ESGO Traveling Fellowship
Fellows Report

Name of Fellow: Rubén M. Betoret Gustems
Position at Home Institution: Specialist in ObGyn
Home Institution (full address): University Hospital of Vinalopó (C/Tonico Sansano Mora, 14, 03293 Elche, Alicante, Spain).
Head of the Department: Dr. Eduardo Cazorla Amorós
Email: doctor.beto@gmail.com

Name of Mentor at Host Institution: Dr. Philipp Harter
Position at Host Institution: Senior Physician. Stellvertretender Klinikdirektor.
Institution (full address): Kliniken Essen Mitte, Evang. Huyssens-Stiftung (Henricistrasse, 92, 45136 Essen, Germany).
Email: p.harter@kliniken-essen-mitte.de

Dates of Fellowship: 01/08/2017 to 31/08/2017.

Detailed description on Teaching received:

Starting on day 1 I was allowed to attend the clinical conferences held every morning by 7:30 am, with particular focus on continuing education (seminars delivered by prestigious medical specialists from in- and outside the clinic every monday: Heart stroke 07/08/2017; Morphin and doubtful anticancer effects 14/08/2017; Renal Insufficience and cancer therapy 21/08/2017; Security issues in Radiotherapy 28/08/2017). Another strength of the clinic was individual clinical case assessment, with special interest in clinical trials and the planning of the multidisciplinary "Tumorkonferenz" taking place every friday with valuable contribution of pathologists and radiologists.

After the sessions I was invited to join the surgical team on every case and was able to learn the surgical techniques by close "hands-on" exposure (Log for each of the 47 operations I attended has been registered and is available for review). Ultra-radical ovarian cancer surgery is house´s main speciality, with almost one - or even two- case scheduled in OR everyday, so I received direct procedural education on peritonectomy, both paracholic and diaphragmatic, as

well as retroperitoneal removal of pelvic packet and removal of particularly "difficult" tumoral implants (retrocaval, paraesophageal, splenic, pancreatic...).

Da Vinci Xi robot is available for ginaecological use in the clinic and is frequently used, so I had the possibility to view total radical histerectomies, parametrectomies, paraaortic lymphadenectomies, as well as a very interesting total colpectomy, ending in anterior exanteration with Briker conduit in a vaginal melanoma.

Classic laparoscopy was also performed, with particular interest in preoperative assessment of ovarian cancer patients and staging of Borderline Ovarian tumors.

Goals accomplished :

I was able to accomplish all my initial goals, which mainly were exposure to ultra-radical ovarian surgery and understanding the functioning of a cancer referral center.

Techniques of peritoneal stripping and retroperitoneal pelvic packet removal were performed in a very standardized manner, so the steps were easily recognizable in OR and therefore reproducible in my future surgical praxis. In addition, I had the possibility to join the team in Da Vinci´s robot assisted surgeries and was able to learn about its advantages in some surgical settings.

TRUST study (Trial on Radical Upfront Surgery in Advanced Ovarian Cancer) is now being conducted by the clinic, among other german and international institutions, to assess the outcomes of selected patients with Stage IIIB or higher Ovarian Cancer (tubal or peritoneal carcinomas also included), randomized either for primary debulking surgery or for interval debulking surgery following neoadjuvant chemotherapy. I was a privileged spectator of study enrollment and the immense amount of work needed to randomize the patients for this really promising and –in some ways- bold study, which has an estimated completion date for April 2023, and will hopefully bring some more light to the management of advanced ovarian cancer.

Achievement in clinical practice:

This travelling fellowship will impact on my confidence for future clinical and surgical praxis; teachings obtained will also hopefully have a positive impact on our organizational structure, from tumor committee arrangements to the radicality extent of our surgeries, which will improve our patients health and outcomes.

Presentations eg. at seminar or meetings:

I did not prepare any presentation during my visit. Nevertheless, we have the preparation of a cadaver workshop in mind, related to upper-abdomen procedures in oncological patients.

Research performed and outcome:

No research was performed, related to the travelling fellowship.

Publications:

No publications are in process, neither.

Problems encountered with a critical evaluation of the fellowship experience as a whole:

Absolutely no problems to mention. The clinic has a broad experience in hosting fellows from all across Europe, so the experience was absolutely flawless. Very friendly team.of surgeons, anesthesists and theatre staff, too.

Obviously, this kind of ultra-radical surgeries take a lot of time, even up to 8-9 hours each in some cases, and you really need to be mentally and physically trained to cope with this demands of endurance and concentration. As a tip for future visitors, specially if not used to this kind of surgical approach, and you have to face two of them in the same day: YOU BETTER BREAKFAST WELL!!

Future plan on returning to home:

I would really like to use the skills learned in clinical practice, such as peritonectomy and retroperitoneal removal of pelvic packet. Nevertheless, the sole contemplation of this team´s daily work is inspirational and will be an incentive to improve our functional structures back home.

Overall evaluation and comment of the fellowship:

This fellowship has been a very valuable experience for me and my career. It is my honor to have joined Prof. Andreas DuBois and his team for what finally happened to be a very short month and I can only thank him, as well as Dr. Phillip Harter, Dr. Beyhan Ataseven, Dr. Sonia Prader, Dr. Stephanie Schneider, Dr. Florian Heitz and Dr. Mareike Sporkmann, as senior phisicians, for their truly dedicated attention. All staff, including all other doctors and fellows, nurses, secretaries, theatre staff and the friendly anesthetic team was very welcoming and supporting.

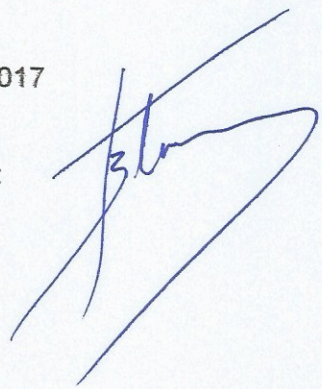
I am also grateful to ESGO and its Travelling Fellowship program for sponsoring me and must additionally praise the support received from Helena Opolecka (ESGO office angel) and Astrid Noll (secretary of Dr. Harter).

Personally I would also thank Helmut and Miladin for their company and help in the difficult moments. They are now just friends to me, more than colleagues!

Kliniken Essen Mitte (KEM) provides a great opportunity to learn and train, due to his high volume of operations, and therefore the standardization of techniques, but the quality and humanity of their professionals is what makes it second to none. I really would recommend a fellowship in KEM to all other colleagues in my position.

In Alicante Date 19/09/2017

Applicant's name: RUBÉN M. BETORET GUSTEMS Signature:



Enjoy learning with ESGO!