, our scheduled presentations were postponed to the following day. However, we were greeted warmly by Prof HK Wong, A/Prof Gabriel Liu, A/Prof KS Naresh and the rest of the Orthopaedic department staff. We were given a brief tour around the orthopaedic facilities in NUH. We were impressed by the University Spine Center and Orthopaedic Clinic which houses a EOS imaging system which provides 2D and 3D imaging with low dose radiation. This is especially useful in spinal deformity assessment.

We proceeded to join Prof HK Wong in the operation theatre. He performed a posterior spinal fusion on a 15-year-old boy with Lenke 5 idiopathic scoliosis. Dr Hsieh was given the opportunity to scrub in to assist this surgery. The use of the pedigard pedicle finder for pedicle screw insertion was shown to us. We managed to observe another surgery performed by A/Prof Gabriel Liu. He did a MIS TLIF surgery combined with navigation technique for the pedicle screws. The navigation technique was aimed to reduce the radiation during pedicle screws insertion.

After the surgeries, we were treated to the signature curry crab at the famous 'No Signboard Seafood Restaurant' together with the whole spine unit. After the scrumptious dinner, we had the opportunity to enjoy the stunning water front scenery next to the restaurant.



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Day 2

(Tue, 28th October 2014)

On our second day, Dr Kim YH presented his topic in 'Research and Updates in Studies of the Spinal Cord Injuries'. It was followed by Dr Tzeng ST's presentation, 'Stage Posterior Correction in the Treatment of Severe Rigid Scoliosis or Kyphosis'. We joined Prof HK Wong later in the operation theatre where he performed an anterior scoliosis surgery for a Lenke 5 curve combining the conventional open technique (for lumbar levels) with the thoracoscopic surgery (for the thoracic levels). Dr. Kim YH scrubbed in. The second surgery was an ACDF for cervical spinal stenosis performed by Dr Hey. In the operation theatre complex, Prof Wong HK managed to share his experience, tricks and pearls for his renowned thoracoscopic scoliosis surgery.

Dinner was a delightful experience where we had the famous traditional Herbal Meat Soup 'Bakuteh' hosted by Dr Lau. This delicacy started out as the daily diet of the Chinese labourers at the harbour during the colonial times. After dinner, Dr Lau brought us to the Marina Barrage as well as to the Garden by the Bay. Marina Barrage houses the state of the art water recycling technology and the Garden by the Bay is a huge indoor garden where the world's largest columnless greenhouse resides.



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Day 3

(Wed, 29th October 2014)

We started day 3 by joining the Singapore General Hospital Spine team's case presentations and discussion. A/Prof Tan Seang Beng, A/Prof Yue Wai Mun and Dr John Chen greeted us warmly. After a short tour of the ward and clinic, we had our breakfast with the spine team at the O'Briens Irish Sandwich Café. After breakfast, A/Prof Yue Wai Mun led us to the SGH Museum. Housed in the Bowyer Block, an architectural landmark in the SGH Campus, the SGH Museum is a repository of artefacts and records, where visitors can trace the long and rich history of the Singapore General Hospital. For dinner, A/Prof Gabriel Liu treated us to an authentic Chinese cuisine meal at the Imperial Treasure Restaurant at Marina Bay Sands. Before entering the restaurant we were able to catch a bird's eye view of the luxurious casino beneath.



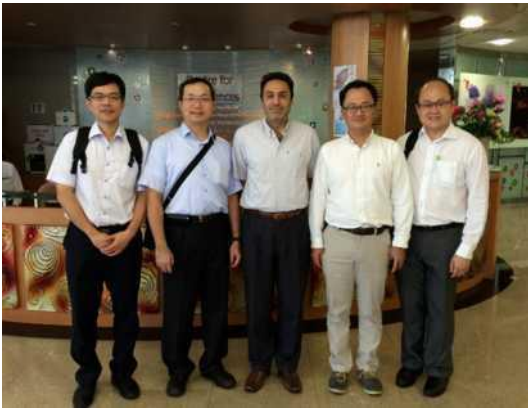
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Day 4

(Thurs, 30th October 2014)

We started the day with presentations by Dr Hsieh MK, 'A study in cases treated with MIS TLIF' followed by Dr Khoo EH's presentation, 'Tuberculosis Of The Spine in An 17 Month Old Toddler: A Case Report And Review Of Management in Pediatric Pott's Disease'. A/Prof KS Naresh and Dr GK Lau presented their award winning research and had an interesting case discussion. After lunch, we joined A/Prof Angelo for a tour of the Singapore Institute of Neurotechnology (SINAPSE) and the NUS Tissue Engineering Program Laboratory. We were deeply impressed by the cutting edge technologies presented to us. The following afternoon we took the opportunity to explore the famous tourist attraction at Sentosa Island.



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Day 5 - 6

(Friday-Saturday, 31st October – 1st November 2014)

We joined A/Prof Naresh during surgery where we were introduced to the expandable screws from Arthrotech. Dinner was at another Bakuteh restaurant. After dinner we took a stroll down the famous high end shopping street- Orchard Road, which was beautifully decorated with colourful lights and street decorations.

On Saturday, A/Prof Gabriel brought us to the Garden by the Bay. We were awed by the beautiful nature presented here, much more spectacular when seen in broad daylight. We took the 22-seater Garden Cruiser tram and go on a leisurely 25 minutes ride with informative commentary around Bay South Garden. Then we feasted our eyes in Flower Dome and Cloud Forest, a twin giant air-conditioned conservatories with features a variety of flowers and plants around the world. We had our lunch with A/Prof Gabriel at the Supertree Dining by IndoChine, a pretigious yet unique restaurants resides on top of the tallest supertree there. After lunch, we thanked our dearest host for a fruitful week and we bade farewell.



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Bangkok

(2nd November – 8th November 2014)

Day 1-2

(Sunday-Monday, 2nd – 3rd November 2014)

After we arrive at Bangkok airport and then on shuttle bus to Golden Tulip hotel just near Bangkok general hospital. We have advise the secretary in Malaysia that could we separate our room but responded as to be shared because of budget.

On November 3rd, we visit Department of orthopaedic, Chulalongkorn hospital.

Prof. Aree Tanavalee, the APKS president, take us inside operation theatre. Prof. Wicharn Yingsakmongkol have two operations: one is 60 y/o male with cervical spondylotic myelopathy, ACDF with plate C4-7 was performed with a very fast speed and give us a lecture about his clinical research. The other operation is L2-3 instability and he performed XLIF L2-3 with plate-screw fixation.



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Day 3

(Tuesday, 4th November 2014)

We visit Department of orthopaedic Faculty of medicine Siriraj Hospital (Mahidol university) and joined the difficult case discussion and one of our fellow present his data . Prof. Cheron Chotigavanich (APOA president) present minimally invasive method to treated osteoporotic compression fracture patients .In the afternoon colleges of Professor Saranatra Waikakul guided us to Grand Palace for a detail tour to realize the history of Thailand . At night , Prof. Cheron Chotigavanich bring us to a nice Thailand food restaurant near Chaophya river.



Day 4

(Wednesday, 5th November 2014)

We visit the Department of orthopaedic of Rajvithi hospital(public hospital). Dr. Athikom Methathien give us a lecture of spinal osteotomy and fracture treatment .He performed a pedicle subtraction osteotomy and long instrumentation fixation on a 30 y/o ankylosing spondylitis male patient .



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Day 5

(Thursday, 6th November 2014)

In the morning ,we visit Department of Samitivej hospital and Professor Prof. Cheron Chotigavanichl give us a introduction about the hospital and take us to every part of the department .The Samitivej hospital passed JCI certification for 4 years and undergoing mock survey when we in hospital.In the afternoon , Prof. Cheron Chotigavanich take us to visit Chaophya hospital and with his colleges blessed for future beside the Chaophya river in Loy kratong festival.



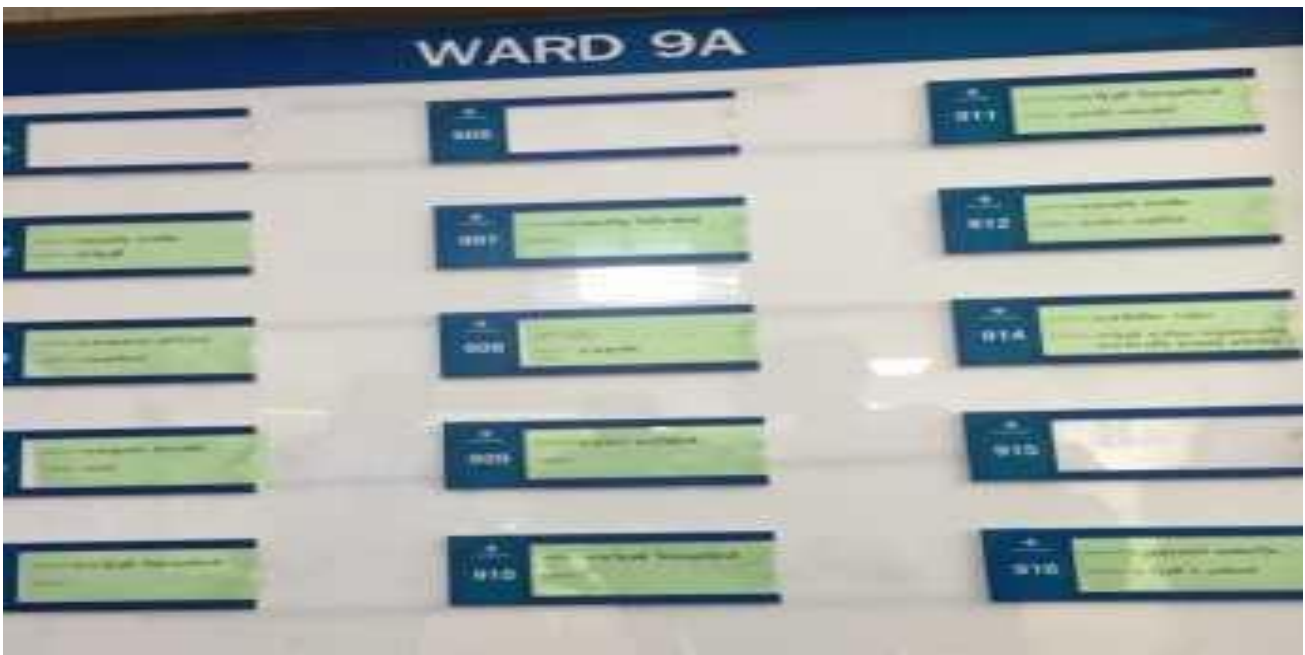
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Day 6

(Friday, 7th November 2014)

Today we visited Ramathibodi Hospital, one of the teaching hospitals of Mahidol University. At there we met Dr. Gun Keorochana, he is Dr Tzeng's old friend during their fellowship in the UCLA. We take a guide tour around the hospital. After that, we visited the operation theatre to see two surgeries. One is ACDF for multi-level cervical spondylotic myelopathy, the second one is posterior decompression and instrumented fusion using RAMA plate for a patient with L4/5 spondylolisthesis. During the interval between the two surgeries, we present our four topics to the spine team members. We have short discussions after each presentation. At night, we have dinner with Dr Gun, A/Prof Pongsathorn, the fellows and residents in the spine team at a famous Thai food restaurant. We have a happy time with them.



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Day 7-8

(Saturday - Sunday, 8th-9th November 2014)

On the weekend we joint a local tour to the Dammnoen Saduak Floating Market. The colourfully clad merchants at these lively markets paddle along congested canals in sturdy canoes laden with fresh fruit and vegetables to sell to shoppers on the banks. We have some local food there. After happy ending in Bangkok, we moved to our last stop - Kuching, Malaysia on Sunday.



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Kuching

(10th November – 15th November 2014)

Day 1

(Mon, 10th November 2014)

On our first day to the Sarawak General Hospital, we were greeted warmly by Prof. Wong Chung Chek and the Orthopaedic departmental members. After our brief introduction, we followed Prof. Wong to the ward to see his patients. After that, we proceeded to join Prof. Wong in the operation theatre. He performed a posterior decompression and fusion with supplement T8 PSO on a patient with thoracic OPLL. Dr. Tzeng and Dr. Kim were given the privilege to scrub in to join this surgery. Prof. Wong showed us how to insert thoracic pedicle screws by using the “funnel technique”. After surgery, we have dinner with the spine team members at a famous seafood restaurant.



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Day 2

(Tue, 11th November 2014)

The second day in Kuching was a free time. We joint a local tour to the Bako National Park. We were attracted by the rainforest, abundant wildlife, jungle streams, interesting plant life, secluded beaches, bizarre rock formations and trekking trails. We visited Sarawak Culture Village in the afternoon. The village residents provide information on their various traditional cultures and lifestyles. We visited buildings that represent every major ethnic group in Sarawak; longhouses of the Iban, Bidayuh and Orang Ulu, a Melanau tall-house and a Chinese farm house among others. We also visited a theatre to enjoy multicultural dance performances.



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Day 3

(Wed, 12th November 2014)

At the third day in Sarawak general hospital, we have presented our research to the members of this hospital. I presented “staged posterior correction for the severe scoliosis and kyphosis”, Dr. Hsieh presented “Minimally invasive TLIF” and Dr. Khoo presented “TB Spondylitis in an infant - case report”. And Dr. Kim presented “Degenerative lumbar scoliosis”. And we shared our experience and knowledge with each other. After our presentation, we have a chance to learn about thoracic screw insertion technique by Prof. Wong. For lunch, we were treated by Prof. Wong with traditional Dyak food. In the afternoon we had a chance to visit some private hospital which Prof. Wong was working for attending doctor. At this hospital, we attended the revision surgery for complicated osteoporotic spinal fractures.



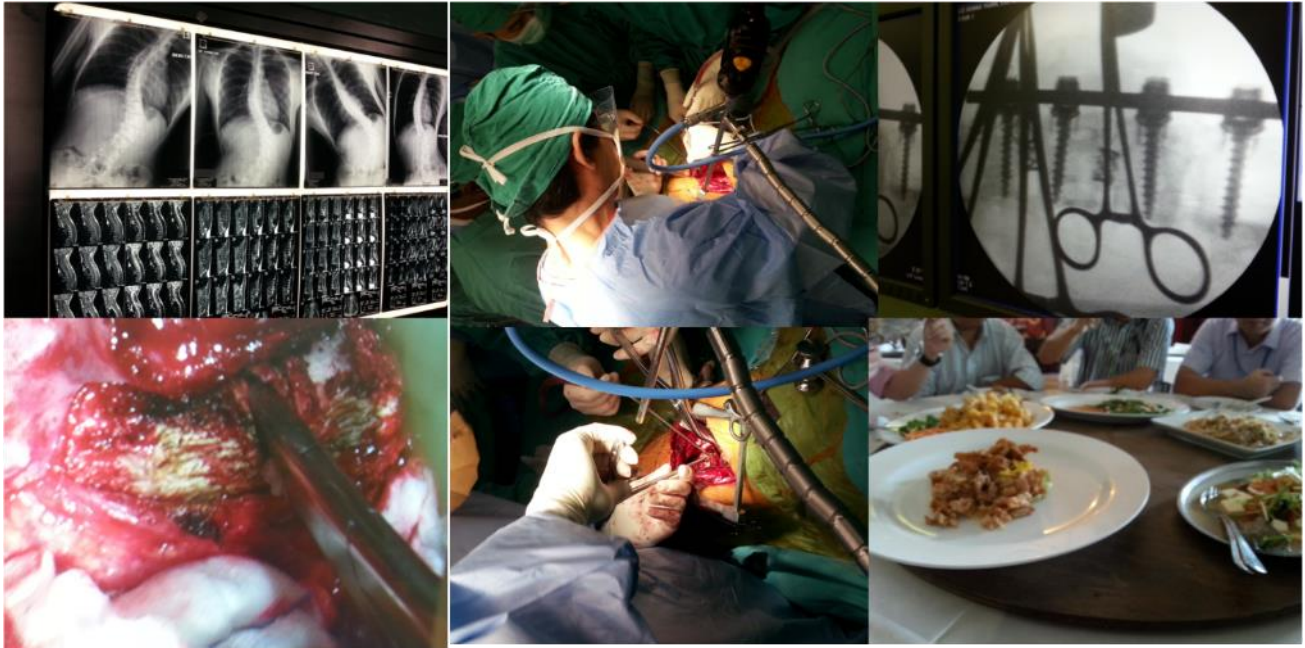
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Day 4

(Thursday, 13th November 2014)

Today we observed an anterior scoliosis surgery. This 15 year old boy was a scoliosis case with thoracolumbar curve more than fifty degree. Prof. Wong did the anterior correction and fusion from T10-L2. In this operation, we learned thoracoabdominal approach for anterior thoracolumbar surgery. After this operation, Prof. Wong treated us with another traditional food. We are really appreciated his hospitality despite our unexpected visit. We are sincerely willing to express our deep gratitude to him.



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Day 5-6

(Fri- Sat, 14th-15th November 2014)

On the last two days of our stay in Kuching, we have visited museum for Sarawak under the guidance of Dr. Khoo, co-host of Kuching. On Saturday, we decided to go Kayak for enhancing our relationship more. It was unforgettable memory for us. We shared our personal knowledge and experiences at our own dinner. Moreover, personal communication made us more intimate. Even though we have met just three weeks ago from each country and different situations, all of us could feel our deep friendship. We promised each other to enhance our relationship forever and contribute our efforts for advance of APSS and communications between our countries.

I am deeply appreciate all hosting professors and doctors and APSS for giving us this precious chance. Now, after I back to my country, I am still missing all of doctors who met during our fellowship program.

