Medical Exchange Program at Osaka Medical College

8th - 24th February 2012

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My Diary

Wednesday 8th February 2012

We arrived at the Kansai International Airport, which is located in Osaka, at 7.50 am. The weather was very cold, snowing. Auey, Pol and I took the 9:20 am limousine bus to Hankyu Ibaraki station to see Matsumoto-san who always contacted with us when we were still in Thailand. She welcomed us warmly with her smile and greetings. She took us to the residence, Dwell Takatsuki, by the local train. This apartment was very impressive because it was convenient, clean and comfortable, but within the walking distance was more important. There were many Japanese restaurants and 24-hour stores around there. After we checked in, we went to Osaka Medical College for lunch and checked the next day schedule. Before the meal, we were told that we’d have to check our body temperature every day, so that they could detect our health problems if any. Then, my first meal in Japan was Shouyu Ramen. During the lunchtime, we met 3 Japanese students; Kuroda-san, Tomioka-san and Kodama-san.
In the afternoon, Mr. Ogawa, the Administrative Manager of The Nakayama International Center for Medical Cooperation (NICMC), greeted and introduced us to Prof. Koichi Kono, the Director of NICMC. They were very nice. They took us on the campus tour to the university and the hospital buildings. The first place we went to was the President’s office. We met Prof. Hiroshi Takenaka there and then had a small discussion. Next, we met the Chairman of the Board of Directors, Prof. Minoru Ueki, on the way to the hospital buildings. Then, we met Prof. Toshiaki Hanafusa, the chief of the internal medicine section and he showed us around the most parts of the hospital buildings, especially the Internal Medicine Department. After that, we visited the Medical Training Support Center. All equipment there was up-to-date and neat. Actually I wanted to try them, but I was too shy to ask. Then, we went to the college library and museum. These two places were full of history and knowledge, and very beautiful and attractive. We finished the first-day schedule around 4PM.

After some free time, we were invited to welcome dinner with Prof. Kono and Mr. Ogawa. It was held at one of the beautiful Japanese restaurants near the resident. The dinner was the well-prepared Japanese dishes but I couldn’t remember the set name on the menu. It was a very long day and I got many impressive and unforgettable memories already.
**Thursday 9th February 2012**

Today, my schedule started at the Internal Medicine II department. In the morning, Dr. Yoda took us from Nakayama center to the endoscope center to observe esophagogastroduodenoscopy (EGD) by Dr. Sano, Dr. Hara and some other doctors. They explained to us what the patient’s conditions are like and let us practice the EGD with the specimen. Then, one of them taught us how to use indigo coloring for mild lesion, such as ulcer and polyp. I learnt that some gastrointestinal diseases are more common in Japanese people, but are rarely seen among Thais. For example, gall bladder polyp and NASH have a high prevalence in Japan. After finished our morning schedule, we had lunch with Dr. Yochiro and his friend. In the afternoon, we went to another room of the endoscope center. Dr. Akira Imoto taught us how to do and indication the endoscopic injection sclerotherapy (EIS) in patients with Esophageal Varices. I also learnt that patients with NASH, HBV hepatitis, HCV hepatitis, Cirrhosis, or Chronic liver disease have to be followed up by screening for Esophageal Varices. After that, we went on to observe the colonoscopy for patient with colorectal cancer and Endoscopic Ultrasound (EUS) for patient with pancreatic cyst, gallstone, and common bile duct stone. We finished today’s schedule at 4 PM.

**Friday 10th February 2012**

The Internal Medicine I department was on my today’s schedule. I met Dr. Shishikura in the morning at Nakayama center. She took
Auey and me to the clinic section to observe outpatient care by Prof. Hanafusa. Then, we observed an endocrinology ward round by Dr. Jungo Terasaki. They didn’t have to spend so much time at the patients’ beds because they had already checked all of the patient’s charts in advance. They explained the patient’s condition and how to use equipment at their best. I learnt that Continuous Glucose Monitoring System is used (CGM) to monitor the blood glucose of diabetic patients every 10 minutes for 4 days and Hertel eye is used to examine patients with exophthalmos from hyperthyroidism. After the morning round, we went to the canteen and had lunch. In the afternoon, Dr. Shishikura came to pick us up. We observed Dr. Tanimoto, Dr. Ibata, Dr. Bessho and Dr. Shishikura herself doing Ultrasonic test. After watching Needle Aspiration (FNA) of thyroid gland performed by Dr. Shishikura, we practiced the ultrasonic test on each other’s thyroid gland. Dr. Tanimoto and Dr. Ibata were also there and told us about the patient’s conditions in detail and answered our questions when we had any. We finished today’s schedule at 4 PM.

Monday 13th February 2012

It was a raining. In the morning, Dr. Akiko Soyama came to Nakayama Center and took me and Pol to the Coronary Angiography (CAG) center in the Internal Medicine Department. I observed the operation of Cardiac Catheterization of the patient with Unstable Angina. Dr. Soyama taught us the process and equipment for this operation. In the afternoon, we went there again and met Dr. Tatsuji Kono. There was a small discussion about
Heart’s anatomy, patients’ condition, prevalence of heart diseases and management. Then, Dr. Taichi Okabe taught us about Echocardiography. We had a discussion about some congenital heart diseases, which are very rare, such as Bicuspid Aortic Valves and Quadricuspid Aortic Valves.

In the evening, some OMC students took us to the Japanese Archery club. The weather was still bad, so we couldn’t actually try doing it outside. After that, they took us to a Nagoya style restaurant, which was located near Takatsukishi station. It was very enjoy and we had a wonderful time there.

**Tuesday 14th February 2012**

Obstetrics and Gynecology department was my schedule for today. Dr. Chika Hirota took me to observe the operation of Radical hysterectomy with bilateral salpingo-oophorectomy and pelvic lymph node dissection for the patient with the cervical cancer stage IIIb (bulky type). In the afternoon, she took me to observe the normal labor and delivery of dichorionic diamniotic twins (DDTwin) and she told me that if the twins were monochorionic-monoamniotic twins, they would have a high risk of twin-twin transfusion syndrome (TTTS) because of the additional potential umbilical cord
entanglement and compression. I had an opportunity to observe ultrasonology of pregnant patient and saw some examples of abnormal babies, such as Down’s syndrome (Trisomy 21), Ventricular Septal Defects (Absent one of short arms of Chromosome 15) and Cystic hygroma (Turner syndrome or 45XO). Every part of the baby, especially fetal heart, was checked in the process of the antenatal care. Dr. Hirota said that the normal range of Nuchal translucency is 1-3 millimeters. If the result is abnormal, counseling for checking baby’s chromosomes by amniotic fluid examination is needed because of high prevalence of chromosomal abnormalities (about 50%). After that, she took me to see her patient with ovarian cancer stage IIIb with ascites. It was all very impressive today. Thank you very much Dr. Hirota.

**Wednesday 15**th **February 2012**

We met Professor Ryuichi Saura this morning at JR Takatsuki station. He was a very nice person. We took the train to the Kobe University Hospital to visit the Rehabilitation Medicine Department. We arrived at JR Kobe station around 9 O’clock. After walking through one of the famous shrines in Kobe, we were taken to the outpatient care section and the Rehabilitation Training Center of Kobe University Hospital. Professor Saura told me that today’s patients were the patients with Xeroderma Pigmentosum, an autosomal recessive genetic disorder of DNA repair, which was roughly six times more common in Japanese people than in other ethnic groups. Xeroderma pigmentosum group A was the classical form of XP and the most common form among Japanese patients. I was extremely impressed
because he took care of us and the patients very very well. Also, he taught us about symptoms and choices of management. The managements are Surgery, Injection or Botox, but the important part of treatment was avoiding exposure to sunlight. After the outpatient care, we had lunch at the cafeteria. In the afternoon, we came back to Osaka Medical College. We went to the Rehabilitation Training Center and met Dr. Haruki Nakano. We had a small lecture about Swallowing Disorders (Dysphagia) there. Then, we had a ward round in many departments to see the patients with dysphagia. After that, we met Dr. Noriyo Takahashi and Dr. Rumi Sasayama at the Rehabilitation Training Center and had a little discussion about Rehabilitation Medicine. We finished today’s schedule at 4.30 PM.

**Thursday 16th February 2012**

Around 9.00 am, Auey and I met Dr. Kenta Fujiwara at Nakayama center. Dr. Fujiwara is a pediatric orthopedist. He was very funny and caring. Although today’s schedule was Orthopedics surgery, there was no operation today. So he took us to observe the patients’ examination and treatment at outpatient care section. There were many patients today, but he said that the three most common diseases among children are Developmental Dysplasia of Hip (DDH), Torticollis and Clubfoot. Before lunch, he explained about how to use ultrasound for detecting DDH among newborns. In the afternoon, we were at the outpatient care section again for observing outpatient care. Then, we had a chance to wear a cast the same as a patient with an arm fracture. I wore a hard cast on my left forearm, but Auey’s cast was a soft one on her right forearm. After the last patient
Friday 17th February 2012

Pol and I met two new friends, Miwa-san and Miyake-san, at Neurology department, after Dr. Bunji Kimura took us there from Nakayama center, we attended the morning round with Dr. Kimura and other doctors. There were many kinds of diseases in this morning round such as Infectious disease, Inflammation, Idiopathic, etc. Then, we moved to the cafeteria for lunch.

In the afternoon, we got three great opportunities. First, Dr. Kimura taught us step by step how to do Lumbar Puncture, which is a very important investigation for the patients with neurologic signs and symptoms, so we practiced Cerebrospinal Fluid Collection by Lumbar Puncture with some specimens at the Medical Training Center. Second, we had a chance to listen to the conference about “Correlation between Clinic and Hospital concerning the patients with Parkinson’s disease”. Finally, we listened to the presentation about results of a research called “Onset and spreading patterns of lower motor neuron involvements predict survival in
sporadic amyotrophic lateral sclerosis”. We finished today’s schedule at 4.30 PM.

After today’s schedule, OMC friends took us to Prof. Kono’s house. We had a very fun dinner there. Prof. Kono was very friendly and kind. He and all OMC friends took care of us so well. We had a wonderful Friday’s night. Thank you very much for everything.

Sunday 19th February 2012

Pol and I met our OMC friends around 2.00 PM at Dwell Takatsuki. We met other friends and two more friends, Risa-san and Naoko-san at Takatsukishi station. We took the local train from Takatsukishi station to Kawaramachi station. We went to the Enkiri shrine after walking through Gion which has many ancient and beautiful buildings both sides of the street. Our friends tried to teach us how to pray like Japanese people and how to send a wish to god. Next, we went to the Nishiki market and then had some delicious Japanese dishes. Then, we arrived at Yasaka shrine and made a wish there. After that, we went Kansai International Manga Museum with Cody-san and Risa-san while the others waited for us at Cafeteria. I really love Manga, so this place was very interesting and exciting for me. After we finished there, we came back to the cafeteria and had a chance to try an original Kyoto’s Matcha. That tea was very delicious but a bit bitter than I expected. Then, All of us went to have
a dinner at a small famous restaurant in Kyoto. I was really happy with all the dishes because they were very very delicious. After dinner, we came back to Takatsuki city and then had a rest. Today was a wonderful day because I got many impressive memories with my friends in Kyoto. Thank you very much for everything there.

Monday 20th February 2012

We met Matsumoto-san at Takatsukishi station this morning. We went to the Sojiji station by the local train to go to Hokusetsu General Hospital. We arrived there around 8.00 AM, and Murata-san took us to the hospital. Next, we participated in the morning conference there and introduced ourselves. We were honored to meet Dr. Masaya Kino, the president and the CEO of this hospital. He was friendly and talked about Hokusetsu General Hospital and other topics with us. After that, we met Dr. Matsuo, who was a second-year resident of the surgery department. He showed us around the hospital buildings and then we observed Cardiac Catheterization on a patient with Heart Failure. At 11.00 AM, we moved to the surgery department to observe an operation, Total Gastrectomy, for a patient with Stomach Cancer. After this operation, we had lunch with Dr. Matsuo and Dr. Miyu at the cafeteria of the hospital.

In the afternoon, we went to the surgery department again and observed an operation. Two operations that we observed are Laparoscopic Sigmoidectomy
with Frozen Section Technique for a patient with Sigmoid Cancer and Left Upper Lobe Removal for a patient with Congenital Blebs at pleura which caused Recurrent Pneumothorax. We finished today schedule at 3.30 PM.

Tuesday 21\textsuperscript{th} February 2012

My morning schedule for today was the Microbiology and Infectious Control Department. Professor Koichi Sano, Dr. Takashi Nakano, Dr. Hong Wu and Dr. Yoshihiko Fujioka came to Nakayama center at 9.30 AM. They greeted us and we talked about the department a little. Then they took us to the laboratory and explained how to use equipment and how to do a specimen for studying microorganisms, such as plotting microorganisms in square-shaped media, cutting in micromillimetres and staining in metallic ion. After some explanation about how to use the Electron Microscope, they let us try to find, focus and take a picture of the parts of microorganisms.

In the afternoon, we met Dr. Yuko Ito and Dr. Nabil Eid from the Anatomy and Cell Biology department. We went to the laboratory again to study the cells through the Electron Microscope. We managed to find and take a picture of the bacteria. Then, we went to the meeting room of the department and had a small party with some delicious short cake and tea. We talked about
Wednesday 22\textsuperscript{th} February 2012

Today my schedule was in Pediatrics. I met Dr. Yukako Kono at Nakayama center and then met Dr. Nomura at the Pediatrics ward later. She took me to the ward and told me that I could only observe morning and afternoon round for patients with Neurologic diseases. For example, Menkes disease and Cerebral Palsy. Most of patients with these diseases can’t do anything by themselves and need a care giver beside them when the diseases progress to the severe stage. After the morning round, we had lunch together at the cafeteria. Then, we went to the ward again in the afternoon. I followed the afternoon round. They tried to explain about the diseases in English really hard, so I was very touched. Before completing today’s schedule, I had a chance to observe the Single-fiber electromyography (SFEMG) for a girl with Myasthenia Gravis. When she came to the hospital for the first time, she had ptosis in both eyes. Her muscles got progressively weaker during the periods of activity and improved after the periods of rests. She got an acetylcholinesterase inhibitor as treatment. She came to the hospital again because her symptoms are worse than before. So, she had to do SFEMG
to see the progression of her diseases. I finished today’s schedule after this.

Thursday 23rd February 2012

We met Dr. Akira Yamada in the morning at Nakayama center. We went to the Surgery section to observe an operation by Dr. Yamada. Today’s operation was Autologous Reconstruction Surgery of the external ear for a 8-year-old girl with microtia. Surgeons had to do 3 main elements in common: (1) construction and placement of a cartilage framework; (2) lobule rotation, conchal excavation, and tragus formation; and (3) elevation of the pinna. They got many pieces of cartilages from patient’s 6th-9th costal cartilage and then did a framework construction which was the most difficult and the longest step of the operation. While Dr. Yamada did a framework construction into type-A right ear from patient’s 6th-9th costal cartilage, other surgeons cleaned and opened the small right ear area preparing for remodeling with the cartilage framework. Dr. Yamada neatly and calmly made a beautiful cartilage framework for 2 hours, It was very impressive. I thought that this department was very interesting but I was not patient enough to do any neat work which needed a long time to finish it, so I was really excited when the framework was completed. Dr. Yamada told us that the real most difficult part of this operation was the reconstruction of the ear.
Unfortunately, this operation took very long until the end of my schedule, so I couldn’t see the patient’s ear when the operation finished.

Friday 24th February 2012

Today is the last day of my medical exchange program in Osaka Medical College. My schedule was in Radiology Department. We went to Professor Narumi’s office and we had a little discussion there. He introduced us to Dr. Yuki Inada. She took us to observe a lot of equipment, such as CT and MRI. She explained how the equipment worked and things that can’t be brought inside the rooms such as clips and watches. Next, she took us to observe radionuclear equipment for diagnosis, namely the Scintigram machine. We met Dr. Yuchi and another doctor there. They taught us how to make radioactive substance by Meltgen and how to protect it from the environment by the lead protector. Then, they taught us how to get the right diagnosis form SPECT and PET scan.

In the afternoon, we met Dr. Masatsugu Takahashi and Prof. Taisuke Inomata at the department. We went there to join an afternoon round and then observed radiation therapy for Prostate Cancer by Linear Accelerator (LINAC) with Multi Leaves Collimator (MLC). Then, we got a great opportunity to observe Prostate HDR by nucleoton. They used a needle to transfer Iridium to the cancer area. A concentration of Iridium depends on the area of cancer, so they had to draw a plan for each needle.
After that, we had a conference about radiology journal for an hour. We finished today schedule at 5 PM.

After that, we had a farewell dinner with Professor Kono, Mr. Ogawa and our OMC friends at an Italian Restaurant. Every dish was really delicious and we enjoyed many funny talks. I had a wonderful time there. This exchange program gave me a lot of unforgettable and impressive memories.

Thank you very much for everything there,

Thank you Osaka Medical College,

Thank you Professor Kono, Ms. Matsumoto, and our OMC friends,

And I thank my medical school for giving me this great chance.