

SIU Scholarship: Dr. Anthony M. Kariuki

The Société Internationale d'Urologie offers Training Scholarships for young doctors with basic surgical or urological qualifications. The SIU Scholarships involve training in a recognized Urological center of excellence located in the candidate's geographical region. These SIU-accredited centers provide an excellent environment for learning and, in many instances, hands-on experience, so that candidates may acquire knowledge and skills that they will be able to transfer to their own setting of practice. In this series of short communications, SIU Scholars write about the impact that these training opportunities facilitated by the SIU had on their quality of care and career development. Information about applying for an SIU Scholarship is available at <http://www.siu-urology.org/>.

Surgical services in Kenya have been expanding in the last decade. Since the late 90s to date there has been intensive and sustained training of general surgeons with a view to having a surgeon in every district hospital (there are over 50 such hospitals). This goal has so far been achieved.

With the objective of bringing surgical services to the grassroot level, new challenges emerged in attaining this goal and, in particular, establishing surgical units that were formerly unavailable. This is mainly due to the large number of patients requiring surgery, vs the limited resources. In addition, the entire scope of urological problems requiring surgical intervention does really exist and in itself is a major challenge. This is borne out by the fact that urology training in Kenya is covered as part of the general surgery curriculum.

My experience in field left me feeling that more can be done with extra training and exposure in urology. This meant that I should look for available opportunities to advance and improve my urological skills. To this end, I contacted one of the urologists in Kenya who introduced me to professor Chris Heyns of Stellenbosch University and Tygerberg Hospital, South Africa, for a position as a supernumerary registrar. Professor Heyns readily agreed to take me in for 1 year and went ahead to introduce me to the SIU for a scholarship.

Formalizing my admission to Stellenbosch was not easy and professor Heyns was never tired to assist me at every stage until I arrived on May 15, 2008. I was warmly received in the Urology Department, which has a very friendly, competent, and committed staff who are eager to teach, share, and impart knowledge at all times—all this under the steering of the good-hearted and able hands of professor Heyns.



Anthony M. Kariuki, SIU Scholar

I was initially astounded by the sheer scope in urology and the wide range of equipment in the hospital, to which hitherto I had only limited exposure and no doubt I actually felt inadequate. However, I was gradually introduced to urology practice by the staff whose patience is a virtue worth extolling. I was introduced to a wide range of clinical conditions, excellent diagnostic approaches, and decision making in evaluation and management of patients based on various levels of evidence.

The weekly ward teaching, pathology meeting, clinical presentations, and journal club were all good sources of knowledge and updates and formed very good stimulus for further reading. One of the most inspirational key areas was the Oncology Clinic chaired by professor Heyns in which we discussed all patients with urological tumors and the best management options. This is a largely ignored field in Kenya, possibly due to the complexity of the problem and limited treatment options available locally. Of course, there is the issue of poor sensitization of the populace, limited diagnostic facilities, and hence the late presentation culminating in few oncological operations.

Theaters were highly organized and I am grateful to have been given a great opportunity to participate, assist, and operate. Surgery in Tygerberg Hospital is highly interactive, and I was guided through surgical procedures patiently and diligently. Laparoscopic and endoscopic surgeries were impressive and no efforts were spared in taking me through every step of the procedure, including auxiliary preparation.

In a nutshell, my training experience from May 2008 to April 2009 at Tygerberg Hospital was truly valuable and has helped me in improving my knowledge and skills in urology, and to this end, I am greatly indebted to professor Heyns and the SIU for having made this possible. The collaboration between the SIU and various regional universities to help in training urologists from less endowed countries is quite noble, and I hope that this noble cause will continue.

My recommendations to the SIU in improving this program are to have the student and the faculty discuss and identify the specific needs for the training period with a view to setting specific objectives that the student is expected to achieve at the end of the training. In this

way targets are set for specific topics and procedures that the student is expected to achieve at the end of the course and which can be used as a basis for evaluation to the satisfaction of both the student and the faculty. A certificate can then be issued to that effect.

Abbreviated CV. Dr. Anthony Maina Kariuki was born in Nyeri, in central Kenya, on December 1964. He graduated with degrees in Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery (MB ChB) from the University of Nairobi in 1992. He completed his internship at the Coast Provincial General Hospital and worked as medical superintendent in various district hospitals before joining the University of Nairobi in 1999, where he graduated with a degree in Master of Medicine (MMed) in Surgery in 2004. He proceeded to Kitui district in Eastern province as medical superintendent and district surgeon. He undertook a diploma course in Israel on health system management in 2006. He is currently working in Muranga District Hospital in central Kenya.

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