

New links and insights from the CUA-EAU Exchange



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services at the Victoria General Hospital and the New Halifax Infirmary. Additionally, there are outpatient clinics with the whole service spectrum needed for diagnostic workup, non-surgical treatment and follow-up of patients with urological complaints.

Our two-day programme has shown that surgical oncology is an essential part of the services provided by the department. We have seen during the visit radical prostatectomies that use various technologies. One elegantly performed intervention was by Prof. Bell who convincingly showed that open radical prostatectomy remains a treatment option for localised carcinoma of the prostate despite the entry of new technologies.

We also observed a highly sophisticated laparoscopic technique used for a nephron-sparing management of a centrally located small renal tumour. The postoperative analgesic management was also interesting, using an epidural-like catheter introduced above the 11th rib of the flank incision.

It became evident to us that functional urology is a central focus of the clinical and research activities of the department which offers full spectrum rehabilitation programme. Research projects and clinical studies of the Functional Urology Research Group presented by Prof. Gajewski gave insight into a structure which allows translational research with high efficacy. Our meeting with his group took place at the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron, which not only has an exceptional ambience but is also distinguished by its history (Photo 1).



Photo 1: Meeting with the faculty members of the Department of Urology, The Dalhousie University at the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron (from left: Dr. Dawn MacLellan, Dr. Roman Sosnowski, Dr. Peter Anderson, Dr. David Bell, Dr. Jerzy Gajewski, Prof. Rolf Ackermann, Dr. Peter Nyirády, Dr. Erdem Canda, Dr. Greg Baily, Dr. Sakher Tahaineh).

Research in paediatric urology

Our visit to the paediatric urology division acquainted us with the highly sophisticated research project directed by Dr. MacLellan (Photo 2). This project examines the effects of stretch on the urothelium in vitro at the protein level, applying proteomic tools and looking at the impact by studying metabolomics. Using a small animal model with partial obstruction of the kidney and complete urinary obstruction, the project was expanded to an in vivo situation. Studies in paediatric cases are not only conceivable but already under consideration. We were deeply impressed by Dr. MacLellan's knowledge and involvement in this basic research.



Photo 2: Visiting the Division of Pediatric Urology, The Dalhousie University, Halifax guided by Dr. Dawn MacLellan (from left: Dr. Dawn MacLellan, Dr. Roman Sosnowski, Prof. Rolf Ackermann).



Photo 3: Prof. Gajewski, The Dalhousie University Campus, Halifax (from left: Dr. Erdem Canda, Dr. Roman Sosnowski, Dr. Jerzy Gajewski and Dr. Peter Nyirády).

To learn about the department's way of closely following the development of the manual surgical skills of residents and fellows, as structured and organised by Dr. Greg Baily was another highlight of our visit. We were invited to actively participate in the annual testing of the surgical skills of the residents and fellows (Photo 4). Each resident had to demonstrate practical skills by conducting five different surgical manoeuvres such as closure of a bowel injury using a fresh bowel segment, re-anastomosis of a transected ureter or closure of a vascular injury under persisting outflow etc. Each step had to be completed within eight minutes under supervision of staff members. It was not only a challenge to the residents and fellows but also for us.

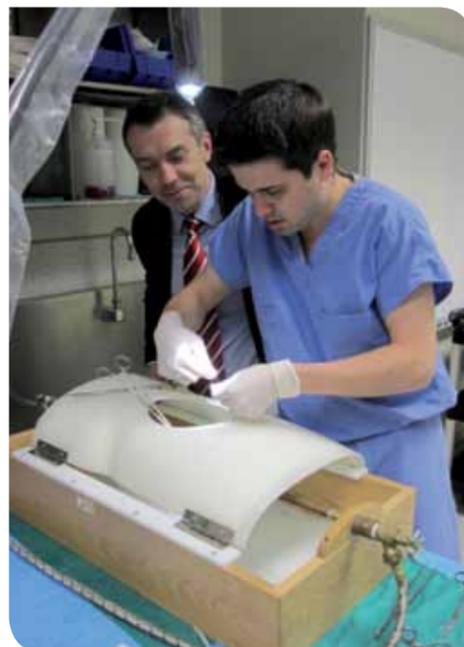


Photo 4: Annual testing of residents' surgical skills, Department of Urology, The Dalhousie University, Halifax. A resident attempts to close a vascular injury under persisting outflow on a model in the lab.

"We noted that a lot of emphasis is given to the collaboration between professional scientists and clinicians, allowing efficient teamwork"



Photo 5: City tour in Montreal with Prof. Luc Valiquette and colleagues from the Department of Urology, The University of Montreal (from left: Dr. Peter Nyirády, Dr. Roman Sosnowski, Dr. Diego Barrieras, Dr. Jean-Paul Perreault, Dr. Luc Valiquette and Prof. Rolf Ackermann).

During one of the department's research meetings, we had the chance to talk about our institutions respective achievements, our countries and the EAU as one of the biggest urological associations. Following academic tradition, a faculty dinner was arranged for us. And despite our tight schedule we have seen historical landmarks such as the Old Fisherman's Village in Lunenburg. In other words, our academic excursion could not start any better. We are more than thankful to our hosts for providing us with an exceptional tour and a memorable welcome.

New impressions in Montreal

Leaving Halifax for Montreal meant that we did not only say goodbye to wonderful hosts and excellent institutions but we have also transitioned from an English-speaking region into another culture and environment- the Franco-Canadian life style. A group of young ladies welcomed us at our hotel in Montreal, and who, as CUA representatives, also efficiently organised our visit and were responsible for making our Canadian tour so efficient.

When Prof. Luc Valiquette, former SIU Secretary General and Surgical Director of the University of Montréal and on behalf of Prof. Fred Saad (Photo 5), chairman of the Department of Urology, joined us at the enjoyable lunch, we already had had a sightseeing tour in downtown Montreal. Having the city sightseeing tour at the start of our visit was probably well-thought by our hosts considering the busy programme that the Department of Urology of the University of Montreal had prepared for us.



Photo 6: Prof. Luc Valiquette, Department of Urology, Hôpital St Luc, The University of Montreal (from left: Dr. Peter Nyirády, Prof. Rolf Ackermann, Dr. Roman Sosnowski, Dr. Luc Valiquette and Dr. Erdem Canda)

A tour of the facilities of the department and a glimpse at the enormous new clinical centre still under construction gave us a good impression of the importance of this institution, which is also equipped with modern technology (Photo 6). Since one of the tour members is highly interested in robotic surgery, the experience in robotic surgery presented by Dr. Zorn was very valuable.

The department's prestigious reputation is obviously due to its competent and comprehensive services plus the very efficient teamwork among its members. With regards to the structure of the services, we noted the separation of the outpatient from the clinical department, and its impact on the weekly timetable of staff physicians. Providing outpatient services in between surgery does not seem to be possible in this system.

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Photo 7: Visiting the Research Department with Prof. Anne-Marie MesMasson, The University of Montreal (from left: Dr. Roman Sosnowski, Dr. Erdem Canda, Dr. Anne-Marie MesMasson, Prof. Rolf Ackermann, Dr. Peter Nyirády and Dr. Jean-Baptiste Latouf).

The Canadian Urologic Association (CUA) and the European Association of Urology (EAU) has created the Academic Exchange Programme with the goal to offer promising young urologists the chance to link up with their colleagues in Canada and Europe and with representatives of leading institutions.

The programme started last year with the visit of three young urologists and a senior prominent Canadian academic urologist: Ben Chew (Vancouver), Anthony J. Bella (Ottawa), Armando Lorenzo (Toronto), and Jerzy Gajewski (Halifax) who visited academic centres in Malmö (SE), Sheffield (UK), Barcelona (ES), Milan (IT) and Vienna (AT).

This year three European urologists visited six academic institutions in Canada. In a series of reports to appear in this newsletter, the participants will share their observations and experience. Reports were written by A. Erdem Canda, associate professor of the Department of Urology at Ankara Atatürk Training and Research Hospital in Turkey; Peter Nyirády associate professor and deputy head of the Department of Urology at Semmelweis University Budapest, Hungary; Roman Sosnowski associate professor of the Uro-oncology Department at Oncology Centre in Warsaw, Poland; and Prof. Rolf Ackermann, former chief and professor emeritus of the Urology Department at the Heinrich-Heine-University in Düsseldorf.

What a start in Halifax!

The European group met on June 3 in Halifax to visit the Department of Urology at The Dalhousie University which was founded in 1818 by the Governor General Lord Dalhousie. The main university in Nova Scotia province, it consists of 11 faculties providing academic education to almost 20,000 students. During the campus tour we were briefed on the history of the Dalhousie University and learned about its academic legacy (Photo 3).

Prof. Jerzy Gajewski organised our programme. The department, chaired by Prof. David Bell, runs clinical

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A visit to the research and oncological multidisciplinary outpatient facilities at the Hôpital Notre Dame also impressed us in many ways. We were introduced to sophisticated projects headed by Prof. Anne-Marie MesMasson, which aim to identify new biomarkers for prostate and kidney cancer by applying tissue micro arrays. Again we noted that a lot of emphasis is given to the collaboration between professional scientists and clinicians, allowing efficient teamwork. The close link between the clinical oncologists with a well-structured clinical research leads to an effective translation of research findings (Photo 7).

Being a sub-specialty, paediatric urology services are offered outside the adult urology facilities at the Hôpital Sainte-Justine which is located near the impressive main campus of the university. The department's exciting and very special children-oriented new interior is fascinating (Photo 8). A short visit to the operative facilities and observing the doctors at work gave us a good impression.

New links and insights

Our team also actively participated in clinical case discussions presented by the fellows and residents of the department (Photo 9). At the end of the session, each of us gave a brief presentation about the EAU, its structure, goals, achievements and collaboration with our national urological associations.



Photo 9: Participating in the residents' clinical case presentations, Department of Urology, The University of Montreal.



Photo 8: Visiting the main campus of The University of Montreal with Dr. Barrieras (from left: Dr. Peter Nyirady, Dr. Diego Barrieras and Dr. Roman Sosnowski).

Thanks to the structured programme of our visit as organised by the Department of Urology of the University of Montreal, through Dr. Diego Barrieras, we visited the clinical and outpatient facilities, and the units for translational as well as clinical research, giving us useful insights into the department's delivery of healthcare services.

Invited by Dr. Barrieras, we also enjoyed the wonderful show of Montreal's world famous Cirque Du Soleil. At the end of our visit, we also met residents and staff members for dinner at a typical restaurant in Montreal's old town, and that evening we learned that 15 of the 17 participants came from different countries. Indeed it was a 'global evening'!

As we left our hosts and expressed our heart-felt thanks for the exceptional programme that they had carefully prepared, we were all convinced that we have not only benefitted from new connections but have also gained valuable impressions about the urological and academic life in Canada.