

Ravi S. Sidhu MD MEd FRCSC 2017 James IV Travelling Fellow

I am indebted to Dr. Garth Warnock, Dr. Richard Finley and Dr. Gary Redekop for successfully nominating me as a James IV Traveller for 2017. What I have gained through my travels has made a significant impact on me as a surgeon, educator, and researcher. I had the opportunity deepen relationships with colleagues across the globe, learn about different health care systems, experience different pedagogical practices and witness leading edge vascular surgical innovations. I would also like to thank my colleagues Dr. Jock Reid and Dr. Shaun MacDonald whose support in allowing me the time to travel is most appreciated.

My fellowship experience was divided into two separate tours. My first trip was to India where I visited multiple educational institutions across the country. I am indebted to Professor Ramesh K Tripathi who was instrumental in establishing contacts with my multiple gracious hosts in India. My second trip was to Hong Kong and China. Professor Stephen Cheng from the University of Hong Kong kindly supported my travel arrangements for this trip.

India (December 2016-Jan2017)

My journey started with a multiple leg flight from Vancouver to Delhi via Toronto and Amsterdam with my family in tow. Upon arrival in Delhi, we spent 36 hours recovering from jet lag and sight-seeing. Delhi is a large metropolis with a jarring juxtaposition of rich and poor; present and past; urban and agricultural! We visited Red Fort, Old Town, the Ghandi Memorial, Lotus Temple, Humayun's tomb and the Qutab Minar complex. This was a wonderful way to quickly get oriented to the country's history, culture and people.

The following day, we flew to Chennai and drove to Vellore (approximately 2.5 hours west), the home of Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore. CMC Vellore is a private, socially responsible medical centre that serves as a tertiary and quaternary referral centre not only for India but also for parts of Africa. It is ranked as one of the best medical colleges in India. The institution is the site of many 'firsts' in India: open heart surgery, kidney transplant, and bone marrow transplant.

The next morning, I was met by Dr. Albert Kota, a trainee who brought me to the hospital where I was hosted by Dr. Edwin Stephen, the Head of Vascular Surgery. I had an opportunity to meet the four vascular faculty (with whom I had lunch at the hospital canteen), tour the wards, and meet the Hospital Director Dr. S. Chandi.

I attended morning rounds and, in the afternoon, gave a Surgical Grand Rounds presentation on Vascular Access for Hemodialysis and Innovative approaches to Access for Thoracic Endovascular procedures.

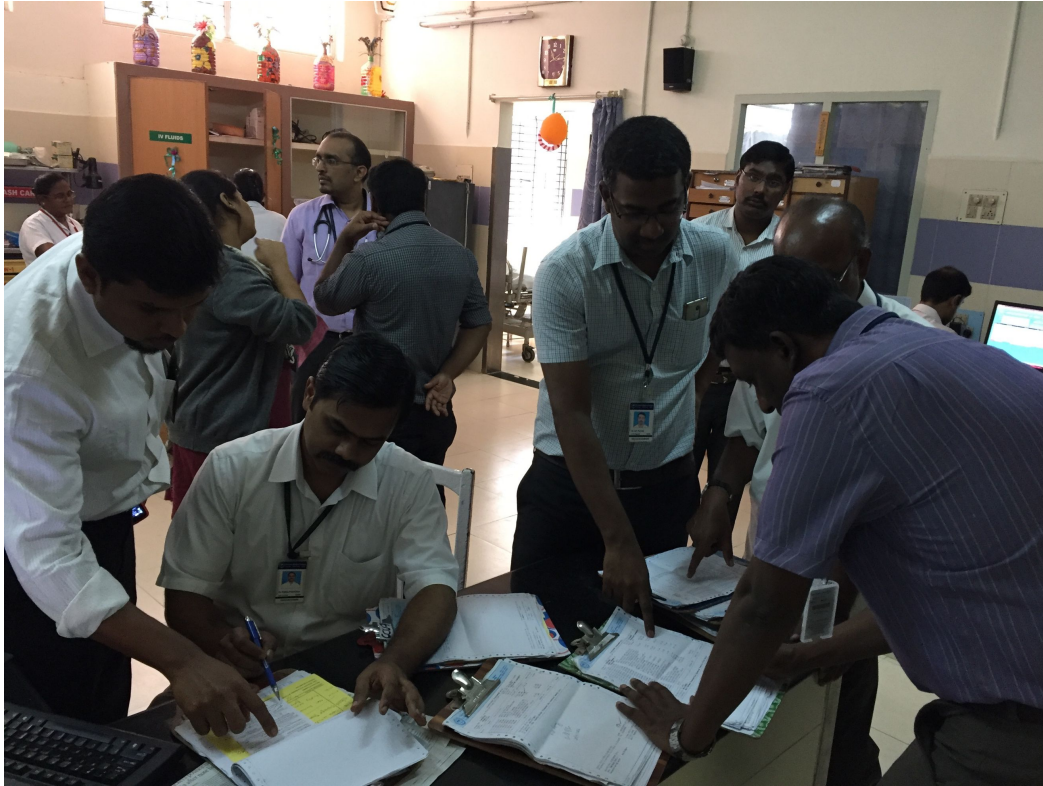


Morning Surgical Rounds at CMC Vellore



I ran a teaching seminar for the surgical Trainees

I was most impressed by the business model of CMC Vellore. All faculty are salaried. Patients to pay / require insurance; however, it is at the discretion of the attending faculty to waive or reduce payments for those who cannot afford their care.



CMC Vellore Vascular Faculty Reviewing Charts and Determining whether to waive fees for patients treated

The following morning, I joined Dr. Stephen in the OR where he performed a Carotid Body Tumour Resection (on a patient referred from Africa) and a Carotid Endarterectomy. I was most impressed at the level of involvement of surgical trainees. Educational briefings, objectives for each part of the case, and debriefing occurred as a matter of routine. These are the types of activities we continue to aspire to at home!



Professor Stephen (dark blue scrubs) next to me with OR Team

In the afternoon, my family joined me for a tour of the Medical School campus including classrooms, laboratories, residences and grounds.



My family and I at the CMC Vellore Medical Campus

The following Day we travelled to Chennai and then flew to Trivandrum in the state of Kerala. As this was Christmas eve, our family took the opportunity to take a boat tour of the storied backwaters of Kerala. On house boat, motor boat and then canoe, we were stunned by the beauty and nature of this part of the India.



On Boxing Day, I travelled to Trivandrum Medical College. I was met by most gracious host, Professor M. Unnikrishnan, the Head of Vascular Surgery at the adjacent Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (Sree Chitra). Sree Chitra is a Federal Institute with Cardiac, Vascular, Thoracic and Neurosurgical services only. The surgical trainees gave me a tour of the hospital. I met the Administrative Staff and was given a Certificate to remember my visit.



Professor M. Unnikrishnan

The next day, I attend the operating room with Professor Unnikrishnan. I witnessed carotid surgery and an emergency vascular injury case (related to failed attempt at percutaneous access by another service in the hospital). I visited the Interventional Radiology Suite in the afternoon then gave Grand Rounds to the combined Vascular Surgery and Interventional Radiology Group. My talk was on vascular care in Canada, vascular access for hemodialysis and the state of Surgical Education in Canada.

The next morning, I was given a tour of the Biomedical Technology Campus. This was a fascinating visit to multiple translational research laboratories including blood

compatibility, prosthetic device development, histopathology of compatibility, and animal care.



Compatibility Lab Staff at Sree Chitra

The remaining few days in India were spent sightseeing. We flew to Rajasthan (camel rides and hiking) before a quick day trip to see the Taj Mahal.



Hong Kong / China (November 2017)

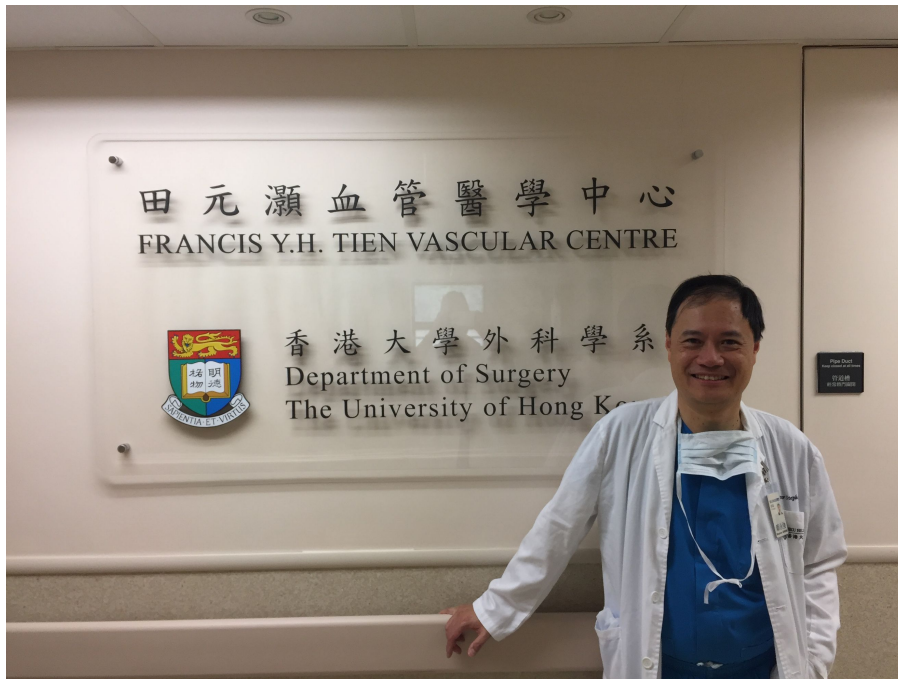
My trip began with a direct flight from Vancouver to Hong Kong. I was joined by my wife and my son. At the Hong Kong airport, we were graciously met and transported to our hotel by Dr. KP Au, a Vascular Surgery trainee at Hong Kong University.

That evening, my family and I were graciously hosted at a local restaurant by the Former Head of Surgery at Hong Kong University, Professor John Wong. I had the pleasure of meeting Professor Wong's family, surgical trainees and other faculty while enjoying traditional Chinese cuisine.



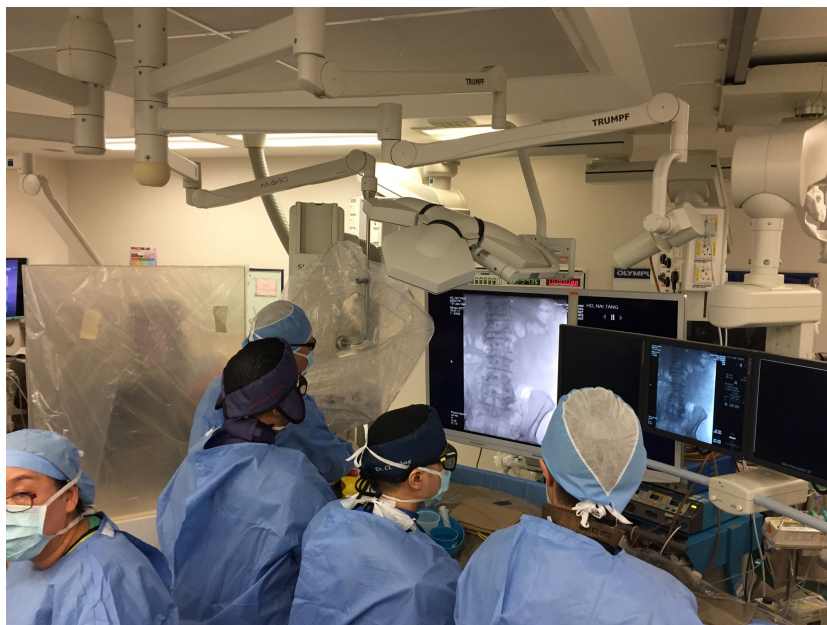
Professor John Wong and me

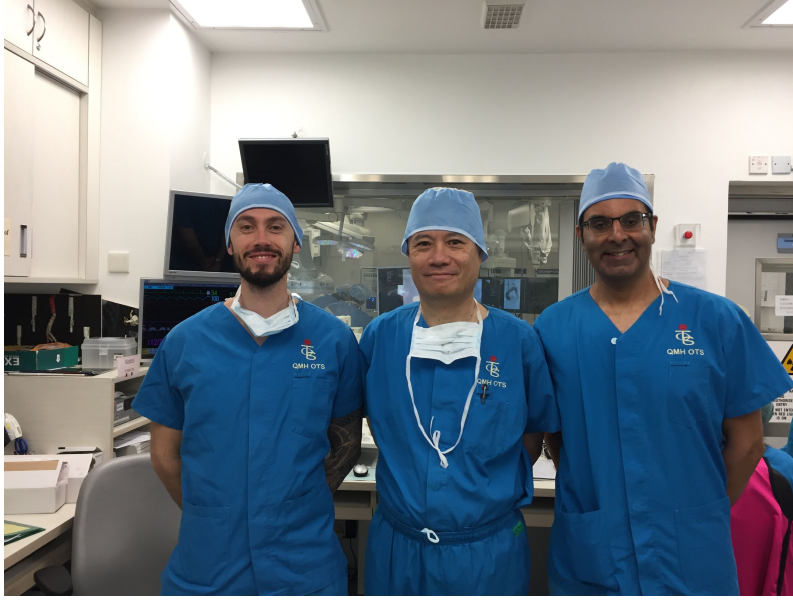
The next morning, I travelled to Queen Mary Hospital, a teaching hospital of the University of Hong Kong. I was greeted by the Chair of Vascular Surgery, Professor Stephen Cheng. We toured the hospital which, due to the population density of the City, has a unique layout. The hospital is built 'vertically'; hence, on the vascular floor, there are only 4 Operating Rooms. The other ORs are on different floors in different parts of the hospital.



Professor Stephen Cheng

I then observed a complex endovascular procedure performed by Professor Cheng, an aortic arch repair with an two-branch endograft. The procedure required combined open and endovascular skills and I was struck by the impressive complex interdisciplinary team interaction.





The next day, my family and I caught an early subway to Tung Chung Station and hiked to see the Tian Tan Buddha (also known as the Big Buddha). Later that evening, I met with Dr. Leung, a Neurosurgeon and Educator and we shared ideas on the future of surgical education.



Thereafter, I attended the HKU Surgical Distinguished Lecture by Professor Law of Colorectal Surgery. My family joined me in the evening for a Black-Tie Dinner for the Department of Surgery at the Hong Kong Country Club. I met fellow Canadian, Dr. Tara Mastracci who was in town for the event.



The following morning, I attended the Hong Kong Surgical Forum where I presented three keynote addresses: Hemodialysis Access Innovations, Transapical Vascular Access for Endografting, and the current status of Competency-Based Medical Education. I had the opportunity to meet past fellows whom I had the privilege of training at University of British Columbia.

That evening, I was driven across the Chinese border to the modern booming city of Shenzhen. I attended a dinner with multiple local surgeons.



The next morning, I toured the enormous Shenzhen hospital. I gave a Grand Rounds Presentation to the Surgical Department on Vascular Access. I had the unique experience of having my slides translated into Chinese for the event! Later that day I returned to Hong Kong to rejoin my family.



Transapical Access for Thoracic Endovascular Grafts

经心尖入路在胸主动脉腔内手术中的应用

Ravi S. Sidhu MD MEd FRCS(C) FACS
Associate Professor, Vascular Surgery
Associate Dean, Postgraduate Education
University of British Columbia

We spent our last day in Asia touring the ladies market and enjoying local cuisine before flying back to Vancouver

Conclusion

My experiences have had a tremendous and profound impact on my perspectives as a surgeon. I have met many wonderful people, experienced different cultures and learned many new ways of approaching problems.

Thank you to the James IV Association of Surgeons for providing me with this opportunity. It has indeed been a privilege to be supported by this wonderful organization. I am forever committed to supporting other travelers and will continue to nourish the relationships I have gained.