

Report on Module 1 – Introduction to Orthopaedics

Module 1 was held at the National Referral Hospital Conference room in Honiara Solomon Islands from February 11 to February 23, 2013. The course was declared open by Dr. Cedric Alependava, Under-secretary, Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Solomon Islands Government and Dr. Rooney Jagilly, Medical Superintendent, NRH. Dr Patrick Houasia spoke about the history of orthopaedic services in the Solomon Islands and also provided a brief history of the formation of the Pacific Islands Orthopaedic Association. Dr. Des Soares explained the PIOA training program and structure. The program consists of twelve modules each lasting 2 weeks held 3 times a year for 4 years. In addition to a number of heads of department from the hospital the opening was attended by Dr. Juliet Fleischl, WHO Representative, Solomon Islands.

There were 5 trainees in the first module. They are Dr. Alex Munamua, Dr. George Kabwere and Dr. Stephen Kodovaru from Solomon Islands, Dr. Shaun Mauiliu from Samoa and Dr. Kolini Vaea from Tonga. The lectures were delivered by Dr. Patrick Houasia from Solomon Islands, Dr. Des Soares and Dr. Paul Hitchen from Australia and Dr. Hermann Oberli from Switzerland.



In the Introductory module the students were taught a systematic approach to diagnosis in orthopaedics. This included clinical history taking and a thorough clinical examination with emphasis on a systematic approach to the examination of bones and joints. Each lecture consisted of a practical demonstration of the clinical examination followed by a detailed explanation and then an opportunity for the students to practice the examination skills on each other. In addition there were focussed lectures on investigation and the use of radiological and other imaging investigations.

In the second week the focus shifted to a practical workshop on internal and external fixation of fractures using plastic “bones”. The students were assessed with a live clinical examination on the Wednesday. The last 3 days of the course consisted of a modified course in the care of the critically injured surgical patient. This course was initially developed by the Royal College of Surgeons, England to help trainees understand the principles of a systematic approach to the care of critically

injured surgical patients. Some of this course was taught by senior staff from the anaesthetic ((Dr Kaini) , surgical (Dr. Dudley Baerodo) and medical (Dr. Elisabeth Houasia) departments. Our sincere thanks go to them.

Overall the 2 week module was intense and it was obvious the students were stimulated to learn. There was a marked improvement in their clinical examination skills. They spent most evenings revising the material as each day always commenced with a review session of the material taught the day before. The students are now already reading ahead to prepare for the second module commencing on 3 June 2013. An additional trainee Dr. Trevor Cullwick from Vanuatu will join us then.

Our thanks to the staff and patients of the National Referral Hospital Honiara for the use of the Conference room and for allowing us to conduct the course there. Our thanks also to our caterer Stella Munamua who provided tasty food for the duration of the course. Finally this module would not have been possible without the generous financial support from Peace Nexus Foundation and Hans Joerg Wyss.

Dr. Des Soares and Dr. Patrick Houasia
Course co-ordinators



Name badges showing countries represented



Dr. Patrick Houasia, opening ceremony



Dr. Silent Tovosia with Dr. Hermann Oberli



Dr. Shaun Mauiliu examining a knee