

EUROPEAN UROLOGY RESIDENT PROGRAMME (EUREP-2019) PARTICIPATION REPORT

I participated at the European Urology Residents Education Program (Eurep-19) in Prague, Czech Republic, an experience I will always cherish in my urology career.

The generous effort of Mr Shekhar Biyani (Urolink), in conjunction with my Chief/Consultants Dr Nenad Spasojevic and Dr Victor Mapulanga, relentlessly ensured that, for the first time, a Zambian resident attended the coveted annual Urology Residents Education Programme.

On Friday 6 September, I joined fellow final-year residents from other countries, predominantly European, at the Clarion Congress Hotel Prague in Vysocany. It was extremely exciting to interact with other highly motivated and enthusiastic residents. The participants were assigned to five groups in accordance with the five modules that covered in-depth topics spanning:

- Urological cancers (testicular, penile, renal and urothelial),
- Prostate cancer and male voiding LUTS,
- Andrology, stones and upper tract urology,
- Functional urology,
- Paediatric urology, trauma and infection.

The lectures, delivered by worldrenowned experts, were compact yet covered all the major components of the latest EAU guidelines in a lively, interactive and cordial atmosphere. They encouraged open participation, debate on clinical scenarios, publications and evidence that provided basis for the guidelines. The presentations also included videos and test-your- knowledge MCQs to consolidate what the Faculty members taught. The participants had an opportunity to give feedback ratings after every lecture session. The lecture sessions were complemented with coffee breaks, enabling participants to converse with colleagues from other countries, exchanging ideas on how to deal with urological cases, progression in a urological career, and views on how certain practices vary in different centres.

I must admit that, before the lectures started, the prospect of absorbing a plethora of urological information in just six days appeared daunting. The

experience was far better than anticipated. The presentations were stimulating and riveting; in particular, the case reports were very interesting.

The Hands-on-Training (HOT) sessions were fabulous; we had an opportunity to interact one-on-one with expert tutors who helped us to improve the skills and learn the tricks applicable in routine practice. The sessions included transurethral resection (TUR), ureteroscopy (URS), and laparoscopy. I participated in the ureteroscopy and laparoscopy training sessions which were marvellous and rewarding experiences. They strongly bridged the gap in facilities from my low resourced country. The HOT sessions also offered a possibility for participants to take the European training program in Basic Laparoscopic Urological Skills (E-BLUS) assessment exam.

It was not just the excellent conference facilities, the wide array of choices for lunch or the accessible cold beers: the organizers also provided a balance to academic activities with social interactions in the most informal atmosphere. The karaoke and barbecue on Sunday evening was the climax for fun, making new friends, enjoying performances from various national residents' teams, and faculty members' team. The party extended to *James Deen Prague* a popular club in Prague.

The key learning point was on the emphasis to practice evidence-based urology and sharpen skills to critically appraise publications. We also learnt the importance of clinical acumen in applying proper diagnosis and management to achieve high quality patient care.

To sum up the following were the take home information:

- I was guided through the steps for proper approach to ureteroscopy and the applied maneuvers for a successful procedure, particularly the use of ureteral sheaths which are not available in our hospitals. It was pleasant to learn how ureteral sheaths can aid good ureteroscopic procedures.
- The tutors ably explained and coached me on basic laparoscopic skills, how to handle the instruments and the operation techniques in an easily understandable approach. The simulators for urological surgery training are not available in Zambia. It was momentous to be exposed to complex models for effective learning.

- It is prudent clinical practice to make decisions relying on evidence-based guidelines.

Ultimately the programme had a positive impact on how I should manage urology patients in my daily clinical practice. I hope more residents, especially from low income countries like Zambia, will have the opportunity to attend future EUREP programs in the Czech Republic.

The EUREP class of 2019 has been aptly named the HYDROCELES (Hot Young Dynamic Residents Obtaining Certified Education, Leading to Excellent Surgeons). Certainly the HYDROCELES will excel as urological surgeons.

I wish to express my profound gratitude to Urolink through Consultant Urologist Mr Shekhar Biyani for the support rendered in ensuring my successful participation at EUREP 19. The continued support of Urolink to urology in Zambia will have a lasting impact on good urology practice for many years to come. I am currently compiling some easy- to-use resource materials, based on what was learnt at EUREP, to share with other Zambian urology residents.

I am appealing to Urolink to help support the incurred costs towards the air-ticket. I am grateful for the invaluable exposure to the EUREP course. It will, hopefully, go a long way in mitigating the limited training facilities for urology trainees in Zambia. I have included a receipt for the air-ticket costs.

Dr George Soko

Urology Resident, University Teaching Hospital, Lusaka, Zambia