

Travelling fellowship

After completing my SpR training in Ireland, I started my Mohs Surgery fellowship in Newcastle upon Tyne on 1st May 2010. The week I started, all 3 consultant Dermatologic Surgeons and the Mohs fellow were in New York to attend the American College of Mohs Surgery (ACMS) meeting. I was very keen to attend the next ACMS meeting as it would be a great opportunity to listen to world renowned speakers on Mohs and reconstructive surgery.

I submitted two posters which were both accepted for the ACMS meeting.

1. Exenteration as an outcome in periocular non melanoma skin cancers
2. The role of cortical bone fenestration in the management of Mohs surgical scalp wounds devoid of periosteum.

I am grateful to the BSDS for the Travelling Fellowship Grant I was awarded to attend the 43rd annual meeting of American College of Mohs Surgery, Las Vegas (28th April-1st May 2011), which was a substantial support to me and recognition which I value greatly.

When I arrived in Las Vegas, I found it a different world, where everyone seems to be talking about gambling. Thankfully never a gambler in my life, it was quite easy for me to concentrate on the conference.

The four day scientific programme was packed with great speakers. After my registration at the desk in the Grand Caesar Palace Hotel and Resorts, the abstract session on clinical pearls was followed by "Controversies in Mohs Surgery" and was great to listen to Dr Leonard Goldberg views on this topic. Afternoon session was on Transplant patients and skin cancers.

Highlight of second day was the full sessions on surgical complications and scientific abstract session. This was followed by the Guest speaker, Dr Macapinlac, Professor of Nuclear Medicine and Experimental imaging at Anderson Cancer Centre in Texas, lecture on PET scan and cutaneous tumours. His informative lecture was focussed on the use and future directions of imaging of cutaneous tumours including melanoma.

I would specially like to mention Dr Fredrick Menick, a world renowned expert and author of 2 text books on nasal and facial reconstruction. It was a great opportunity to listen to his talk and his experience on difficult cases of nasal reconstruction nasal reconstruction.

The second session was by “Cook brothers”. Both have shared their experiences of facial reconstruction with more than 400 slides in their presentations. It was fascinating to see and learn the complex facial closures, reconstructive options and outcome.

Lastly, I must mention the session which I have enjoyed the most: “How would you reconstruct”. This session started with multiple complex closures shown on the screen with 5 closure options. The audience had to vote electronically on one of the options followed by each panel member with their preferred closure with pros and cons. The panellists included names like Zitelli, Menick, Dzubow and Fazio.

Despite the busy schedule of the meeting, it was an excellent opportunity to meet colleagues from several countries, allowing me to understand and appreciate the different ways of practise in dermatology worldwide. It is an expensive course and a long way to travel, but absolutely well worth the effort and will undoubtedly be beneficial to my future career in dermatological surgery. I would strongly recommend to Mohs Fellows in UK to attend this conference as in my humble view, the best conference I have attended on Dermatological Surgery.

Thank you,

Kashif Ahmad

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