



EFORT FOUNDATION

Visiting Fellowship Report

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Country of residence:	MÉXICO
Country of visiting fellowship:	SWITZERLAND
Host centre:	HÔPITAL DE LA TOUR, GENEVA
Name of the host:	DR. PHILIPPE ALVES
Dates of visiting fellowship:	1 st June 2024 – 28 February 2025

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	
Education						
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"/>	I experienced first-hand new technologies and surgical techniques
Host Department						
How was your communication with your host centre (regarding accommodation, programme, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The communication with my host centre was excellent. Dr Alves himself maintained always a positive and consistent contact with me.
Did they offer you a social programme?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not directly host centre, but Dr Alves and his team always included me in their social programme

Report to EFORT:

I am writing this report to provide a comprehensive description on my experience as a knee fellowship trainee at Hôpital de la Tour in Geneva, Switzerland, under the distinguished supervision of Dr. Philippe Alves and Dr. Julien Billieres. This fellowship has been an extraordinary journey of professional growth and personal development, and I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to participate in this program.

The journey from Mexico to Geneva involved significant financial considerations. International airfare costs, with additional expenses for visa processing and travel insurance had to be made. Upon arrival in Geneva, I faced the challenge of securing accommodation in one of the



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world's most expensive cities. Rent for a modest apartment and 500 CHF monthly for food expenses were provided directly by my host centre. These expenses, while substantial, were an investment in my professional future and were offset by the invaluable experience gained, EFFORT Foundation-Medacta generous grant helped me cope with these expenses and live comfortably during my stay.

My clinical involvement at Hôpital de la Tour was extensive and varied. Monday and Tuesday I assisted in an average of 3-4 knee arthroplasty and 4-5 knee arthroscopy procedures daily, ranging from primary to complex cases, for a total of 416 surgeries for the entire fellowship. The rest of the week I attended the outpatient clinic, where I observed and later participated in patient consultations, preoperative evaluations, and postoperative follow-ups. Both clinicians dedicated time to preoperative planning sessions, where we meticulously reviewed upcoming cases, discussed surgical approaches, and prepared patient-specific plans. I was actively involved in the entire patient care continuum, from initial consultation to postoperative rehabilitation. This comprehensive exposure allowed me to develop a holistic understanding of knee arthroplasty management.

The fellowship provided a rich environment for scientific engagement, given the high volume practice, and state of the art surgical techniques and technology involved in our everyday routine. I could critically analyze recent publications in knee surgery and related fields with my colleagues, enhancing our ability to interpret and apply current research. I also participated in ongoing research projects, including a prospective study on the outcomes of robotic-assisted knee arthroplasty and a retrospective analysis of revision rates in arthroscopy patients. Under the guidance of Dr. Alves, I co-authored two papers currently under review in peer-reviewed journals

I attended the Swiss Orthopaedics Annual Meeting, three different learning centers to keep updated in the latest knee surgical advances, and a visit to Medacta center in Lugano, where I experienced first-hand their technology and products.

It substantially enhanced my surgical proficiency across multiple domains. In the realm of knee arthroplasty, I mastered gap balancing techniques for optimal soft tissue management and refined my skills in ligament balancing. I acquired advanced techniques for managing bone defects, including the utilization of augments and cones. Furthermore, I gained proficiency in computer-navigated and robotic-assisted knee arthroplasty, as well as developed skills in revision procedures, including the management of periprosthetic joint infections. In the field of advanced arthroscopy, I perfected techniques for meniscal repair and mastered complex ligament reconstruction techniques, including those for multi-ligament injuries. Additionally, I developed skills in the arthroscopic management of arthritic knees, encompassing joint preservation techniques. This comprehensive training has significantly broadened my surgical capabilities and expertise.

Also, it significantly enhanced my theoretical knowledge and practical skills in several key areas. It has deepened my understanding of advanced biomechanics of both native and prosthetic knees, as well as implant design principles and their impact on functional outcomes. I have gained valuable insights into cutting-edge materials science in arthroplasty and developed a comprehensive approach to diagnosing and managing periprosthetic joint infections. Furthermore, the fellowship has exposed me to emerging technologies in knee arthroplasty, including patient-specific instrumentation and 3D-printed custom implants. As a result of this experience, I am enthusiastic about implementing several advanced techniques and protocols in my practice. These include structured preoperative optimization programs to



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improve surgical outcomes, advanced pain management protocols incorporating multimodal analgesia and regional anesthesia techniques, and accelerated rehabilitation programs based on the latest evidence. Additionally, I plan to implement a comprehensive care pathway for arthroplasty patients and establish a systematic approach to revision arthroplasty, including a dedicated infection management protocol. These enhancements to my practice will undoubtedly contribute to improved patient care and outcomes.

Building upon the invaluable experience gained during this fellowship, I have formulated ambitious plans for my future professional career. My primary objective is to establish a center of excellence for knee arthroplasty and sports medicine at my home institution in Mexico, aiming to elevate the standard of care in these specialized fields. Recognizing the importance of education in shaping the future of orthopedic surgery, I plan to develop a comprehensive fellowship program dedicated to training the next generation of knee surgeons in Mexico. Furthermore, I am committed to advocating for the adoption of advanced technologies in arthroplasty within the Mexican healthcare system, with the goal of enhancing patient outcomes and operational efficiency. To ensure that I remain at the forefront of developments in the field, I will continue my active involvement in international orthopedic societies, participating in conferences, workshops, and collaborative research initiatives. These endeavors collectively aim to elevate the standard of orthopedic care in Mexico and contribute to the global advancement of the specialty.

In conclusion, this fellowship at Hôpital de la Tour, with Dr Alves and Dr Billieres, has been an unparalleled experience that has significantly shaped my career trajectory. The skills, knowledge, and professional relationships developed during this time will undoubtedly have a lasting impact on my practice and, by extension, on patient care in my home country. I am profoundly grateful for this opportunity and I am committed to leveraging this experience to advance the field of knee arthroplasty and improve patient outcomes globally.



Sincerely

Dr Ramon Gonzalez Pola

Permission for publication

I agree that my report may be published on the EFORT and EFORT Foundation website and used for promotional purposes on EFORT's social media channels.