

Report on Module 10, September 2016 – Foot and ankle held in Apia, Samoa



The Foot and ankle module was held at the TTM Hospital conference room in Apia, Samoa from 12 to 19 September 2016. It was a very significant occasion as it marks the final module of the first 4 year cycle of modules. There were 10 trainees in this module. They are Dr. Stephen Kodovaru, Dr. Alex Munamua, Dr. George Kabwere and Dr. James Tewa'ani from Solomon Islands, Dr. Kabiri Itaka from Kirbati, Dr. Shaun Mauiliu and Dr. Areta Samuelu from Samoa, Dr Mark Rokobuli from Fiji, Dr. Naseri Aitaoto from American Samoa and Dr. Felix Diaku from PNG. The lectures were delivered by Dr. Angus Moxon, Dr. Nick Shortt, Dr. Matthew Hope, Dr. Des Soares, all from Brisbane, Australia, and Dr. Hermann Oberli from Switzerland. PIOA is now privileged to train 11 candidates from 7 Pacific Island countries. One candidate missed this module due to other commitments.

In the Foot and Ankle module the students were taught a systematic approach to the management of trauma and elective conditions affecting the foot and ankle. This included clinical history taking and a thorough clinical examination with emphasis on a systematic approach to the management of trauma and elective foot and ankle conditions including an understanding of the biomechanical principles and surgical treatment.

The students were assessed with an examination on the final day of the course including a written paper. In addition, the students performed various practical tasks each day including practicing applying a neutralising ex-fix, internal fixation of a bimalleolar fracture, Lisfranc injury and calcaneal fractures using plastic bones. Overall the 8-day 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 next module on Introduction to orthopaedics commencing on 30 January 2017 in Lautoka, Fiji.



Lectures were supplemented with practical demonstrations. Each morning we commenced with a ward round seeing three patients and getting the students to present the history and clinical signs of the patients. Their management was then discussed and suggestions for improvement were made. This was a useful exercise as we were able to improve clinical skills. It was also helpful to try and elucidate clinical reasoning and decision making and help with developing these skills.



PIOA has signed a training agreement with the TTM Hospital and the National Health Service, Samoa for a period of 5 years. This covers our two Samoan trainees, Shaun Mauiliu and Areta Samuelu and any future trainees. In addition, meetings were held with the National University of Samoa (NUS). It is hoped that the NUS Medical School will accredit the PIOA program as a Master of Surgery(Orth) degree awarded by NUS.

Our thanks to the staff and patients of the TTM Hospital and the National Health Services, Samoa for the use of the Conference room and for allowing us to conduct the course there. Our thanks also to our trainees who arranged nutritious 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 and AO Alliance Foundation and teaching staff from Australia.