

June 2016

It was an honor to be included as a visiting fellow to Unfallkrankenhaus Wien Lorenz Böhler. I learned a lot from the interesting operations that are performed at this institution, including complex revision cases frequently referred from other hospitals, as well as reconstruction and trauma surgeries.



1 Unfallkrankenhaus Wien Lorenz Böhler

I enjoyed the opportunity to both observe and to assist in notable procedures. Fascinating procedures included open fixation of a complicated thumb proximal phalanx fracture, and a Sauvé-Kapandji operation to salvage a significant past wrist injury with Dr. Leixnering. Meanwhile, I was excited to learn about shock wave therapy and its role in assisting with healing in scaphoid nonunions with Dr. Beer. The knowledge of different techniques that I have gained from this visit was extremely valuable, and it has been wonderful to learn about the excellent protocol in place for flexor tendon repairs and rehabilitation that is routine at this center, among many other surgeries at this busy trauma hospital. "After treatment" (nach der Behandlung) postoperative clinics run daily, but Dr. Leixnering always made time to discuss interesting cases. My fellowship experience was perfectly organized in terms of both my stay (in a convenient flat attached to the hospital) and in optimizing my learning opportunities within the hospital schedule at Unfallkrankenhaus Wien Lorenz Böhler by Dr. Keuchel.

Furthermore, I was impressed at the well-organized electronic medical record keeping system, through which surgeons routinely take high-quality preoperative and intraoperative photos of every single case performed. Not only is this a fantastic ongoing teaching aid for medical learners and fellows such as

myself, but this is also extremely valuable for the preparation of journal publications, and for the daily morning/afternoon meetings during which cases are reviewed with all hospital staff to ensure continued quality care.



2 Salzammergut-Klinikum Bad Ischl



3 Salzammergut-Klinikum Bad Ischl

In addition, I greatly appreciated spending time learning about and helping with congenital hand surgery with Dr. Piza and Dr. Mailänder and Dr. Ramach in Upper Austria at Salzammergut-Klinikum Bad Ischl, which was also an amazing experience. Cases included revisions of Apert hand syndactyly releases, reconstructions for bilateral congenital wrist contractures, and removal of significant pediatric hand tumours. I also enjoyed spending time in clinic with them, wherein together, they see a wide variety of congenital upper extremity conditions, following their patients regularly until the completion of growth. Many grateful patients often travel from as far as neighbouring countries to receive care in Austria. Dr. Piza and Dr. Mailänder run HandClub, a fun opportunity for children and their families to meet once a year to go hiking on a different mountain in Austria. The HandClub is a valuable chance for them to meet and to grow personal connections with other patients. This is a wonderful idea, and families are clearly very appreciative. In Bad Ischl, Dr. Mailänder personally ensured that my stay was both fun and comfortable, taking care to help me with arrangements of my transportation and accommodations to provide an optimal experience for my visit. Socially, I will never forget the joy of touring the town and sharing company of these legendary surgeons over delicious meals.

The genuine and kind hospitality of many of the doctors in Austria have made my time here truly unforgettable. I am excited for future international hand meetings, which will be further reasons for me to continue to reconnect with talented surgical colleagues and new friends that I have made in Austria.

Finally, in the beautiful city of Vienna, I was also able to go sightseeing, making time to visit the numerous historical, cultural and musical attractions of this world-class destination. Similarly, beyond Vienna, I was able to travel not only to the hospital in Bad Ischl for further congenital hand surgery

experiences, but also to visit the picturesque historic salt mining town of Hallstatt and the lovely city of Salzburg. I highly recommend this scholarship program to others, and I truly appreciate the International Bone Research Association in supporting this unique learning opportunity. I am thankful for the encouragement and support of my own home hand fellowship program at The CORE Institute in Phoenix, Arizona under the direction of Dr. Edwards, for making this visit possible. Finally, I am grateful to Dr. Leixnering as the fellowship director at Unfallkrankenhaus Wien Lorenz Böhler for the warm welcome and the excellent educational experience, which I will both cherish and carry forward with me into my future surgical career. Danke!

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