

Report on Module 6 – Orthopaedic Tumours

Module 6 was held at the National Referral Hospital Conference room in Honiara Solomon Islands from September 29 to October 8, 2014. There were 5 trainees in the sixth module. They are Dr. George Kabwere,



Dr. Stephen Kodovaru and Dr. Alex Munamua from Solomon Islands, and Dr. Kabiri Itaka from Kirbati and Dr. Shaun Mauiliu from Samoa. The lectures were delivered by Dr. Eka Wiratnaya from Bali, Indonesia, Dr Vaughan Poutawera and Dr. David Ardern from Tauranga, New Zealand and Dr. Des Soares from with assistance from Dr. Patrick Houasia from Solomon Islands and Dr. Paul Hitchen from Sydney, Australia who continued to provide clinical services.

In this module the students were taught a wide range of topics covering the surgical management of orthopaedic tumours. To date, bone and soft tissue tumours have been managed in a very limited fashion in the Pacific Islands. There has been minimal use of adjunct therapies such as chemotherapy. There are no radiotherapy services available in the Pacific Islands.

Metastatic disease to bone is common in the Pacific island countries. Benign bone tumours are also seen often in children and adults. 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.



Some afternoons 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 tumour skills (curettage of a simulated distal femoral tumour defect and filling it with bone cement and plating it to stabilise a

“pathological fracture”, trauma skills (revising use of the instruments in the small fragment set), revising the use of the hemiarthroplasty set.



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.