

Report on Module 5 – Paediatric Orthopaedics



Module 5 was held at the National Referral Hospital Conference room in Honiara Solomon Islands from June 9 to June 18, 2014. There were 4 trainees in the fourth module. They are Dr. George Kabwere, Dr. Stephen Kodovaru and Dr. Alex Munamua from Solomon Islands, and Dr. Kabiri Itaka from Kirbati. (Dr. Shaun Mauiliu from Samoa was absent for family reasons). The lectures were delivered by Dr. Peter Cundy, Dr. Kate Stannage, Dr. Nicole Williams, Dr. Des Soares from Australia and Dr. Maxime Cote from Canada with assistance from Dr. Patrick Houasia and Dr. Silent Tovosia from Solomon Islands.

In this module the students were taught a wide range of topics covering the surgical management of paediatric orthopaedic conditions. The Pacific Islands all have a predominantly “young” population. In the Solomon Islands 40% of the population are under the age of 14 (compared with only 18% under 14 years old in Australia or other Western countries. Paediatric orthopaedic conditions make up a large part of the orthopaedic workload.

Common conditions such as trauma including complex paediatric fractures around the wrist and elbow. Congenital and developmental conditions like club foot (CTEV) and hip dysplasia are also common. Lectures were supplemented with practical demonstrations. Each morning we commenced with a ward round seeing six 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. There has been improvement with each module in the simple clinical tasks such as culture swabs and followup xrays now being ordered because of repeated encouragement in previous modules. There are still some frustrations with suboptimal management of trauma but there is ongoing improvement.



Each afternoon we did a practical exercise involving a surgical skill. These were greatly appreciated by the students as they were directly relevant to clinical problems they face daily. These involved trauma skills (osteotomy for distal humerus malunion), using TENS nails for tibial and femoral fractures and K wires for forearm fractures. Other practicals were aimed at the Ponseti method of treating club foot (CTEV), Salter osteotomies for hip dysplasia (DDH), pinning slipped femoral capital epiphyses (SUCFE) and a practical on the assessment and management of children with cerebral palsy and with scoliosis.

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 caterers from the Mothers Union Womens group who provided 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.