



ESGO Traveling Fellowship

Fellows Report

Name of Fellow: Dr. Bob Achila

Position at Home Institution: Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist

Home Institution (full address): Aga Khan Hospital Kisumu, P.O. Box 530 (40100) Kisumu, Kenya.

Head of Department: Dr. Sam Oula (Medical Director)

Email: achilao@yahoo.com

Name of Mentor at Host Institution: Prof. Eric Leblanc

Position at Host Institution: Head of Department

Email: E-leblanc@o-lambret.fr

Institution (Full address): Centre Oscar Lambret, Lille in France.
3 Rue Frédéric Combemale, 59000 Lille

Dates of Fellowship: 1st April to 30th June 2018 (3 months)

Detailed description on Teaching received:

I was a recipient of the ESGO Clinical fellowship award in 2018. This enabled me to spend three months (April to June) at the gynaecologic oncology unit of Oscar Lambret Cancer Centre in Lille, northern France. The unit is headed by Professor Eric Leblanc, and is one of the regional cancer centres in France. During the fellowship, I was able to fully participate in the multidisciplinary care of gynaecologic oncology patients. I was privileged to have access to and participate in the daily activities of the unit, including interactions and discussions with Professor Leblanc and his team. There are six theatres which are always busy with concurrently running lists. Care of patients at this centre is multidisciplinary and all cases are discussed in a weekly meeting. The centre is also active in research with a number of ongoing clinical trials.

As a laparoscopic surgeon, I was keen to learn new techniques in minimally invasive approaches in oncology. At the Oscar Lambret Centre, a diagnostic laparoscopy with formal Sugar-Baker scoring is part of the initial workup for patients with advanced ovarian cancer to get a biopsy and to triage patients for either upfront complete cytoreductive surgery or neo adjuvant chemotherapy. Use of laparoscopy is now well established as the treatment of choice for most endometrial cancers as well as for early stage cervical cancer. I was particularly impressed by Prof Eric Leblanc's retroperitoneal technique to lumboaortic lymphadenectomy used for staging in locally advanced cervical cancer especially in obese patients.

Some of the key advances in minimally invasive gynaecologic oncology at the Oscar Lambret Centre included increasing use of robotic surgery and single port techniques. Sentinel Lymph Node Biopsy (SNL) techniques for endometrial and cervical cancer represent an exciting development in gynaecologic oncology that will have tremendous benefits to patients once in routine practice. This is in view of less morbidity and the greater diagnostic accuracy achieved in lymph node staging. The benefits of laparoscopy, including less morbidity, pain and faster recovery were evident and every effort should be made to make minimal access surgery a reality to patients in low income countries.

At the Oscar Lambret Cancer Centre, patients have access to advanced pre-operative work up including PET-CT and MRI. These provided useful learning tools and helped to enrich discussions preoperatively in theatre as well as to deepen my understanding of pelvic anatomy, as well as the diagnostic accuracy (sensitivity and specificity) of various imaging modalities for lymph node staging and detection of distant metastases. I was also able to learn concepts of radiotherapy, including placement of cervical applicators for brachytherapy.

Goals accomplished:

The training fellowship enabled me to broaden my understanding of the multidisciplinary care of gynaecologic oncology patients and the various treatment options for gynaecologic cancers.

Achievement in clinical practice:

1. Better understanding of the multidisciplinary care of gynaecologic cancer patients
2. Enhanced knowledge on the pre-operative work up for gynaecological cancer, including available imaging modalities like PET-CT and MRI
3. Acquired hands on skills in robotic surgery
4. Improved techniques in both conventional laparoscopy and laparotomy for gynaecologic malignancy
5. Enhanced understanding and practical skills in sentinel node biopsy

6. Better understanding of treatment options for cancer patients including surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy.

Presentations e.g. at seminar or meetings:

Attended ESGO Master Class in Warsaw and ESGO endorsed minimal access training in Strasbourg, France.

Publications:

None

Problems encountered with a critical evaluation of the fellowship experience:

None

Future plan on returning to home:

To strengthen gynaecologic oncology services in western Kenya.

Overall evaluation and comment of the fellowship:

The Oscar Lambret Cancer Centre is a renowned international training centre. During my stay, I got to interact with visiting fellows and consultants from various countries. I also got the opportunity to attend an ESGO endorsed minimally invasive course at IRCAD in France and the second ESGO/ENYGO Master class in Warsaw Poland. Overall, the clinical fellowship was a great opportunity for me to improve my knowledge and practice in gynaecologic oncology. It also enabled me to build new friendships and professional contacts. There is always need for collaboration, support and mentorship and I am grateful to ESGO and Professor Eric Leblanc for this opportunity.

In: Kisumu, Kenya

Date: 27th July 2018

Signature: 

Applicants name: Dr. Bob Achila

Enjoy learning with ESGO!