



EFORT FOUNDATION

Visiting Fellowship Report

Name:	Tadashi Iwai
E-mail address:	qq329xpd@opal.ocn.ne.jp
Country of residence:	Japan
Country of visiting fellowship:	Switzerland
Host centre:	Balgrist University Hospital
Name of the host:	Prof. Dr Sandro Fucentese
Dates of visiting fellowship:	01.11.2023-31.07.2024

It is recommended that the report is 3-4 pages including the cover page.

The following paragraphs should be addressed:

1. Description of clinical activities during the fellowship
2. Description of scientific activities during the fellowship
3. Description of social aspects of the fellowship
4. Technical skills that I learnt during the fellowship
5. Theoretical knowledge that I learnt during the fellowship
6. New knowledge and skills that I can implement in my own practice
7. Overall reflective statement over how the fellowship contributed to my professional development
8. What are you plans for the future?

Expenses:

Travel: 1000EUR
 Accommodation: 18000EUR
 Other expenses: A lot of EURS

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"/>	
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"/>	
Did they offer you a social programme?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	



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Report to EFORT:

My name is Tadashi Iwai, an orthopaedic specialist from Osaka, Japan.

I participated in the EFORT Foundation Visiting Fellowship supported by Medacta, at Balgrist University Hospital in Zurich from November 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024.

Although I received a confirmation letter from the EFORT Foundation in February 2020, this fellowship was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. When the situation improved in February 2022, I reached out to the EFORT Foundation again to pursue this opportunity to expand my knowledge in orthopaedic surgery.

First, I would like to express my gratitude to Sabrina Marchal (Coordinator Educational Programs), Prof. Dr. Sandro Fucentese (Balgrist University Hospital), and Prof. Dr. Karl-Göran Thorngren (EFORT Foundation Chairman).

Before my fellowship began, obtaining a residence permit from Kanton Zürich was challenging, primarily because all documents had to be submitted in German, a language I do not speak. This was a significant hurdle for me.

A fellow's experience can greatly depend on their communication skills and the host centre's environment. Despite initial language barriers, the doctors at Balgrist were extremely polite and supportive. They helped clarify any uncertainties, enabling me to participate in numerous surgeries and conduct research. Additionally, I was invited to dinners with Balgrist doctors and other foreign fellows, making my fellowship experience truly enriching.

The daily schedule (Monday to Friday) typically began with a morning conference from 7 am to 8 am, covering preoperative surgical plans and postoperative radiography. Occasionally, there were congress pre-presentations, lectures by professors, and journal club sessions. After the conference, I would either observe various surgeries in the operating room or learn diagnostic methods in the outpatient clinic until about 5 pm. Despite my limited German language skills, I managed to communicate effectively in English without disrupting the doctors' work.

During the fellowship, I primarily worked with the knee team (November 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024) and the hip team (April 1, 2024, to July 31, 2024), and conducted tumour research for nine months.

In the knee team, under Prof. Dr. Sandro Fucentese's guidance, I learned surgical plans and techniques, including the use of computational 3D models and devices supported by Medacta Corporation. This technology facilitated complex surgeries like osteotomy and total knee arthroplasty (TKA). I also gained experience in revision TKA, tumour prostheses, ORIF for postoperative fractures, ACL reconstruction, meniscus repair, and cartilage transplantation.

In the hip team, under Prof. Dr. Patrick Zingg's guidance, I learned surgical techniques such as the anterior approach (Smith–Petersen) for total hip arthroplasty (THA) using the AMIS device from Medacta Corporation. I also learned revision THA, ORIF for postoperative fractures, acetabular fractures, periacetabular osteotomy, and hip arthroscopy.



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For tumour research, under Dr. Daniel Müller's guidance, I conducted research and wrote two original articles, despite the initial difficulty in obtaining the necessary permits from Kanton Zürich.

Overall, the differences between the daily schedules and hospital facilities in Japan and Switzerland were minimal. The most negative aspect of my daily life in Zurich was the high cost of living. Goods and services were approximately three times more expensive than in Japan, leading to substantial expenses. To be honest, substantial self-funding, along with the grant from the EFORT foundation was essential for supporting this fellowship. On the positive side, Swiss doctors generally enjoy high salaries, and can take long vacations (2-4 weeks), which was a notable benefit.

The most positive aspect of my daily life in Zurich was the calm, peaceful, and beautiful environment with low population density. There were minimal traffic jams, no loud noises, and little interpersonal conflict, allowing me to relax and recharge. I relocated to Zurich with my wife and son, and we enjoyed traveling, including a memorable trip to Zermatt to see the Matterhorn and short trips to other European countries.

I will return to Japan to contribute to my university through surgery and research. Thank you for this invaluable experience in Zurich.



Photo with knee team in the restaurant



Photo with Prof. Dr Sandro Fucentese



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Photo with knee team and researchers in the Balgrist campus



Photo with hip team



Photo with tumour team