

ABS Educational Fellowship 2018 Report

I am extremely grateful to the Association for awarding me the 2018 Educational Fellowship enabling me to visit the Plastic Surgery Unit in UZ Brussels, Belgium.

My primary aim was to learn more about reconstructive and aesthetic breast surgery practice in a leading International Unit and I was privileged to join the world-renowned plastic surgeon, Professor Moustapha Hamdi, and his team. In addition I attended the CATBBAS meeting organised by the UZ Brussels team.

As well as attending routine breast reconstruction operating sessions, I spent some of my time in theatres, observing several plastic surgery teams operating simultaneously in different sessions, orchestrated by Professor Hamdi. This was an impressive experience to how the team works efficiently whilst providing training at different levels at each stage of the procedures.

The majority of reconstructions performed were autologous in nature and implant based reconstructions were much less commonly used. The team provided me with detailed explanations of the operations and valuable tips on various technique modifications.

The use of high definition lipomodelling as an aesthetic adjunct including lipomodelling to enhance the aesthetics of mammoplasties was an interesting experience. I was fortunate to watch a demonstration of the technique in several patients.

The highlight of my visit was attending the CATBBAS meeting. This was a very exciting event focusing on controversies, art and new technology in breast surgery. CATBBAS was unique in involving the audience along with world leading plastic surgeons in several brainstorming sessions and debates. It also was an opportunity to witness some early innovative ideas and techniques including the "Scarless" mammoplasty. This and other evolving concepts shared in CATBBAS could significantly impact our future practice.

Overall, I learned a few new surgical tips, witnessed an inspirational model of seamless theatre, and was made to feel extremely welcome by the UZ Brussels family. I would certainly recommend this fellowship to my colleagues. In addition to the inspiring clinical and educational experience, I really enjoyed the interaction with the fantastic team at UZ Brussels.

I would like to thank Professor Hamdi and his team, as well as the Association of Breast Surgery for giving me the privilege of this great experience.

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