

## EVENTS OVERVIEW

## SGH ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING 2022



The two-day Annual Scientific Meeting, titled “Call to Action: Future Proof Healthcare”, include presentations and discussions on COVID-19 related topics amongst many others, for healthcare professionals across SGH Campus to learn and foster collaboration that best address the needs of our population. The Guest-of-Honour was Senior Minister of State for Health, Dr Janil Puthucheary.

Associate Professor Kenneth Mak, Director of Medical Services at the Ministry of Health, outlined key policy shifts that the Singapore healthcare sector will be embarking on as Healthier SG is rolled out to address these challenges in his keynote lecture: “At the cusp of change: Transforming care for better population health and sustainability”

ASM 2022 has also attracted over 220 abstract submissions from SGH and across the Campus for the 15 different award categories.

*Source: SGH Facebook*

## FELLOWSHIPS &amp; INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS

### Dr Amber Haseeb from Malaysia shares her fellowship experience in SGH, Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, Foot and Ankle Service

#### What was your impression of Singapore’s healthcare industry?

Well integrated system amongst the SingHealth hospitals that makes referrals and patient management seamless. Technologically advanced in several aspects such as robotics, availability of implants, equipments. Overall SGH is giving good support to the patients and things are more accessible. It is a well-developed industry.

#### Are there any differences compared to the healthcare industry in your country?

The healthcare system in Singapore is more efficient and advanced in terms of technology and overall management and integration. Equipment and implants are more readily available. Patient’s financial affordability is also superior, making it easier to plan surgeries. SGH has better facilities and right from the pre-operative planning to different types of admissions catering to an array of cases is better developed e.g. same day admissions. The turnover rate of each elective list is faster and efficient. The healthcare industry in Singapore has a better support system for both the medical personnel and patients, making it more harmonious and progressive.

#### Why did you choose to apply to Singapore/SGH for your attachment?

Doing a fellowship at Singapore had never been an option simply because of the cost as I would be funding my own training. However due to circumstances created by pandemic most centres had low volume and I genuinely wanted a hands on clinical experience so I could train and confidently set up foot and ankle service at my centre. A friend who was doing fellowship in AR at SGH recommended based on the volume of cases and expertise available. I got in touch with Dr. Nicholas Yeo who is the Director of Foot & Ankle Service at SGH and the rest is history.

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## FELLOWSHIPS & INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS

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### Did you face any difficulties (e.g. culture, language) during your attachment? What were they?

Singapore is a diverse society culturally so I did not face much difficulties. It's a country that does not impose its culture and accepts everyone for their backgrounds. Everyone was so helpful and welcoming. Occasionally I did have Mandarin speaking patients who were not fluent in English but the clinic staff and my trainer Dr. Nicholas were readily available to translate. Overall Singapore is an extremely friendly place, both at SGH and outside the hospital. I do have to say the application process was smooth and PGMI staff had been helpful every step of the way.

### During your attachment, what was a 'typical' day like?

There was daily online departmental teachings from 0700H to 0730H i.e. subspecialty rounds, trauma rounds or morbidity and mortality. My day at work would typically start around 0720-0730H with daily ward rounds followed by either clinic or surgery (OT). Each week of the month had a different schedule panned out over 4-5 weeks depending on the duration of the month. There was always something running during AM and PM, so either AM clinic followed by PM OT or vice versa. There were days where there was full day clinic or full day OT. OT consisted of both major theatre cases and day care local anaesthesia cases depending on days. Apart from this fixed schedule there were evening theatres that usually began after 1700H and Saturday mornings. There were free PM slots once a month which gave time for research work/paper writing. There was time allocated for teaching and case discussions with Dr. Nicholas during clinics and OTs. He was always encouraging questions and discussions. I am an early riser so my day begins at 0500H, which I utilised to read up on the cases planned. During my free times in between at work I would also go through the radiographs and case notes for the surgeries planned. On top of all this, I was lucky to have a trainer that understood my passion and need to workout therefore, I managed to train CrossFit ever so often.



*Hands on experience at Foot & Ankle Cadaver Course*



*Dr Amber (middle) and the Foot & Ankle team completed a 10K charity run for SGH.*

### What were your learning experiences?

I have learnt how to manage and run my own foot and ankle unit. My aim is to take this knowledge and set up a good foot and ankle service at my institution. I have also learnt a lot of new surgical skills e.g. minimally invasive surgeries around the foot and ankle region, complex foot deformities and neglected chronic injuries. I would have to say I did learn communication skills by just observing Dr. Nicholas. He is extremely compassionate and understanding towards his patients. His level of dedication is commendable. I did get a better insight on registry data collection, which will be an invaluable

experience for my own practice. Post operative wound care, rehabilitation and patient compliance are crucial for a good outcome especially for my area of subspecialty. It requires a little more dedication compared to other Orthopaedic specialties.

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## FELLOWSHIPS & INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS

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*Dr Amber with supervisor, Dr Nicholas Yeo (in white, wearing tie), at the end of her fellowship training.*

### How has the attachment made an impact on you?

The attachment has made me a more matured surgeon overall. It has given me the confidence to try out new surgical techniques. My trainer, Dr. Nicholas Yeo has inculcated in me to always strive to get better, learn new skills and keep evolving. His favourite quote is, “Never do the same thing for 10 years” but working with him I have noticed he constantly improves every

week, which is inspiring. I feel I have learnt a better approach to evaluating foot and ankle patients, deducing the main pathology and offering an appropriate management at the right time. Foot and ankle pathologies can be complex, therefore the timing of surgery makes a difference. Dr. Nicholas always says, “For certain cases and pathologies the patient has to have earned the surgery”. A good surgeon is one who knows when not to operate. Doing research and translating it into publications is a crucial trait that every surgeon should have. It is not just a way of immortalising your work but it makes you a world renowned surgeon as well as aids your practice. I have encountered several patients who have better confidence in well published surgeons. Showcasing your hard work into papers is very rewarding and becomes a tool for others to learn from too.

### Do you have any interesting/memorable experience during your attachment that you would like to share?

It would be difficult for me to put a finger on just one experience because every day was interesting and there was something new to learn. I would have to say it was quite enlightening to see minimally invasive surgery for severe, complex hallux valgus deformities, reconstruction of the fibula for a patient that wished to be active in sports and restoration of the ankle joint for a chronic, neglected ankle fracture. The team and people around me have just made this whole experience memorable. It’s humbling to have so many patients that were grateful. This training and Singapore has given me so much more than I could have ever imagined. The friends I have made on this journey are invaluable and I am filled with gratitude to have been given this opportunity.

### What did you enjoy most during your attachment?

The learning experience has been amazing and invaluable in more ways than one. The aspect I enjoyed was a balanced work-life experience. My trainer is a very conscientious person but he also advocates a good outside work life to strike a balance and maintain sanity. I was very appreciative of all the team building activities and outings. When you are surrounded by good people everything becomes enjoyable.

### Would you recommend SGH to interested fellows? Why?

Yes, without a doubt. The Orthopaedic department at SGH is well established with skilled Consultants. They have the expertise and patient load required for proper training. Overall, for me it has been an intriguing experience. Going through my logbook, I can confidently say that we covered every aspect of orthopaedics pertaining to foot and ankle; ranging from acute trauma, infection, chronic neglected injuries, deformities, degenerative, inflammatory and benign tumors. Fellowship at SGH is definitely worth the experience.

### How would you describe your fellowship experience in 3 words?

Memorable, educational, enjoyable!