



**JAMES IV**

Association of Surgeons

## James IV Traveler 2017

### British Isles and Rest of the World (ROW)

#### **Tan To CHEUNG, Hong Kong SAR**

The University of Hong Kong

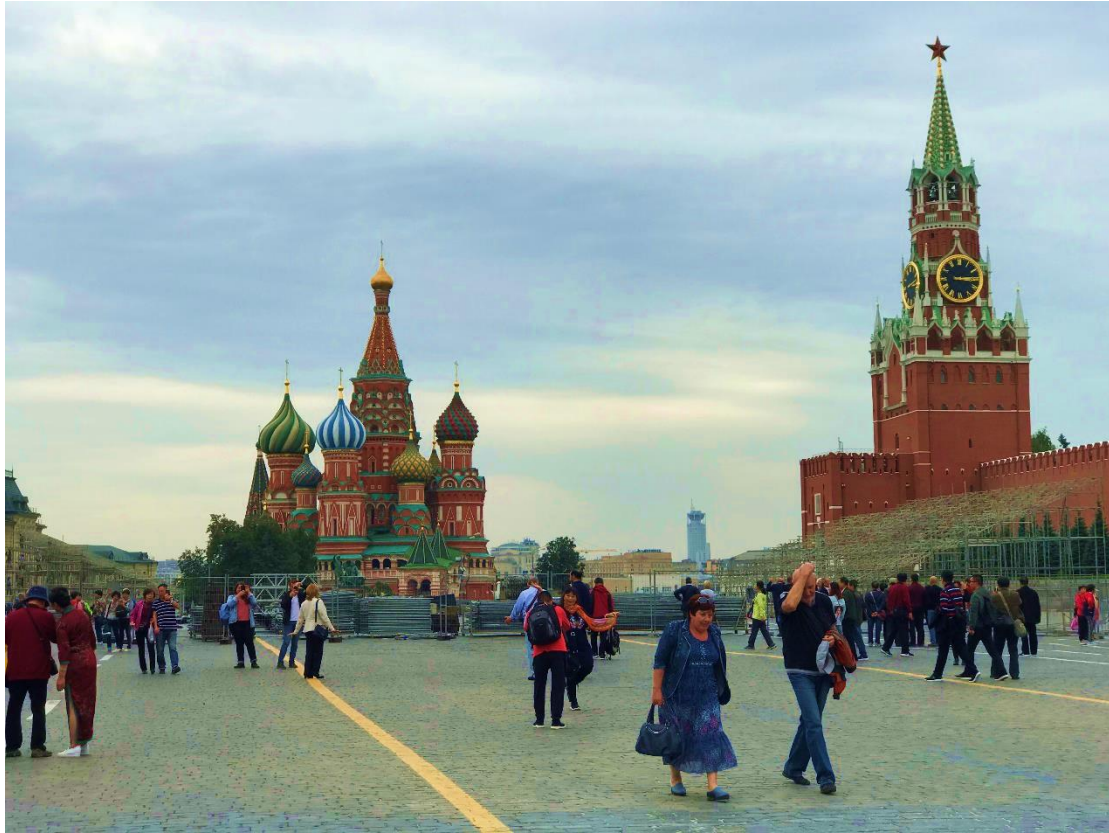
Travel Period: Fall 2018-Fall 2019

Cities visited: Moscow, Heidelberg, London, Edinburg, Glasgow, New York, and San Francisco

I feel much honored to be elected as the travelling fellow of James IV Association of Surgeons and I would like to thank all of the people who supported me for this wonderful opportunity to visit the different famous medical centres and learn new knowledge from friends amongst the best institutes in the world.

James IV Travelling Fellowship is a very prestigious award that opened a lot of doors during my visit. All the hosts were very welcoming. The daily programs they arranged were very organized, which made me feel like working as part of their families during my stay.

## Moscow



My trip started in September 2018 and my first destination was Moscow. I was honored to be invited as a guest speaker on the development of laparoscopy for liver cancer at the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary IASGO World Congress. The congress was one of the high-profile events in the field of medicine and was attended by professionals from over 80 countries, including leading experts in oncology, surgery and gastroenterology.

The 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Congress was well organized with a great welcoming dinner with all the experts in the world. I was very happy to share the same table with Professor Makuuchi, Professor Kaneko, Professor Kokudo, Professor Hasegawa, Professor Torzilli and many more friends.



It was a four-day congress which covered a wide range of topics in surgery and oncology, from the development of new surgical technique for treating cancer to evidence-based medicine for improving cancer using systemic therapy. A good multidisciplinary

approach involving discussion amongst different specialists yielded fruitful enhancement in transmission of knowledge.

## London



After the IASGO congress, I travelled to London to visit the King's College Hospital. This was the first medical center I visited for the travelling fellowship.

King's College Transplant Unit is one of the largest liver transplantation programmes in England, which is carrying out more than 200 operations per year. During my visit, one to two liver

transplant operations were performed every day. Apart from the very busy clinical activities, there were well-arranged multidisciplinary meetings and structured ward rounds led by different specialties.



On the first day, there was a liver transplant symposium taking place, which gave a very detailed account of the history of liver transplantation at King's, the technique they used, and their postoperative care and nursing management.

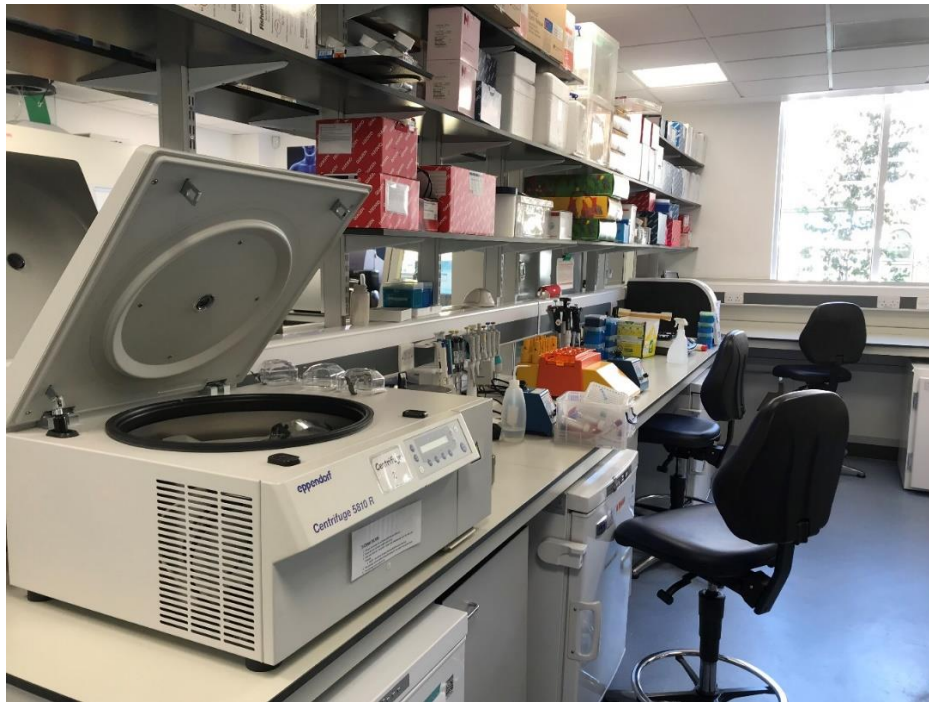




Professor Nigeal Heaton showed me the daily operations they performed. He always got involved in the management of patients and participated in all the complicated surgeries.

My friend Mr. Krish Menon, who specializes in minimally invasive liver surgery, showed me around in the hospital and showed me his technique in laparoscopic liver resection.

Professor Roger Williams, CBE, shared with me his journey in setting up the Institute of Hepatology in London and his wisdom in managing liver diseases.







## Heidelberg



The European Pancreas Centre at Heidelberg University Hospital is one of the leading institutions for the diagnosis and treatment of pancreatic diseases, particularly pancreatic carcinoma. Led by Professor Markus W Buchler, it is a high-volume centre for pancreatic surgery and treats patients from all over the world.

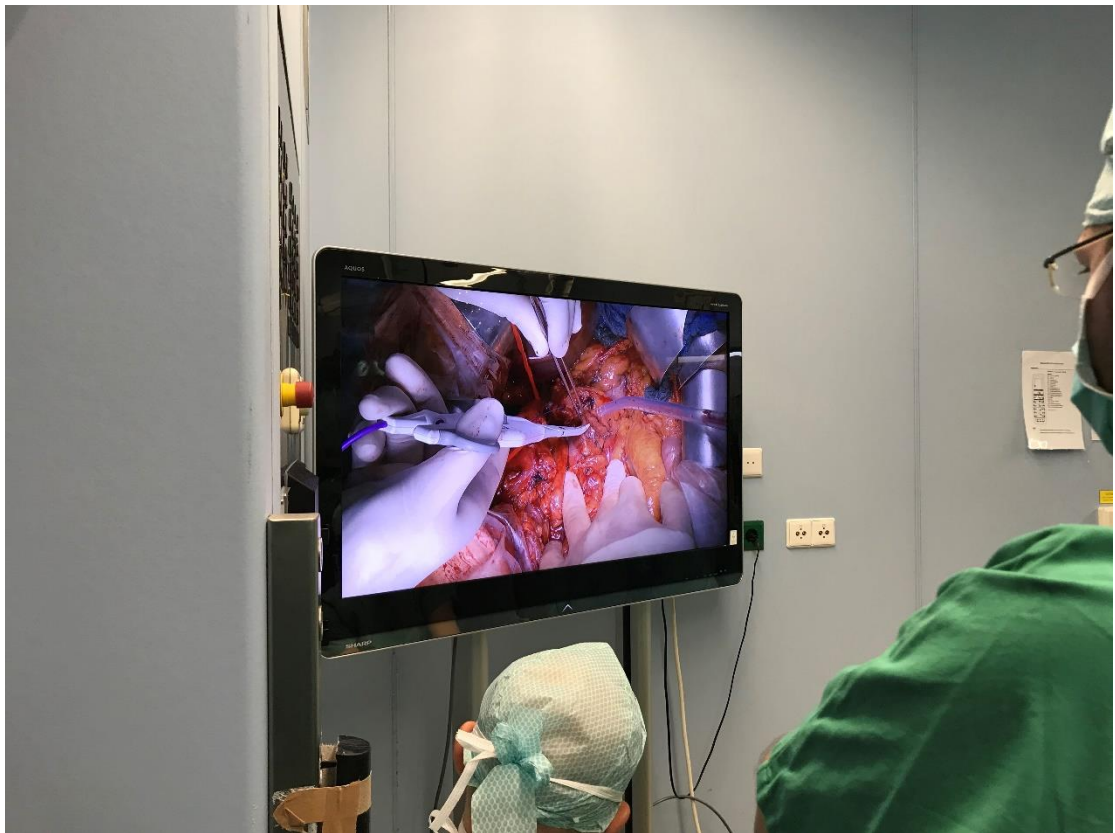
Their daily activities were very well organized, including department morning meetings, research presentations, multidisciplinary meetings and a big volume of surgeries. Professor Thilo Hackert was a wonderful host. He showed me around in the

hospital and told me the history of the hospital.

I was glad to present the surgical techniques that I used and the original research carried out in Hong Kong on liver resection and transplantation. There was in-depth discussion of my presentation with the staff in Germany. The venue for the meeting was a historical compound of a coliseum. The meeting had with a wide range of audience, from medical students to senior professors.







During the week I was visiting, the hospital was hosting a 3-day HBP conference. Live demonstrations were performed, from minimally invasive surgery to open surgery for advanced tumour with complex reconstructions. There were totally 5 theatres operating at the same time for pancreatic diseases including cystic neoplasms and cancers by different senior surgeons.

Professor Arianeb Mehrabi showed me his technique of using staplers to perform right hepatectomy in patients with liver abscess. My impression of stapler hepatectomy had been that it was fast but not very precise, but Professor Mehrabi's performance changed my mind. His technique was very meticulous. There was virtually very little blood loss and the whole operation was very fast (~1 hour).

Later the week Professor John Neoptolemos had a meeting with me discussing the trend of pancreatic cancer treatment and prevention of recurrence. His hospitality was exceptional and he was very enthusiastic in collaborating with different centres all over the world for research.

## Edinburg



I have been a fellow member of the Edinburg College of Surgeons and that gave me extra pleasure in visiting Edinburg.

Although the Royal Infirmary of Edinburg had moved to a new site, the heritage remained and yet the facilities became more modern, which fully met the need for improving patient care.





The Hepatobiliary and Pancreatic Unit was led by Professor Steve Wigmore. The HBP unit was comprised of many world-class surgeons and members of the James IV Association, including Professors James Garden, Stephen Wigmore, Rowan Parks, Ewen Harrison and many more.

During my stay, I had a full schedule for the week, including busy daily clinical activities and operations as well as research meetings. I also got a chance to meet every single member of the team to learn from their experience in management of patients and development of research programmes.

I felt like home during my stay in Edinburgh because all the surgeons were very friendly and they had visited Hong Kong and other parts of China on many occasions. Exchange of ideas and brainstorming happened any time from a morning breakfast to a late evening feast.

I was honored to give a talk on “Contemporary management of liver cancer”. The discussion on management of patients with liver cirrhosis was interesting and truly reflected there were different wisdoms in treating different patients from the East and the West.





Professor Rowan Park, the vice president of the College of Surgeons of Edinburgh at the time, took me on a very inclusive tour

in the College. The Museum of Surgery was a fascinating facility containing an exciting collection of information and art comprised of some very important history of the human kind.

Professor Wigmore and Professor Garden also showed me the way to the famous Museum of Whiskey, where good vintage of spirits could be easily found.





## Glasgow



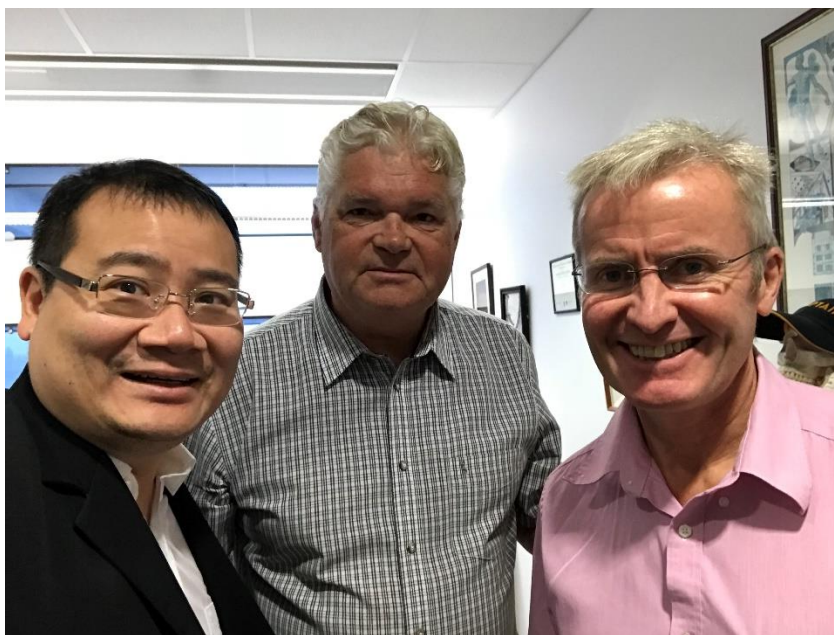
I had a day trip to Glasgow to visit Mr. Ross Carter in Royal Infirmary. Royal infirmary is a historic building with a lot of history since 1794 and was redeveloped post-war. The infirmary serves as the major hospital that serves the whole district.

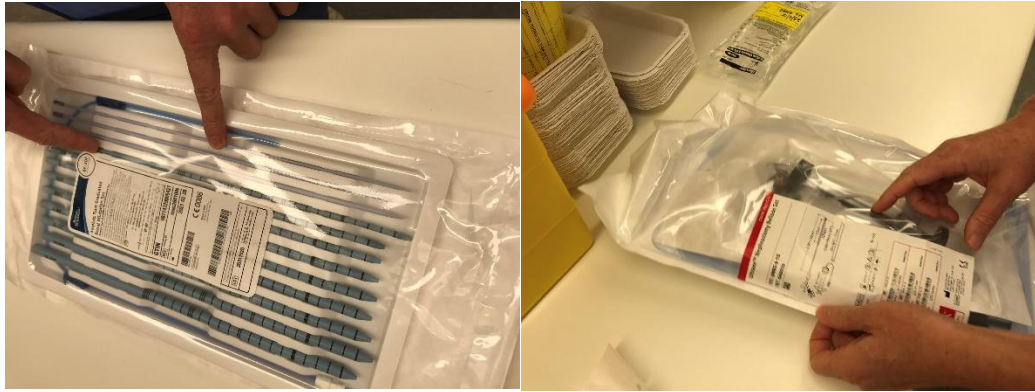
It has a huge number of patients with pancreatic disease including more than 800 cases of pancreatitis per year. The infirmary has tremendous experience in the management of patients with necrotizing pancreatitis with the minimally invasive approach.

Although the etiology of pancreatitis is mainly alcohol-related in the

West and is mainly stone-related in the East, the treatment modality for severe necrotizing pancreatitis would be similar.

Because of improved primary health care and proactive laparoscopic cholecystectomy for gallstone disease, the number of cases of severe necrotizing pancreatitis in Hong Kong is around 10 per year at major hospitals. Most of these patients are treated with open necrosectomy. Ross showed me how to perform percutaneous necrosectomy using endoscopy. Selection of patients and instruments and the timing of intervention were discussed. I have started doing this procedure in Hong Kong after learning all the technique in Glasgow.

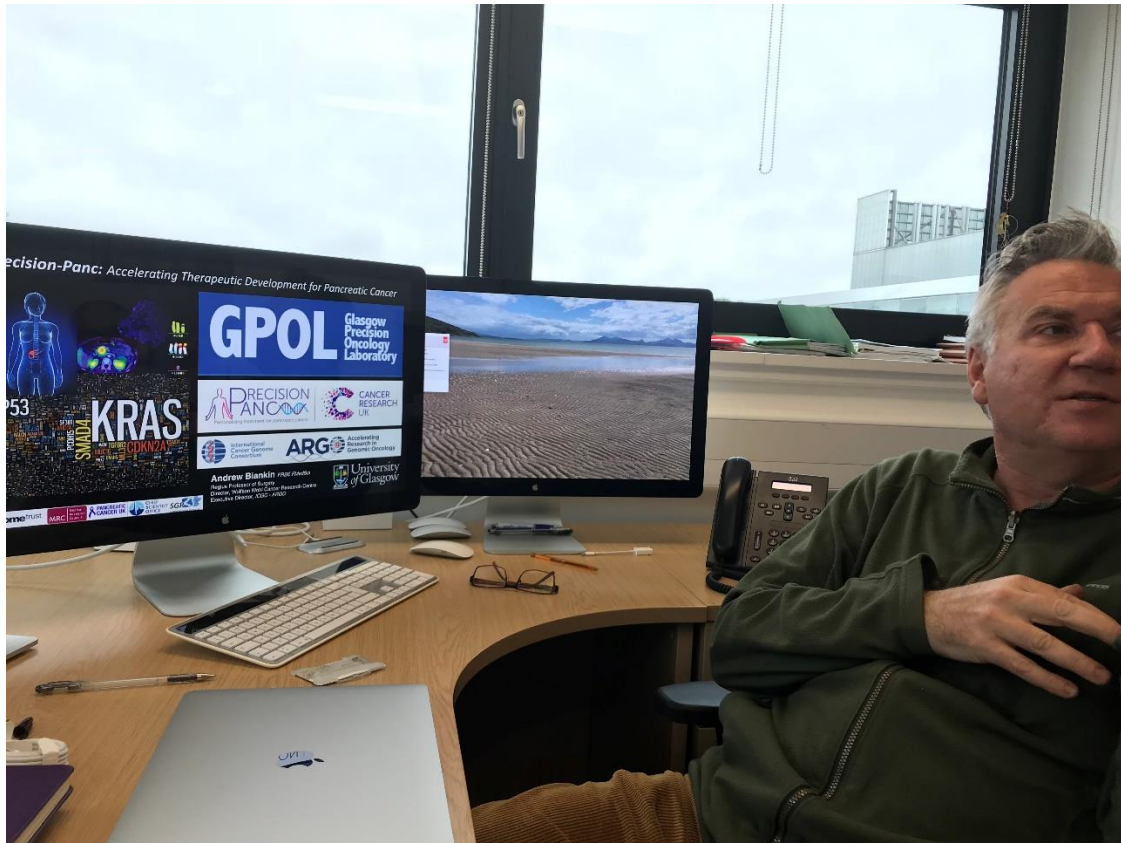




I also paid a visit to Professors Andrew Biankin and David Chang at their wonderful research facilities. Andrew is a top scholar who has been very successful in getting tremendous grant for his good work in genomic analysis and its translation to clinical application. During this visit, I certainly learnt a lot of new knowledge that would be crucial in future precision oncology research development.







## New York



Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center is a busy centre for hepatopancreatobiliary disease. Professor William Jarnagin, Chair of the HBP services, is well known in the world for his work in diagnosing and managing cancer in the HBP system. He had a very tight time schedule and yet he took good care of me during my stay and spent plenty of time sharing his vision with me. The MSK HBP team is a wonderful organization with talented people all over the world.



I would like to thank Michael Angelica, Alice Wei and Peter Kingham for showing me around the compound and demonstrating very nice operations to me. This institution had a well-known regime of intra-arterial chemotherapy for treating liver cancer and the outcomes were phenomenal. The placement of intra-arterial pump into the hepatic artery by the open or robotic approach was well executed.

Dr. Alice Wei worked in Hong Kong for a one-year clinical attachment 20 years ago when we were both doing emergency on-call duties together. At that time we were both junior doctors. Time

flew. She has become the co-director of Surgical Initiatives at David M Rubenstein Center for Pancreatic Cancer Research and now I am the Chief of HBP services at Queen Mary Hospital, The University of Hong Kong. Thanks to the James IV Association, we had the opportunity to work together again for a brief one week and I am sure there will be many more collaborations in clinical research between the two centres.

The multidisciplinary meeting at MSK was very well organized and efficient. A lot of interesting cases were discussed, and with the input from Professor Abou-Alfa, a world-renowned medical oncologist, many unresectable tumours became treatable.

I would like to thank Professor Jeffrey Drebin, Chair of Department of Surgery, who took me to a very traditional steak house for dinner with all the staff. That was a wonderful treat for a cozy evening with the famous New York strip, good wine and most important of all – friendship.

I gave a talk in their morning meeting with the topic “Approaching zero mortality for liver cancer surgery”, in which a series of research carried out at The University of Hong Kong was

presented before all the department members of this prestigious institution.







## **San Francisco**

After visiting New York, I attended the ACS Clinical Congress and participated in the International Society for Digestive Surgery Council Meeting for preparation for International Surgical Week in 2021.

The ACS Clinical Congress was a great meeting with educational activities and a great opportunity to meet researchers from the United State and from Europe. I had the opportunity to meet other James IV travellers including HJ Kim and Kjetil Soreide in the meeting. We had a nice chat and shared the experience learnt during our travels.







James IV Travelling Fellowship provided me with the opportunity to visit first-class institutions in the world and let me meet the most talented people in the field. It is a life-time honor to be part of this society. I could join the top-notch surgeons in participating in operations and sharing ideas in research. The liver and pancreatic surgery experience in Edinburg, London, Germany and the USA was different from Asia and I learnt many tricks and techniques that will certainly benefit my patients in the future.

The knowledge exchange experience from M&M meetings, MDT meetings, research meetings and grand rounds was all valuable

experience. I am sure, by bringing this important infrastructure back to our institution, I will enhance the development of clinical and research activities.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank again all the people I met during this trip, the board of directors of James IV Association for electing me for this travel award and Secretariat Jillian for making all the arrangement.

We work together to make this world a better place.