

Observership to Japan 2022 (Dr Chaw Phyu Phyu Than): What I experienced in Japan and what I will practice in my country

I am Dr Chaw Phyu Phyu Than, HBP registrar from Hepatobiliary and Pancreatic Surgery (HBPS) department, Yangon Specialty Hospital (YSH), Myanmar. Encouraged by my Head of Department, Professor Dr Tin Tin Mar, I applied for the Asia Pacific Observership offered by the Japanese Society of Hepato-Biliary-Pancreatic Surgery (JSHBPS). I have been selected as one of the candidates from observership program of JSHBPS and IHBPA since 2019. At that time, the scheduled plan was postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic condition.

I participated as oral presentation at 34th meeting of JSHBPS that held from June 10 to June 11 2022 via zoom meeting with “Recurrence of Hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) after Living Donor Liver Transplantation within five years’ experience”.

Recently I have accomplished the observership program at Nagasaki University Hospital, one of the outstanding Japan International Hospitals, from 15th August to 21st October 2022. This program provides a variety of opportunities to learn not only liver transplantation but also hepatobiliary and pancreatic surgical procedures.

Concerning living donor liver transplantation, Professor Susumu Eguchi and his HBP team gave me a chance to participate as assistant in both donor hepatectomy and recipient hepatectomy. Laparoscopic hand assisted donor hepatectomy is a new experience for me. Professor Eguchi and the members of his department were able to communicate very well and they patiently explained the details of their conferences and discussions to me. I was able to learn a lot from not only consent taking from the patients and their family members, pre-operative discussion for planned surgical procedures, intra-operative procedures but also post-operative care managements.



As assistant in donor hepatectomy in Living Donor Liver Transplantation

I am also so grateful to participate in pig liver transplantation that were done at Kobe. I assisted in two times of pig's liver transplantation including donor hepatectomy, recipient hepatectomy and graft implantation. During that time, I gained precious hands on training of vascular anastomosis from Professor Eiji Kobayashi and Dr Akihiko Soyama.



Group photo after liver transplantation in pigs at Kobe



With Prof Kobayashi, Dr Soyama and Dr Fukumoto after finishing pig's liver transplantation



as assistant in graft implantation of liver transplantation in pig

Regarding HBP surgical procedures, many performed minimally invasive surgical procedures such as robotic and laparoscopic procedures for liver, biliary and pancreas allowed me to broaden my horizon. I learned in every procedure and wished to apply in our department when I came back Myanmar.

The morning conferences were very educative and informative in which all detail about the pre-operative plans of the patients, intra-operative procedures with very detailed diagrammatic sketches and

post-operative managements were discussed. Every surgical procedure was discussed pre-operatively with very detail CT angiographic imagines that gave me to understand more tricks and tips of each procedure. Surgical decisions making in the complex patients is challenging and requires excellent judgement that comes from multidisciplinary discussion in the weekly meeting at the surgical department, Nagasaki University Hospital. I got the chance to observe both operative and non-operative management for these complicated patients.

I could observe a variety of weekly journal reading from surgical residences and ongoing research programs & scientific presentations. I attended two academic programs during my observership period such as 47th Annual meeting of Japan Society of Coloproctology held on October 1st 2022 at Dejima Messe. Another one was the 60th annual meeting of Japan Society of Clinical Oncology held on October 20th 2022 at Kobe. I was also fortunate enough to meet with Professor Itaru Endo, President of JSHBPS the Oncology congress.



With Professor Itaru Endo, President of JSHBPS and Dr Masaaki Hidaka from Nagasaki University Hospital at Oncology Congress at Kobe

I wrote a review paper of Biliary complications in Adult Living Donor Liver Transplantation in ABO incompatible in Nagasaki University Hospital. I tried to find out which variable will be the key factor in the occurrence of biliary complications. Although the final results were not significantly related to the complication, I tried my best in this research paper.



Professor Eguchi presenting the completion certificate to me



Farewell treat to me with Professor Eguchi and his lovely wife

Nagasaki, one of the most cosmopolitan cities in Japan, is set on a large natural harbor, with buildings on the terraces of surrounding hills. It is synonymous with a key moment during World War II, after suffering a nuclear attack in August 1945. I visited the Atomic Bomb Museum, Peace Park and Peace Statue. I have enjoyed many a beautiful sunset strolling along the Dejima Wharf and hiking to Mount Inasayama, the views from there was very great.

Before I go back to Myanmar, I visited and paid respects to Professor Masakazu Yamamoto, Utsunomiya Memorial Hospital and Professor Goro Honda, Tokyo Women's Medical University. Both of them visited Yangon at the event of IHBPA outreach program on January 2019. They performed surgical procedures at YSH and guided us the precious surgical methods and these are very much beneficial for our department.



Delicious lunch with Prof Yamamoto and his colleague at Utsunomiya

The observership programme at the Nagasaki University has been very fruitful to me as a young HBP surgeon who is trying to become a HBP transplant surgeon. It has given me lots of opportunities to learn and observe as well as to get thoroughly involved in the process of liver transplant from start to finish. I also found my teachers at the Nagasaki University to be very inspirational and willing to teach. I am also grateful that they not only taught me surgical techniques but also made my stay in Japan a pleasant one. I hope that we would be able to keep in touch and to further develop our interdepartmental ties. I hope to see you all again.