

Educational Travel Grant from European Society of Vascular Surgery

Department of Cardiovascular Surgery of the Bern University Hospital, Switzerland.

I am a 5th year vascular surgeon trainee from the University Hospital of Granada (in the Vascular Surgery Department), in Spain under the coordination of Dr. Salmerón Febres, chief of department.

My main reason for applying to this grant was the opportunity to see complex aortic and aortic arch surgery, either open and endovascular procedures.

The reason to choose Switzerland, and specially Bern is its team, how they work, the big variety of pathology and different techniques to afford them in the same team and the quality of their medicine.

I was attending every day to mostly open surgery of aortic arch, thoracic and abdominal aorta, carotid surgery and peripheral arterial surgery from occlusive to aneurysmal diseases.

I've learnt many things,

From basic things like: swiss punctuality, OR organization, diagnostic algorithm, indications, selection of patients for the endovascular procedures, surgery's planification, surgical protocols for open and endovascular procedures.

To more specific techniques like: intraoperative ultrasound, measurement of blood flow pressure to control bypass patency, angiography, valvulotomy guided by angiography.

Some tricks: Larchard patch, the use of occlusion balloon, the use of bipolar, Donati's stitch, Pontresina's stitch, how to use bands of bovine pericard patch to reinforce the anastomosis and also to protect the grafts from infections and contact with other structures like ureter. How to do carotid endarterectomy with local anesthesia and without shunt. How to deal with complications of percutaneous close device. Realize the benefits and complications of many different surgeries.

And some new surgeries for me like: toraco-abdominal bypass, frozen elephant trunk, Lumbotomy, BREVAR.

And specially to feel more confident in open abdominal aortic repair as I was attending almost one per week.

I was also on call every day so they were calling me for interesting emergent surgeries.

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I expected this experience to be very useful for my career and my knowledge in vascular surgery but it has outreached my expectations by far. I've learnt a lot in every field of life and now I know how things are well done and how an impeccable team works.

They were teaching me all they know, trying to make me feel part of everything, planning me in the most amazing surgeries every day, motivating me to study, explaining me any doubt, giving me access to every source of knowledge they have.

Now, I'm a new vascular surgeon and a new person, more critical with the indications, knowing that there are many different but also correct ways of treating a disease, and there is just one that is the best in each case and it depends on the patient. Now I know how to work in a team made of friends, how to be supported by my colleagues. Now I'm not afraid anymore of open surgery and I could be able to offer my patients the best.

I really want to thank the ESVS to give me this opportunity, without your help it wouldn't be possible.

And I really want to thank the vascular surgery team, specially Prof. Schmidly, Dr. Makaloski, PD Dr. Widmer, Dr. Bühlman, Dr. Geppert, Dr. Pasch, Dr. Wyss, Dr. Becker, Dr. Kissling and Dr. Bachofen and their special assistant (Silvan and Romina) for giving me a different point of view from the vascular surgery and an unforgettable experience for the rest of my life.

I hope this would be the beginning of a new great relationship between Switzerland and Spain.

Sincerely, thank you.