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MARCH 2025

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Theme: MOA and the World

Dear Esteemed Readers,
In celebration of the **International Women's Day**, I am honoured to present this edition of Berita Ortopedik. Today, we recognize and celebrate the remarkable achievements of women who have significantly enriched our field - transforming orthopaedics through their passion, perseverance, and innovation.



Historically underrepresented in many specialties, women in orthopaedics have risen to every challenge, breaking barriers and reshaping patient care, research, and leadership in our community. Their unwavering dedication not only inspires us but also paves the way for future generations to follow their courageous example.

This edition is dedicated to all the women who continue to drive excellence in Malaysian orthopaedics. Through compelling stories, insightful research, and personal reflections, we honour their contributions and reaffirm our commitment to fostering a diverse and inclusive environment where every talent can flourish.

Let us use this day as an opportunity to celebrate achievements, inspire change, and work together to build a more equitable future. Thank you for your continued support and for being part of a community that values every voice.

Warm regards,
Dr Michelle Lim Chia Hua
*Editorial Secretary
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Breaking Barriers: Women in Orthopaedics

Celebrating Strength, Resilience, and Teamwork on International Women's Day

Written by: **Dr Michelle Lim Chia Hua**

Lecturer & Orthopaedic Surgeon, Hand & Microsurgery Unit, Department of Orthopaedics & Traumatology, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

Orthopaedic surgery has long been perceived as a specialty dominated by men, often associated with physical strength and endurance. However, times are changing. More women are entering the field, proving that technical skill, precision, and resilience—not brute force—define an exceptional orthopaedic surgeon.

Yet, true progress in orthopaedics is not about women succeeding alone; it is about **men and women working together**, recognizing, and complementing each other's strengths, overcoming biases, and creating a more inclusive and effective surgical team.

Historically, women in orthopaedics have been underrepresented, facing both visible and hidden barriers to entry and career progression. The lack of female mentors, misconceptions about physical demands, and workplace biases have long discouraged women from pursuing careers in the specialty.

However, the landscape is shifting. More female medical students and trainees are choosing orthopaedics, supported by **progressive policies, strong mentorship, and a growing appreciation for diversity in surgery**. The increasing presence of women in the field is not just about representation—it is about enriching the specialty

with diverse perspectives, skills, and approaches to patient care.

Challenges and Overcoming Bias

Despite progress, gender biases still persist. Women in orthopaedics may face skepticism about their physical capabilities, struggle with work-life balance, or find fewer leadership opportunities compared to their male colleagues. However, many of these challenges can be **mitigated through teamwork and collaboration between men and women**.

By working together, male and female orthopaedic surgeons can help dismantle these biases and prove that success in orthopaedics is about teamwork, skill, and strategic problem-solving—not gender.

For example:

- **Strength vs. Technique:** While men may have a natural advantage in terms of physical strength, women often compensate with refined surgical techniques and ergonomic strategies that reduce physical strain. Learning from each other's approaches leads to more efficient surgical methods.

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- **Different Perspectives, Better Outcomes:** Women often bring different perspectives to patient care, communication, and problem-solving. When both men and women contribute their viewpoints, it enhances decision-making, leading to better patient outcomes.
- **Mentorship and Support:** When male surgeons actively mentor female colleagues and advocate for their inclusion in leadership roles, they help break down stereotypes and create a culture of equality. Similarly, female surgeons mentoring younger trainees—both male and female—ensures a cycle of growth and inclusivity.

The Power of Teamwork: Strength in Diversity

Orthopaedic surgery is inherently a **team-based specialty**. From the operating room to research collaborations, success depends on seamless teamwork, mutual respect, and shared expertise.

When men and women work together as equals, their strengths **complement rather than compete**. Men may bring advantages in endurance and brute force, while women excel in fine motor skills, patience in microsurgical techniques, and multitasking under pressure. These differences, when combined, create a well-balanced team capable of handling even the most complex cases. Rather than focusing on competition, embracing each other's strengths allows teams to innovate, adapt, and push boundaries in orthopaedic surgery.

Malaysia has seen inspiring female orthopaedic surgeons rise to prominence, but many of these success stories are also backed by **supportive male colleagues** who believed in their potential, provided equal opportunities, and encouraged their professional growth.

Globally, orthopaedic surgery departments that embrace **gender diversity and teamwork** are seeing remarkable improvements in innovation, patient satisfaction, and workplace morale. Hospitals that actively promote inclusivity, mentorship, and skill-based progression are

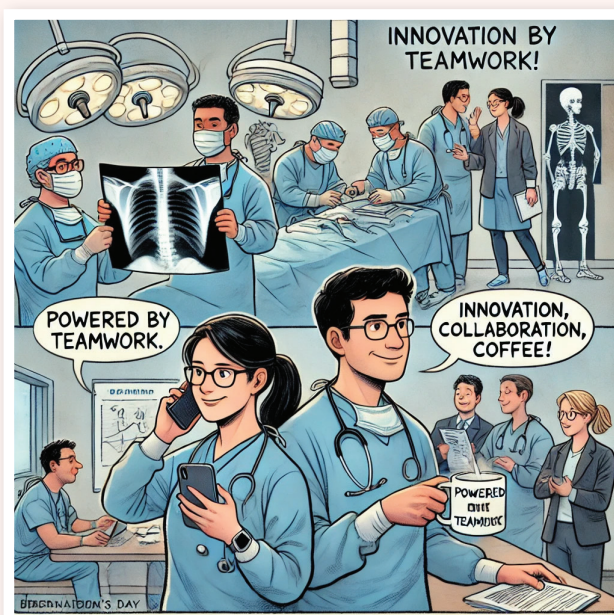
setting the standard for the future of orthopaedic surgery.

The future of orthopaedics **depends on collaboration, not division**. By embracing diversity and working together, we can break down barriers, overcome biases, and build a specialty that is stronger, more innovative, and truly inclusive.

Conclusion: Strength in Unity

Orthopaedic surgery is not about who is the strongest or who can endure the longest hours—it is about precision, skill, resilience, and, most importantly, teamwork. The best surgical teams **leverage the strengths of each member, support one another, and work toward a common goal: providing the best care for patients**.

This **International Women's Day**, let us celebrate the progress women in orthopaedics have made, acknowledge the men who have championed inclusivity, and commit to **building a future where gender is no longer a barrier to excellence**. Here is to strong women and supportive men in orthopaedics—may we know them, may we support them, and may we work together as a team to shape the future of our specialty.



ASEAN – New Zealand Orthopaedic Association Junior Travelling Fellowship 2024 Report

Written by: **Dr Sarah Sheena Toyat**
Orthopaedic Surgeon, Ministry of Health

Since 1983, the ASEAN Orthopaedic Association (AOA) has brought together orthopaedic surgeons to visit other member countries in the region as part of the Junior Travelling Fellowship (JTF) programme. Last year, Dr Sarah Sheena Toyat (Malaysia), Dr Eric Cher Wei Liang (Singapore), Dr David Vincent J. Antonio (Philippines), Dr Juniarto Jaya Pangestu (Indonesia), Dr Prakasit Chanasit (Thailand), and Dr Surendra Senthil (New Zealand) travelled through Indonesia, Singapore, and the Philippines, culminating with the Philippine Orthopaedic Association (POA) annual congress.

3-4 November, 2024: Surabaya, Indonesia Dr Eric Cher Wei Liang

AOA JTF 2024 started in Surabaya. Here, we met with the local orthopaedic surgeons and Dr Nur Flora Nita, chief of the East Java branch of the Indonesian Orthopaedic Association (PABOI-JATIM). Indonesian hospitality was incredible, and all of us immediately felt at home, as though we all knew each other prior to the fellowship. On the 2nd day, we visited Dr Soetomo General Hospital. Mei and Suren presented their research work on superior capsular reconstruction of the shoulder and diabetic limb salvage respectively at the morning meeting.

During the hospital tour, we had the opportunity to engage with the local residents during their ward round and share what we would have considered doing in our own practice. This was a great opportunity for us to learn about how patients were treated in Surabaya.

5-6 November, 2024: Jakarta, Indonesia Dr David Vincent J. Antonio (Tinggoy)

On the 5th of November, we had an early flight to Jakarta, then headed straight to the Fatmawati Central General Hospital, where our co-fellow Juniarto Pangestu had done most of his residency training. We were subsequently brought around the newly-built operating complex. In the massive operating rooms, we were able to observe several hip cases and a tumour case, which made us quite 'at home'. The following day, we headed to RSUPN Dr. Cipto Mangunkusumo Hospital. Our



*At the back: Dr Juniarto Jaya Pangestu (Jun)
At the front, from left to right: Dr Sarah Sheena Toyat (Sheena), Dr Surendra Senthil (Suren), Dr Prakasit Chanasit (Mei), Dr David Vincent J. Antonio (Tinggoy), Dr Eric Cher Wei Liang (Eric)*



Morning orthopaedic meeting at Dr Soetomo General Hospital, with Head of Department, Dr Tri Wahyu Martanto

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Eric giving an introduction of the AOA travelling fellowship to the orthopaedic department of RSUPN Dr Cipto Mangunkusumo Hospital



Visiting the stem cell laboratory in IMERI

co-fellows Eric Cher and Sheena Toyat presented their interesting work on MIS options for plantar fasciitis and tenogenic stem cell research in rats to aid tendon repair healing respectively.

We then went around the sprawling campus of RSUPN, including the Indonesian Clinical Training and Education Center, and the Indonesian Medical Education and Research Institute (IMERI), a joint stem cell venture between the public hospital and a pharmaceutical industry partner, headed by Professor Ismail Hadisoebroto Dilogo.

The day was capped off by a sumptuous dinner at the historic Tugu Kunstkring Paleis, arranged by the Indonesian Orthopaedic Association (IOA), where we had the opportunity to dine and meet again with Prof Ismail, as president of the Indonesian Orthopaedic Association. We were privileged to have been hosted so generously throughout our stay in Indonesia, and the evening marked what was a memorable first leg for our traveling fellowship.

7-8 November, 2024: Singapore **Dr Juniarto Jaya Pangestu**

On the 7th of November, we left for Singapore. That night, we had dinner with Singapore Orthopaedic Association (SOA) President, Prof Fareed HY Kagda and AOA Secretary-General Dr Peter Lee. Their spouses also joined us for dinner, and I could not help but admire these two power couples. I could tell that the outstanding achievements of Prof Fareed and Dr Peter Lee were more or less attributed to the support of these respected ladies.

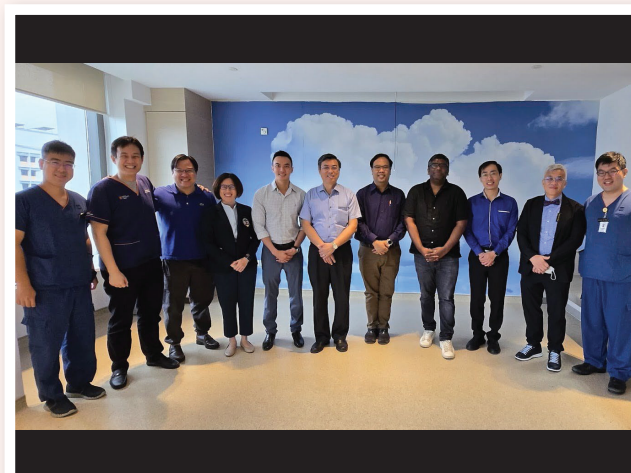
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Exchanging gifts between Prof Ismail, President of IOA, and our respective orthopaedic associations.



Receiving gifts of ties and pretty hand fans from AOA & SOA in Singapore



With the orthopaedic department of Sengkang General Hospital, Eric's place of work



Sheena presenting at the morning meeting at Sengkang General Hospital



Operating theatre at Sengkang General Hospital



Physiotherapy centre at Sengkang General Hospital, with a robotic gait rehabilitation device in the background

The next day, we visited Sengkang General Hospital, where we met Prof Poon Kei Boon, who came and greeted us despite having his off day, Prof Wong Merng Koon, and last year's AOA JTF, Dr Dickson Chau.

After Sheena and I presented our research during the morning meeting, we were brought round the hospital, including the clinical sterile services department (CSSD), where we were able to observe cutting-edge technology in robotic surgical-instrument storage, and in the rehabilitation clinic, such as the robotic and zero-gravity walking trainer.

9-11 November, 2024: Singapore Dr Prakasit Chanasit (Mei)

On the 9th of November, we visited the Woodlands Health Campus (WHC), a public hospital in Woodlands, Singapore, which consisted of both acute and community facilities.

The morning's programme included the SOA academic session, which I was surprised to find was held on Saturdays. The Singaporean orthopaedic residents were bemused by Tinggoy's X-ray of a unipolar hemiarthroplasty, and it took them a while before they were able to correctly identify the implant, probably because they did not expect this "historical device" to still be in use.

For the rest of the weekend, we engaged in various sight-seeing activities, including taking in

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In front of the mural at Woodlands Health Campus



Dr David Vincent J. Antonio (Tinggoy) concluding his presentation at the SOA academic session



At Fort Siloso



With Prof Joyce Gan at Singapore General Hospital

the scenic view from the Singapore flyer, touring Fort Siloso on Sentosa Island - which Tinggoy, as a WWII history buff, enjoyed – visiting the Buddha Tooth Relic Temple and souvenir-shopping in Chinatown.

On the 11th of November, we went to Singapore General Hospital (SGH). As a sports surgeon, I was thrilled to meet Assoc. Prof. Denny Lie, a senior consultant in sports and shoulder surgery in SGH, and ex-president of AOA 2022.

We were then given a tour of the ward and outpatient clinic, as well as the Duke-NUS academic building. SGH also has its own museum, housed in the Bowyer block, detailing the 200-year history spanning nearly two centuries, and can be traced back to the British colonial era of 19th century Singapore.

We concluded our Singapore leg with a dinner hosted by the Sengkang General Hospital and Singapore General Hospital orthopaedic team.

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Curator of the SGH museum giving an explanation to us, and our tour guide, Dr Toh Rui Xiang



Sitting down, from left to right: Dr Henry Soeharno, Dr Suraya Zainul Abidin, Dr Surendra Senthil Standing up, from left to right: Dr Dickson Chau, Dr Prakash Chanasit, Dr David Vincent, Dr Joel Lim Wei An, Prof Goh Seo Kiat, Prof Poon Kein Boon, Dr Sarah Sheena Toyat, Dr Juniarto Jaya Pangestu

12-13 November, 2024: Manila, Philippines
Dr Sarah Sheena Toyat

On arrival in Manila, we were graciously hosted at dinner by the POA board, including incoming president, Dr Justinian Aquilino Cyril Li Pimentel IV, and vice-presidents John Andrew Michael A. Bengzon, and Juan Antonio Maximiano R. Escano. I was honoured to meet Dr Ellewellyn G. Pasion, past president of APOA, and last year's recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Philippine Board of Orthopaedics.

The following morning, we headed to Shangri La hotel, the venue for this year's POA 75th Annual Congress. In keeping with their diamond jubilee celebration, the theme of this year's congress was Cutting Diamond: Looking Back, Moving Forward. The congress opened with a procession of the POA office-bearers and board of trustees. I was delighted to see among the many female members holding office, one of them was Dr Rosalyn P. Flores, whom I had the pleasure of meeting last year in Kuala Lumpur during her stint as AOA JTF.

Various distinguished overseas guests also made up the procession, including APOA president, Dr Jamal Ashraf, AOA president, Prof Thipachart Punyaratabandhu, and from Malaysia, Prof Saw Aik, and Prof Azlina Amir Abbas, editor of the AOA journal, the only female on the AOA executive committee, and my personal role model. One of the notable panel discussions I attended was titled, "Leading by Example: Lessons from Women Orthopaedic Pioneers." The international panel comprised Dr Rujuta Mehta from India, the president of the APOA women's advocacy section (WAVES), Dr Teresita L. Altre of the POA, the first female orthopaedic surgeon in the Philippines and the first female worldwide to become president of a national orthopaedic association, and our very own Prof Emeritus Tunku Sara Ahmad from Malaysia, one of the founders of the Malaysian Society for the Surgery of Hand, first female orthopaedic surgeon in Malaysia and my previous Universiti Malaya lecturer. They discussed topics ranging from how women in orthopaedics had to perform at an exceptional level just to be accorded the same modicum of respect as our male counterparts, whilst still juggling the bulk of family responsibilities; to practicalities of setting clear boundaries in and out of the operating theatre when it came to inappropriate behaviour or speech. I was able to glean useful insights into creating a safe and conducive working environment, and fostering diversity within our specialty.

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Dinner hosted by POA board members



Drs Sarah Sheena Toyat (Malaysia) & Rosalyn P. Flores (Philippines)



The women of APOA, from left to right: Drs Ramona Reyes-Diyco, Sarah Sheena Toyat, Marie Jeanne Bertol, Madam Rujuta Mehta, Dr Teresita L. Altre, Prof Emeritus Tunku Sara Ahmad, Prof Azlina Amir Abbas, Dr Anne Kathleen B. Ganai-Antonio

That night was the fellowship night, with the theme “Denim & Diamonds.” I, for one, was absolutely flabbergasted at the sight of Prof Emeritus Tunku Sara, Prof Azlina, and the president-elect of the Malaysian Orthopaedic Association (MOA), Dr Gandhi Solayar, tearing up the dance-floor.

14-15 November, 2024: Manila, Philippines
Dr Surendra Senth

On the 14th of November, we decided to continue the tradition of wearing the traditional local clothing at the President’s dinner, which needless to say, was very well received.

Eric had worked tirelessly over the course of the 2 weeks chronicling our exploits in each country, and the final video montage was displayed during the dinner, much to the delight of the audience. The next day, Tinggoy arranged for us to visit Quirino Memorial Medical Center, and then Medical City. The stark contrast between public and private healthcare was on full display and was truly eye-opening. We were able, however, to see how limited resources allow for ingenious solutions in different situations from training future surgeons, performing surgery and providing for the local community.

On the final night, we attended the congress banquet. The night continued long into the morning with lots of tipsy impromptu karaoke hosted by Tinggoy to cement our fellowship of lasting friendship.

The following morning, we managed to rouse ourselves to present for the last time on the closing day of the POA Congress.



With the moderators of our oral presentation session at the POA annual congress

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Grooving with Prof Pasion, Prof Emeritus Tunku Sara, Madam (Dr) Rujuta Mehta & Prof Azlina Amir Abbas



Wearing our barong at the President's dinner with Prof Pasion, Dr Gandhi Solayar (president-elect of MOA), Prof Edward Mah, and Prof Peter Lee



Visiting the orthopaedic ward at Quirino Memorial Medical Center, with Orthopaedic Department Head, Dr Gregorio Marcelo Azores



Final night: Congress Banquet

Conclusion



Dr David Vincent J. Antonio (Philippines)

I am very grateful to have been part of the AOA Junior Traveling Fellowship for 2024. I was hesitant to leave work with so many things going on during the last quarter of the year. I am very happy to have met in no particular order: Jun, Eric, Mei, Sheena and Suren. It was a pleasure to host them during the POA Diamond Annual Convention. This group was always appreciative, never mean, persistently witty. There was never a dull moment with them and in a span of 2 weeks we talked about everything under the sun and bonded for life. I will always consider them as my newest and dearest friends from the region.



Dr Eric Cher Wei Liang (Singapore)

It was truly a privilege to be selected to represent Singapore Orthopaedic Association (SOA) in this year's 2024 AOA JTF. Travelling together for 2 weeks with 5 other ASEAN + NZ fellows (Sheena, Jun, Mei, Tinggoy and Suren) has brought us closer than we would have ever imagined. The friendship forged among us seems almost effortless, and I almost couldn't believe how well we have bonded as a group. It was with great pleasure that Singapore was one of the designated hosting venue this year. Putting together a 4 days programme for my group was a memorable experience for me and I'm sure they enjoyed it as much as I did. No words can describe how much I treasured the time we spent together, and in my opinion, this fellowship program has transcended into something much more valuable and meaningful.



Dr Juniarto Jaya Pangestu (Indonesia)

I am truly grateful to be part of the ASEAN Junior Traveling Fellowship. It is a humbling experience to see advanced and creative orthopaedic care and to meet prestigious leaders in ASEAN Orthopaedics. Moreover, I really cherish the friendship that we built over the course of two weeks. Let me say appreciation to my dearest friends: The dynamic duo of the group: Sheena and Eric. The funny banter that these two guys shared kept the group alive. Sheena, our Mom, while promoting her MOA events every chance she got, paid attention to everyone in the groups, making sure no one was left out. Eric, the fittest guy in the group, who arranged the Singapore trip and made it, in my personal opinion, to be the best part of the program. Mei, the Sushi-graft chef / rocker, who was very artistic, composed, yet very outgoing. Vincent, the nicest guy in the group, who attended to our every need during the Philippine leg, despite being very busy with the POA meeting. Suren, an Ipoh-born Kiwi, who made us laugh too many times with his Malay-accent sarcasm. I can confidently say that this program has made me a better orthopaedic surgeon in many ways and hopefully will benefit my country and ASEAN in more ways.



Dr Prakasit Chanasit (Thailand)

It was such a wonderful experience for me to be part of the AOA JTF program 2024. As the representative of the Royal College of Orthopaedic Surgeons of Thailand (RCOST), I would like to try my best to make good connections with the fellows from other countries in the SEA area in order to collaborate with them in the future. But moreover, I've got a group of best friends. It was more than jobs, clinical work or surgeries. It was about sharing our lives with each other from each country. I would like to express my gratitude to AOA for making the program for such a long time and also hope this program will continue in the future.

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Conclusion



Dr Sarah Sheena Toyat (Malaysia)

As an AOA JTF, I had a rare golden chance to meet with key members of international orthopaedic associations, and as a Malaysian Orthopaedic Association (MOA) council member, I felt privileged to be able to strengthen regional ties on behalf of my association. Equally as valuable was the time re-connecting with mentors from my home country. These interactions helped me reflect on my own career and leadership journey, expanded my network, and reinforced for me the importance of mentorship, as well as the role of international collaboration in advancing orthopaedics in South East Asia.

“What happens if you put 5 brothers & 1 sister together? FIBROSIS.”

More than just the professional opportunities afforded, it was the friendship with my other junior travelling fellows. I particularly appreciated how we supported each other's ideas, from coordinating matching batik outfits and Filipino/Filipina wear, promoting each other's association events – well, mainly that of MOA's – to shooting videos in random locations, even to singing on stage together. These fellows epitomised for me what it meant to be part of a fraternity, especially when men support women. The bonds forged during this fellowship - based on mutual respect and shared experiences - turned what could have been merely an academic tour into something far more meaningful, and I will always be grateful to have been a part of this team.



Dr Surendra Senthil (New Zealand)

It was very humbling and a great honor to be selected, to represent New Zealand for the AOA JTF this year. I had no idea what I was getting myself into. Information was initially light, but as an itinerary started to come together, it started to sink in what a great once in a lifetime experience this would be. Travelling through Indonesia, Singapore and the Philippines and experiencing Orthopaedic healthcare in each country was a truly eye-opening privilege. Seeing the obstacles each locality deals with to deliver healthcare to their community was eye-opening. The hospitality afforded to us was truly amazing. Thank you just is not enough. The friendships I made with my fellow fellows will no doubt last a lifetime. I look forward to collaborating with all of them in the future. Without a doubt, they will all be contributing leaders in orthopaedics not only in their own countries, but throughout ASEAN and internationally.

Inspiring The Young Surgeon: Sandakan Basic Trauma Course (SABAT) 2024

Written by: **Dr Shyful Nizam Sumari**

Chairperson SABAT, Orthopaedic Surgeon, Ministry of Health

SABAT, The Sandakan Basic Trauma Course 2024, the first of its kind in the region, was successfully held from 13th to 15th December 2024 at the Institute Latihan Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (ILKKM), Hospital Duchess of Kent, Sandakan. The course was meticulously designed to provide structured training in basic trauma management, targeting junior doctors keen on improving their orthopaedic skills. Hosted by the Persatuan Ortopedik Sandakan in collaboration with the Malaysian Orthopaedic Association, the event focused on bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical execution. With trauma cases forming a significant portion of emergency and orthopaedic care, this course aimed to build a strong foundation for young doctors before they embark on their specialist training.

Basic trauma course successfully drew 30 medical officers from Malaysia and Brunei, representing a diverse group of participants from states such as Perak, Selangor, Sarawak, Johor, Labuan, and Sabah. The attendees came with varied levels of experience, but all shared a common goal: to refine their clinical acumen and hands-on surgical skills in managing trauma cases. The presence of faculty members from key regional hospitals—Sandakan, Tawau, Lahad Datu, and Kota Kinabalu—ensured that participants gained insights from seasoned orthopaedic surgeons who regularly manage complex trauma cases. Additionally, the highlight of the course was the invaluable contribution of Prof. Fareed Kagda, Group Chief of Orthopaedics from the National University Health System, Singapore. His engaging lectures and case discussions provided

participants with a broader, global perspective on trauma care, enriching their learning experience.

A comprehensive three-day program that includes lectures, interactive discussions, and hands-on sawbones workshops. The curriculum was meticulously structured to blend didactic learning with practical skill-building, ensuring participants could apply theoretical concepts directly to simulated scenarios. Topics covered included fundamental principles of fracture healing, open fracture management, and the biomechanics of internal fixation. Participants were exposed to the latest advancements in plating techniques, intramedullary nailing, and surgical approaches to complex fractures such as tibial plateau, ankle, and femur fractures. The hands-on sessions, utilizing sawbones models, allowed attendees to practice surgical



Group picture of all participants and faculty members



Faculty members with Dr. Fahmie, Director of Hospital Duchess of Kent, Sandakan

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fixation techniques under expert guidance. Key procedures demonstrated included dynamic hip screw (DHS) fixation, tension band wiring, proximal femoral nailing, and external fixation techniques. These workshops fostered a highly interactive learning environment, enabling participants to refine their techniques while receiving real-time feedback from experienced surgeons.

To the SABAT organizing committee, Persatuan Ortopedik Sandakan, Malaysian Orthopaedic Association, and all industrial supports, thank you for your tireless efforts and support in making this course a success. Organizing a course of this magnitude required months of planning, coordination, and dedication from all involved parties. The commitment of the faculty, coupled with generous support from industrial sponsors, ensured that participants had access to high-quality learning materials and surgical equipment. The overwhelming positive feedback from attendees reaffirms the importance of such structured training programs in developing the next generation of orthopaedic surgeons. Moving forward, the success of SABAT 2024 sets a strong precedent for future trauma courses, reinforcing the commitment of Persatuan Ortopedik Sandakan and the Malaysian Orthopaedic Association in nurturing young talents and enhancing trauma care standards in Malaysia and beyond.



Prof Fareed delivering a talk and also demonstrating during a hands-on workshop on surgical technique



Mr Gerry giving talk and demonstration on pelvic external fixation



Clinical Fellowship in Arthroplasty: Embracing Cutting-Edge Technology In Malaysia

Written by: **Dr Kow Ren Yi**

Orthopaedic Surgeon, International Islamic University Malaysia

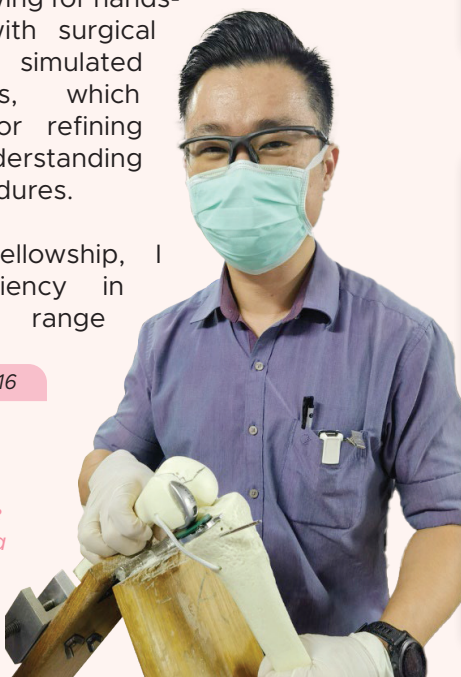
Arthroplasty surgery consistently yields positive outcomes for patients with hip or knee arthritis. Despite advancements in implant designs, achieving immaculate precision in implant placement is crucial for ensuring long-lasting prostheses. Robotic-assisted arthroplasty surgery, which has been available for the past twenty years, significantly enhances this precision by providing real-time feedback to the operating surgeon. The technology has evolved over the years, with newer systems introducing robotic arms, robotic-guided cutting jigs, and robotic milling systems. In Malaysia, robotic-assisted arthroplasty was introduced in 2022 and is available in selected tertiary centres. My clinical fellowship in arthroplasty at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) allowed me to gain hands-on experience with these cutting-edge technologies, particularly the robotic-assisted systems, which are instrumental in achieving optimal implant placement and improving patient outcomes.

The fellowship provided a comprehensive clinical and educational experience, featuring regular seminars, workshops, journal clubs, and saw bone sessions. These sessions offered valuable opportunities to discuss the latest advancements in arthroplasty, explore emerging technologies, and revise basic principles essential to the field. The saw bone sessions were particularly beneficial, allowing for hands-on practice with surgical techniques on simulated bone models, which was crucial for refining skills and understanding complex procedures.

During the fellowship, I gained proficiency in performing a range

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Performing unicondylar knee arthroplasty on a saw bone model



Saw bone sessions conducted under the guidance of Prof. Hamdan



Saw bone session led by Mr Rizal, consultant arthroplasty surgeon at UKM



Performing robotic-assisted knee arthroplasty surgery.



Assisting Prof Hamdan in robotic-assisted knee arthroplasty surgery

of arthroplasty procedures. This included robotic-assisted knee arthroplasty, which enhanced precision and outcomes through advanced technology. I also gained experience in unicompartmental knee arthroplasty, addressing isolated compartmental arthritis, and in revision systems such as rotating hinge knee arthroplasty and the Legacy Constrained Condylar Knee (LCKK) system. In addition, I acquired substantial experience in managing complex hip arthroplasty cases, including revision surgeries. For instance, I managed patients with severe protrusio acetabulum defects using reconstructive techniques to restore acetabular support. This experience was critical in handling challenging cases and improving patient outcomes through advanced surgical techniques and tailored solutions. Mastery of these diverse techniques expanded my surgical repertoire and improved my ability to handle complex cases effectively.

In addition to clinical practice, I engaged in research activities that advanced the field of arthroplasty. A notable achievement of my fellowship was the publication of a review article in an indexed journal, completed under the guidance of Prof. Hamdan. The article, focusing on robotic-assisted hip and knee arthroplasty, contributed valuable insights to the academic community and underscored the high standards of the fellowship. This research experience enhanced my understanding of current trends in arthroplasty and developed my skills in scientific writing and analysis.

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Attending the first Robotic Surgical Assistant (ROSA®) user meeting in Malaysia



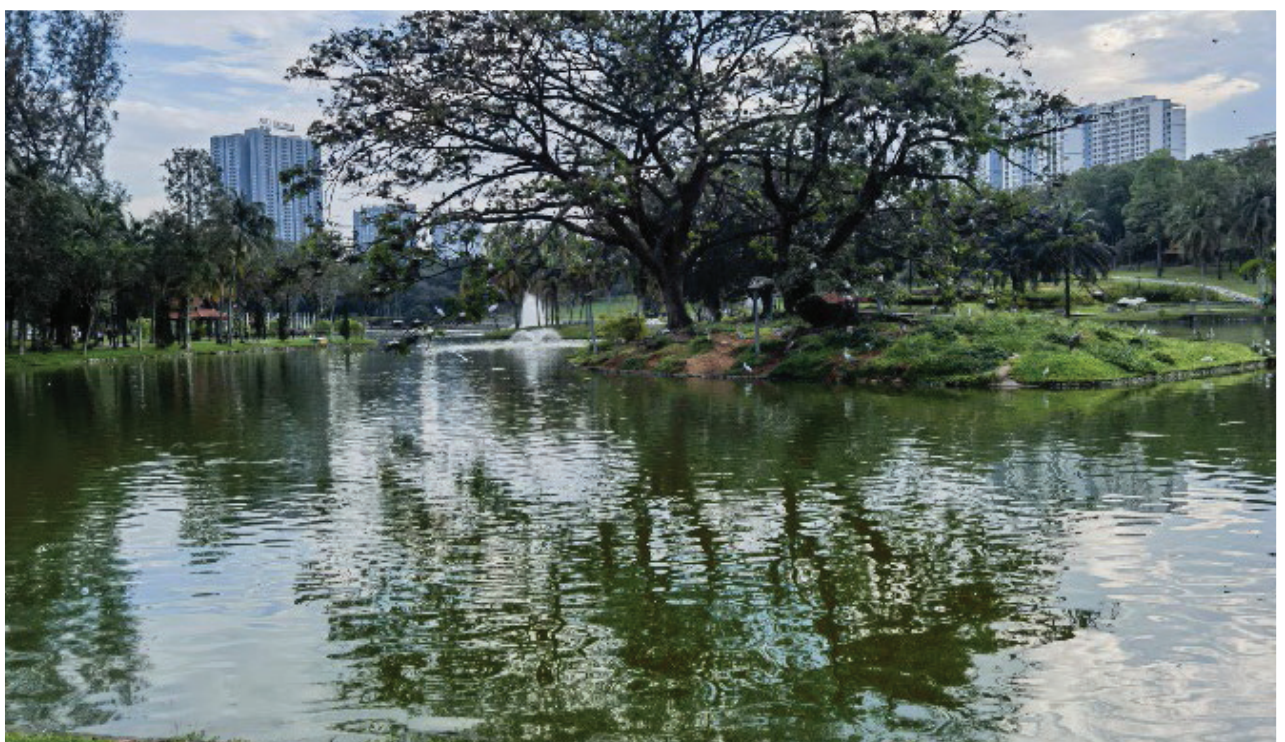
Lunch with fellow colleagues in UKM

One of the notable challenges during my fellowship in arthroplasty was balancing the demanding responsibilities of the program with family obligations. The intensive nature of the fellowship, including long hours in clinical practice, research activities, and educational commitments, often conflicted with personal and family time. Fortunately, with the support of Prof. Hamdan, who was very accommodating, managing this balance became more manageable. His understanding and flexibility greatly alleviated the pressure of juggling professional and personal commitments. Prof. Hamdan's supportive approach allowed me to effectively plan and prioritize my duties, ensuring that I could dedicate quality time to both my family and my responsibilities during the fellowship. This support was instrumental in making my time during the fellowship much easier and more fulfilling.

The skills and knowledge gained during this fellowship have profoundly influenced my professional development. Moving forward, I am committed to applying the advanced techniques and insights into patient care acquired through this experience. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Prof. Hamdan and Mr Rizal for their exceptional mentorship and guidance throughout the fellowship. I also wish to thank Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) for providing this valuable opportunity and the entire medical staff for their support and collaboration. Their contributions were essential in making this fellowship a transformative and enriching experience.



Receiving the clinical fellowship certificate from Prof Hamdan



Scenic views of Permaisuri Lake Garden, located just opposite UKM

THKS Arthroplasty Visiting Fellowship Program 2024

Written by: **Dr Melvin Loh Kwong Weng**

Medical Lecturer & Orthopaedic Surgeon, Joint Reconstruction Unit, Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, Universiti Malaya



Figure 1: Performed hands-on robotic-assisted total knee replacement using the CORI Surgical System by Smith & Nephew, Inc., under the supervision of Dr. Satit Thiengwittayaporn and Dr. Kittipong Diewwattanawiwat at Vajira Hospital

Bangkok, Thailand, with its captivating blend of vibrant city life, rich culture, and breathtaking landmarks, is truly a city like no other. I consider myself incredibly fortunate to have been chosen for the prestigious THKS Arthroplasty Visiting Fellowship Program 2024, an experience that allowed me to immerse myself in this beautiful city while gaining invaluable expertise in the field of hip and knee arthroplasty. The prestigious THKS Arthroplasty Visiting Fellowship Program is a distinguished initiative by the Thai Hip & Knee Society (THKS). This fellowship program, which ran from October 1 to December 5, provided me with the opportunity to represent Malaysia alongside four other fellows namely Dr Lequan Liu from China, Dr Vinay Atluri from India, Dr Carl Cedric Celera from the Philippines, and Dr Anggoro Jati from Indonesia. THKS is a highly respected specialty society in Thailand, focused on advancing the field of hip and knee arthroplasty. The fellowship aims to promote education and foster international collaboration, enabling surgeons to gain hands-on experience in the latest techniques while also sharing research and best practices in arthroplasty. Throughout the program, I was introduced to the culture and traditions of Thailand, while further strengthening the professional bond between orthopaedic surgeons across the region.

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Figure 2: (A) Assisted in primary total knee replacement surgeries under the supervision of Dr. Natthapong Hongku, alongside orthopaedic residents Dr. Dhitaya and Dr. Thachata, at Vajira Hospital. (B) Photo with supervisor Dr. Thakrit Chompoosang at Rajavithi Hospital

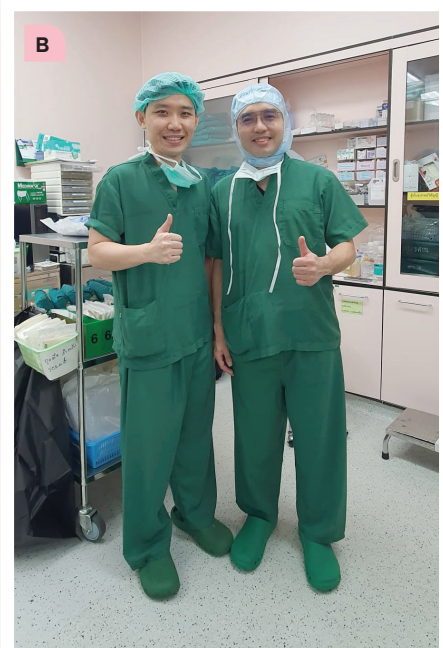




Figure 3: A group photo with the faculty members of the ASEAN Robotics-Assisted Knee Instructional Course: Dr. Peter Savov (Germany), Dr. Yeoh Kian Hua and Dr. Loi Kai Weng (Malaysia), Dr. Barry Tan (Singapore), and Dr. Charoenwat (Thailand). Participants gained hands-on experience operating on cadavers using the CORI Surgical System by Smith & Nephew, Inc.



The training was conducted at two prominent hospitals in Bangkok. At the Faculty of Medicine Vajira Hospital, I worked under the guidance of Asst. Prof. Dr. Natthapong Hongku. I was fortunate to also attach with renowned surgeons there, including Assoc. Prof. Dr. Satit Thiengwittayaporn, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Pruk Chaiyakit, Dr. Ittiwat Onklin, and Dr. Pichayut Wattanapreechanon. My time at Vajira Hospital was filled with rich learning experiences, where I attended clinics, reviewed patients in the ward, and assisted in primary, complex and revision hip, and knee replacement surgeries. I was exposed to challenging cases such as periprosthetic fractures and revision surgeries for both aseptic and septic loosening. This hands-on experience greatly enhanced my surgical skills and broadened my understanding of the complexities involved in hip and knee arthroplasty.

At Rajavithi Hospital, where I trained under Asst. Prof. Dr. Thakrit Chompoosang, I had the opportunity to further hone my skills in a high-volume setting. I also worked closely with Dr. Patcharavit Ploynumpon, engaging in both the clinical and surgical aspects of patient care. Rajavithi Hospital, serving as a teaching hospital for the College of Medicine, Rangsit University, provided an excellent environment for learning, where residents and fellows actively participate in patient management and surgeries. My exposure to advanced techniques, particularly



Figure 4: The Arthroplasty Club Meeting, where experts shared valuable insights and strategies for managing complex and challenging arthroplasty cases.

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in revision arthroplasty, was invaluable. The program provided a comprehensive, thorough, and structured approach to learning, covering all aspects of patient management, from preoperative evaluation to postoperative care.

I also attended the ASEAN Robotics-assisted Knee Instructional Course at the Siriraj Orthopaedic Learning Centre, Siriraj Hospital on November 9, 2024, where I gained a deeper understanding of robotic-assisted surgery. The course included lectures and hands-on cadaveric sessions, offering expert-guided training on the principles of robotics and its application in uni-compartmental and total knee arthroplasty. After completing the course, I received CORI certification, which marked a significant milestone in my career, equipping me with the skills necessary to integrate robotics into my surgical practice.

One of the highlights of the fellowship was attending the Arthroplasty Club Meeting on November 21, 2024, where I had the chance to participate in discussion on complex cases. Dr. Rit Apinyakul presented on total knee arthroplasty in valgus knee, while Dr. Puttipol Waipanya shared insights on periprosthetic fractures after total hip arthroplasty. The discussions were followed by an engaging case presentation session led by Dr. Viroj Larbpaiboonpong with the local hip and knee and THKS fellows. This session further enhanced my clinical reasoning and decision-making skills.

The fellowship culminated in my participation at the Combined Meeting of the 26th Annual Meeting of the Thai Hip and Knee Society (THKS), the 10th Annual Meeting of Arthroplasty Society in Asia (ASIA) and the 16th Annual Meeting of the Asean Arthroplasty Association (AAA), held in Hua Hin, Thailand, from November 28 to 30, 2024. This event provided a unique platform for fellows to present their research. I had the privilege of presenting two papers: *"Immersive Virtual Reality Simulation Training in Total Knee Arthroplasty & Transfer of Skills to Cadaver Dissection: A Pilot Study,"* which won the ASIA 2024 Best Abstract (Silver) Award, and *"Comparative Analysis of Femoral Component Rotational Accuracy in Robotic-Assisted versus Navigation-Assisted Total Knee Arthroplasty."* The THKS fellows had the opportunity to showcase our research and engage with leading experts, providing an enriching experience that will guide our future work in arthroplasty.

Overall, the THKS Arthroplasty Visiting Fellowship Program has been an immensely rewarding and enriching experience. It has broadened my knowledge, refined my technical skills, and connected me with an international network of like-minded professionals. I am deeply grateful to THKS for this incredible opportunity, which has significantly contributed to my growth as a hip and knee arthroplasty surgeon.



Figure 5: (A) Research presentation by THKS fellows was held during the combined meeting In Hua Hin. (B) Fellows receiving their certificate of completion of fellowship from Dr. Satit, President of THKS and AAA.

Travelling With The Team: What It Takes?

ASEAN U-16 Boys Football Championship 2024 Experience

Written by: **Dr Abu Ubaidah Amir Bin Norazmi**

Medical Lecturer/Sports Physician, Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia

As a sports physician, it has always been a dream and an honour to serve my country at an international event. When I received a call from a colleague about the opportunity to join the Malaysian football team, I didn't hesitate and immediately said yes. Even though it was an under-16 tournament, it provided a valuable learning experience. It was also a significant learning curve for me, as my previous experience with sports teams was primarily with adult athletes.

As for the tournament itself, it was ASEAN U-16 Boys Championship 2024, previously known as AFF Tournament. It was held in Surakarta city, also known locally as Solo, located at Central Java of Indonesia from June 20 until July 4, 2024. This tournament served as a preparatory tournament for the U17 AFC Qualifying Tournament later in the year. Travelling from Malaysia, there was no direct flight from Kuala Lumpur. We had to stop in Jakarta with Malaysia Airlines and continue the journey with Garuda Indonesia flights to Surakarta. Unfortunately for us, due to unavailability of enough seat from Jakarta to Surakarta, our group had to be split across three flights over two different days. This arrangement would have affected our training session. In any sports team or contingent, the welfare for athletes or players is always the priority. Therefore, the management and officials agreed to board a bus and continue

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In one of Rest & Relaxation (R&R) areas for 12 hours journey from Jakarta to Surakarta with officials



Top notch facilities in training ground with high qualities of field, comfortable changing room, and tower for our video analyst to record the training session

Our future Malaysian football in the making



the 12 hours journey from Jakarta to Surakarta. This arrangement ensured the training sessions were unaffected and all members of the team arrived on the same day.

Surakarta city previously hosted 2023 FIFA U-17 World Cup back in December 2023. As a result, the facilities, including the stadium, training grounds, and medical facilities, were fully prepared for an international event. The most spectacular facility was the training ground. Despite its isolated location, the facilities, including the field, benches, changing rooms, floodlights, and overall environment, were top-notch. These facilities were even better than most stadiums in Malaysia. The tournament ended early for Malaysian team, with 1 win and 2 losses, resulting in not qualifying for the semifinals. However, it was as valuable lesson for the young players. As their first assignment with the national team at an international level, the experience gained from this tournament will serve as foundation for their future journey. At this early age, their minds and mental toughness are not yet as mature as adults. Facing unexpected losses and criticism from social media, our role as the medical team involved not only treating illnesses and injuries but also providing moral support and guidance. The entire coaching, administrative and medical staff worked together to manage the players' well-being. As the famous proverb goes, "It takes a village to raise a child".

Medical teams play a crucial role when traveling with a sports team, ensuring the players' health and performance are optimized. For a football team, this usually includes a medical doctor, a physiotherapist, a masseur, and fitness coach. The work starts during early phase of player selection when all the medical record of the player are reviewed to ensure each player is in top condition for the tournament. During travel, especially when in transit and unable to access medical bags and drugs, some medications need to be carried in hand luggage. This is particularly important as the low humidity and dry air in the cabin can increase the risk of respiratory symptoms. Travel time, transit time and location must all be considered when planning medical support for the team.

Differences in the chain of command within a sports team must be acknowledged when working in a sports team. In the hospital where the works revolve around doctors, staff such as



Mr S. Sivasvaran, most senior physiotherapist in Malaysian football team



Top notch facilities in training ground with high qualities of field, comfortable changing room, and tower for our video analyst to record the training session

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Line-up of officials, coaches, and administrative staff for Malaysian team.

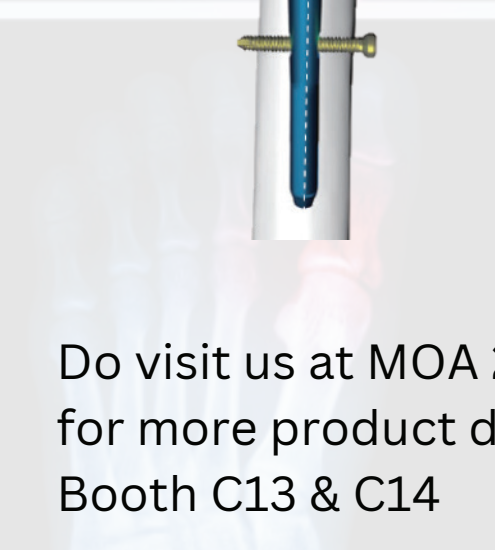
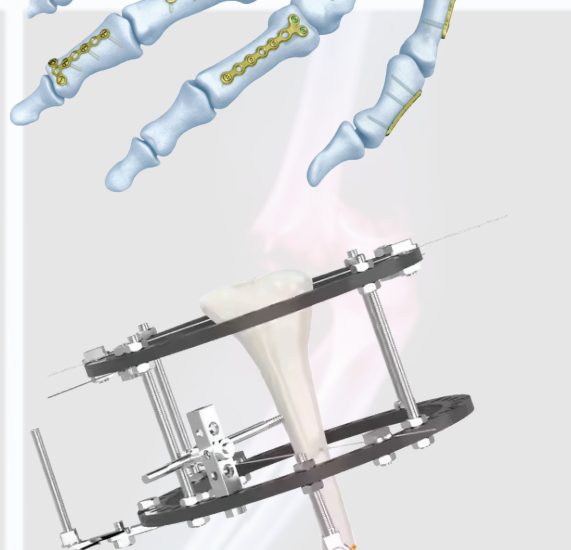
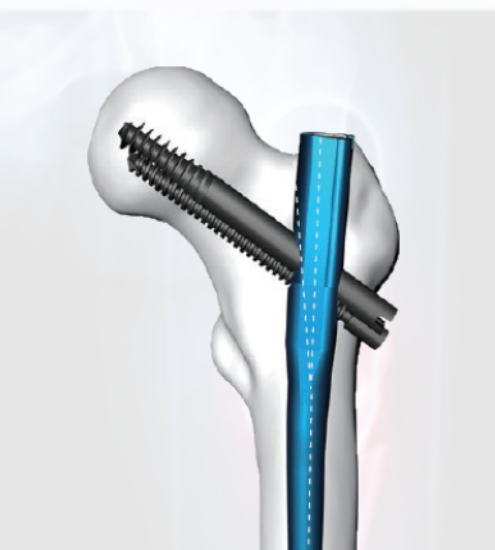
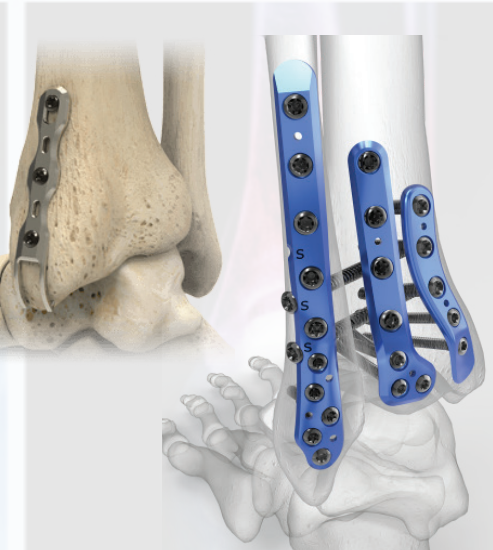
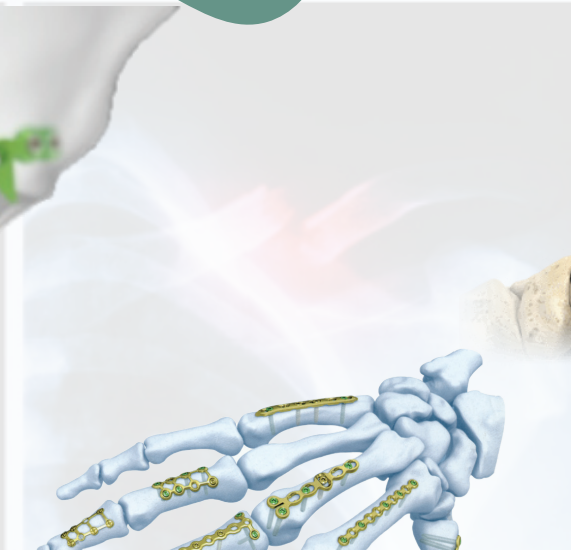
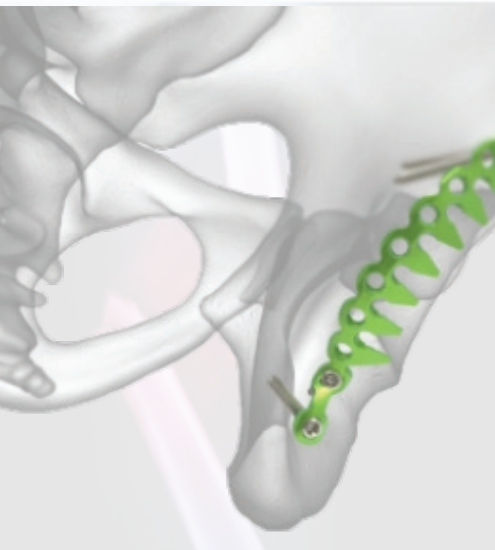
nurses, medical assistant and other paramedical staff are there to make doctor's working life easier. On sports team, however, the doctor is a small cog in a very large wheel where the players and the coach are the key figures. When traveling, the team doctor's job is not limited in the treatment room. It ranges from suturing of laceration wound and prescribing the medication to filling up the water bottle of the players and picking up stray balls (more like 'Milo boy') during training session. Taking advice from the most experienced Malaysian team doctor in football, Dr Mohd Zaidi Saleh, the doctor must be available in anytime and anywhere during the tour, even during the loading of luggage into the lorry.

Lastly, communication between physiotherapist and doctor is critical when traveling abroad with a sports team. It must be founded on mutual trust and respect. I had a pleasure of working with Mr. Siva, FAM's senior physiotherapist during this trip, which served as his last assignment before retirement. He has been with FAM since early '90s and I learned a lot from him during this short time. Let's hope that our Malaysian football team will be more successful in the future.



Callus removal procedure in the treatment room for one of the players

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