



# EFORT FOUNDATION

## Visiting Fellowship Report

<b>Name:</b>	Stefan Gaukel
<b>E-mail address:</b>	sgaukel@gmail.com
<b>Country of residence:</b>	Switzerland
<b>Country of visiting fellowship:</b>	South Africa
<b>Host centre:</b>	Mediclinic Stellenbosch
<b>Name of the host:</b>	Dr. Jan D Joubert
<b>Dates of visiting fellowship:</b>	03.09. – 29.10.2022

### Expenses (estimated)

Travel: EUR 1000 (Flight), 1000 (rental car)  
 Accommodation: EUR 2400 (via Airbnb)  
 Other expenses: EUR 1500 (food / local trips)

Topic	Please tick one of the boxes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 (poor) to 5 (very good)					Your comments, thoughts, recommendations
	1	2	3	4	5	
<b>Education</b>						
Could you improve your knowledge and gain new experiences?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Host Department</b>						
How was your communication with your host centre (regarding accommodation, programme, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We did not get any answer by the desired host for 2 years (due to COVID), tried to apply to other hosts, got in contact with Medacta... until at the beginning of 2022 Dr. Joubert suddenly answered. Programme and experience after arriving was at least 5 points!
Did they offer you a social programme?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	As if I was a family member!



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I applied for the EFORT visiting hip and knee arthroplasty fellowship already in 2019, just before finishing my training in orthopedics. My goal was to improve my experience in arthroplasty of the lower limb, seeing how other surgeons in the lower limb recon specialty work and how they approach the pathologies presented. Furthermore I wanted to gain insights in a different health care system.

Because I was very impressed by South Africa, the people living there and the landscape during my first visit there in 2018, I chose Dr. Jan Joubert from the list of possible hosts provided by Medacta, who would act as a sponsor for the fellowship.

In March 2020 I received the confirmation being chosen to visit Dr. Joubert. I was very happy and excited – it was the time of first reports coming up of a new virus seen in China, spreading all over the world. The COVID pandemic just began and the planning of the fellowship was postponed. Because of the pandemic we failed to organize the fellowship for the next 2 years. In the meantime I finished my orthopedic training and became a consultant.

Luckily after 2 years Dr. Joubert answered and accepted me as his first fellow for such a long period of time. Within the shortest possible time we managed to organize a two month stay with him in Stellenbosch, which is a lovely place next to Cape Town. The anticipation was back!

It was only 6 month later that my wife and 2 years old daughter joined me on the flight down to South Africa. They accompanied me for 4 weeks which gave us a lot of time to explore the area and doing all the trips I got recommended during my stay with Dr. Joubert. Furthermore it reduced the time being separated from my family which made the whole trip much easier for all of us.

Dr. Joubert runs his practise at the Mediclinic in Stellenbosch, which is a purely orthopedic private hospital. Interestingly the hospital is run by the same company as the Hirslanden Group in Switzerland as well as some other private hospitals in Dubai, Saudi-Arabia and the UK. All doctors in this clinic are running their own practise and doing the operations and ward round in the rooms provided by the hospital, i.e. the hospital belongs to the private sector in the South African health care system.

Dr. Joubert also has consultation hours at the Mediclinic Panorama located in Cape Town where we stayed every Thursday.

He was the first orthopedic surgeon doing the AMIS approach for total hip replacement in South Africa and until now he is one of the leading and most experienced South African surgeons regarding this technique. Around 6 month before my arrival he unfortunately skipped doing knee replacements and focussed totally on doing hip arthroplasty with the use of a traction table. That's the reason why during my stay with him I mostly saw patients with hip related issues and attended hip surgery.



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It was a very warm welcome when I arrive at the first morning. I really got used to the South African way of living and being spontaneous. Dr. Joubert introduced me to his secretaries and his wife, who runs the practise in the back-office as well as all the important people in the hospital. There was only a very small amount of paperwork to be done (copy of medical license and ID and one signature), something that I experienced as well with other private hospitals I visited later on.

Our weekly routine consisted of consultation hours on Monday morning, Thursday (at Mediclinic Panorama) and Friday morning. We had a theatre list on Monday afternoon, a whole day list at Tuesday and Wednesday and, if needed, on Friday afternoon (some revisions and fracture cases). The days started at 8 am or later (depending on consultations) and lasted until 4 to 5 pm at most. Most of the time we finished earlier than that and had enough leisure.

During the consultations I followed the conversation between the patient and Dr. Joubert, which was sometime challenging when the spoken language was Afrikaans (one of the different official languages spoken in South Africa). In time I got more and more used to this language so that I was able to follow these conversations. I also attended him doing his examinations and discussing treatment options. Between the patients there was enough time to discuss the cases and the different approaches and thoughts regarding the treatments. We were able to exchange ideas on many hip related topics and Dr. Joubert was interested in how we handle some of the presented issues in Switzerland. I was impressed of patients coming from far away (New Zealand, US) to see Dr. Joubert and being treated by him.

In theatre I was allowed to scrub in right from the beginning; as Dr. Joubert has his permanent assistant Dr. van Zyl most of the time I observed the operations (which is exactly what the fellowship aimed at). During the revisions I assisted actively as the second assistant at the table. We mostly did primary hip replacements (about 50 patients), but there were also some revision cases as well as fractures. The latter were treated either with a femoral nail system or with total hip replacement.

I really appreciate these experiences at theatre and being allowed to scrub in to see Dr. Joubert's tips and tricks as well as listening to his expressed thoughts on the problems faced during the operation. On the other side it was very interesting to see the different methods in a South African theatre compared to those in Switzerland or Germany.

I also joined Dr. Joubert on an irregular basis on ward rounds which were (typically for orthopedic surgeons) quite quick ones. The patient's care was done by the anesthetists and all papers for the discharge were already printed as forms to check what's needed.

Dr. Joubert was very keen on improving my experience during my stay with him. He organized visits with other orthopedic surgeons as well as took me to the Congress of the South African Orthopedic Association.



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I spend three days with Dr. Hennie Bosch at the Mediclinic Durbanville and the Advanced Durbanville Surgical Centre to see another way to do the anterior approach for hip replacements as well as hip arthroscopies. I also spend some days with Dr. Spike Erasmus, a very experience and famous South African knee surgeon, introducing me to his technique of soft tissue balancing knee replacement and surgery for improving the patella tracking.

In the second half of my fellowship I attended Dr. Louis van den Berg at the Busamed Paardevlei Private Hospital in Somerset West to get in touch with the robotic assisted primary knee replacements which was very informative and included a reflection on different alignment strategies.

As an additional experience I was allowed to visit the Groote Schuur Hospital and meet Dr. Marc Nortje to see their approach in an public hospital setting.

During the last week of my fellowship we focused on my exposure to knee surgery with a visit to Dr. Leith Steward, who uses the same implants as I was trained on during my orthopedic training. During that day I was able to see the posterior approach for hip replacement using the Exeter Stem as well as the conventional knee replacement with the medial pivoting Medacta GMK Sphere. On the day of my return flight I visited Dr. Ed Dillon at Mediclinic Stellenbosch to see some last knee scopes.

Finally Dr. Joubert organized an attendance at the Smith&Nephew Hip Course at Tygerberg Hospital Cape Town where I was trained in another possible way to do the anterior approach for hip replacement using the figure of 4 instead of using the traction table. These 4 days were worth every second, included a cadaver workshop, a VR training and broadened my horizons regarding the anterior approach with a very well organized course.

Beneath all these clinical insights there was enough time to enjoy South Africa and the countless things to do around Cape Town, be it climbing on top of Table Mountain, visiting different beaches, spending a weekend at a private Game Reserve, visiting the Rugby Sevens World Cup and enjoying a lot of very good wines on various vineyards around Stellenbosch. Dr. Joubert, his wife and all other local people I met, made always any effort to recommend trips and locations to visit. The Sales Representatives from Smith&Nephew even took me with them for a camping over the last weekend in the mountains.

In addition to working in the hospital, it was not uncommon for Dr. Joubert and his wife to share a glass of wine with me, have lunch or dinner in town, or even be invited to their private garden party (on Garden's Day) and birthday party. They really managed to give me the feeling of being a part of their everyday life. Every person I have worked with during these past weeks has been very attentive with me, they have tried to make me feel at home and to teach me as much as possible and to share their experience.

At the end of these two months, I cannot be more grateful for this experience. I am extremely thankful to EFORT and Medacta allowing me to benefit from this fellowship and of Dr. Joubert who made the eight weeks spend with him a unforgettable time. I will return to Switzerland with a broadened perspective, new



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tips and tricks for my surgical performance and new insights in different techniques for hip and knee replacements. I can and will wholeheartedly recommend the fellowship to every young orthopedic surgeon.

I made friends and will keep in touch with so many amazing peoples I got to know – I hope we will meet again in the future, perhaps in Switzerland on their way to go skiing or to an European congress.

**Baie Dankie Dokter Joubert!**