

# Five weeks as a Visiting Scholar at the Nepean Clinical School and hospital, NSW, Australia.

By Sissel Oversand, OUS Ullevål, Oslo, Norway



**The Nepean Hospital**



**The Nepean Clinical School**

The Nepean Clinical School is part of the University of Sydney and situated across the street from the Nepean Hospital, a tertiary level hospital for the Nepean Blue Mountains local Health district. The location is Penrith, a small town about an hour train ride northwest from Sydney, just at the entrance of the Blue Mountains National Park. The urogynecological group of professor Hans Peter Dietz and coprofessor Clara Shek has its research computer lab at the school, and is

based in the upper floor of the building. There are two clinical

fellows, a research fellow, a Ph.D. student and several national and international associates. There were midwives, physiotherapists and doctors from all over the world coming and going.

The week schedule was as follows: On Mondays and Fridays patients from the Public Health System were attended at the Pelvic Floor Clinic, situated in the first floor of the Clinical School building. The clinical fellows performed the consultations including pelvic floor ultrasound. As a visiting scholar I was not allowed to touch the



**At the Review Session**

patients in the public system, so I altered between observing in the clinic and working on my research project in the Research Lab. At the end of the day Prof Dietz had a review session for the whole unit where the patients of the day including their 3D/4D images were discussed.

Wednesdays were theatre days, and coming from a unit where we stick to native tissue repairs, it was like being on another planet watching them placing puborectalis (PR) slings to diminish the hiatus (fortunately as part of a RCT). The main surgeons were usually the clinical fellows assisted by the Ob and Gyn registrars.

Tuesdays and/or Thursdays were reserved for patients seen at Sydney Urodynamics Centre, privately own by Prof. Dietz, Prof.Korda and Prof Benness. The Centre has 8 locations, but Prof. Dietz and Prof Shek only attended the offices in Penrith and in Liverpool (South-West of Sydney). One of the clical fellows would always go with Dietz to the clinic, and I would alter between going with Dietz or Shek, to avoid crowding the office as there sometimes would also be other visitors wanting to observe. The consult included a standardized interview, urodynamics, cystoscopy and Pelvic Floor Ultrasound, and these were the days where I was allowed to train Pelvic Floor Ultrasound under supervision.



The research lab was always crowded, and there was a high focus on investigation. I spent long hours with clinical fellows and the research fellow at the lab, learning to improve 3D/4D images and how to interpret them, especially in terms of identifying avulsions of the levator or injuries of the sphincter ani. During my time at Nepean, I finished 2 abstracts relevant to my field, highly due to the investigative environment and the fantastic support of the rest of the group.

**Long hours at the Research Lab**



**Prof. Dietz, Phd. student Jessica, Prof. Shek, Clinical Fellow Norlelawati, Visiting scholar Cristina , Research Physiotherapist Caroline and me.**

I had a memorable stay at the Nepean Clinical school and Hospital, and am infinitely grateful for the NFOG support covering most of my expenses. Thank you!

Best wishes,  
Sissel Hegdahl Oversand