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THE IFCC PROFESSIONAL SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGE PROGRAMME (PSEP)

THE IFCC PROFESSIONAL SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGE PROGRAMME (PSEP)
Contributed by Dr. Burak Bahar, Gazi University, Ankara, Turkey

I am currently working as a senior resident at Gazi University, Department of Biochemistry, Ankara, Turkey. I was honored to be awarded the International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (IFCC) PSEP Scholarship.

During my 2-month stay in South Africa, working at Cape Town's world famous Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital, I had the opportunity to learn how to use the GC/MS and to perform a research project using this system. I, together with Drs George Van Der Watt and Fierdoz Omar, developed a new method for the rapid and sensitive quantitative analysis of leukocyte cystine using isotope dilution mass spectrometry. This method was then used to establish reference intervals for leukocyte cystine concentrations in healthy South Africans.

Having worked at the South Africa's leading centre for postgraduate specialist paediatric medical and surgical training, I have also improved my knowledge in paediatric chemical pathology, particularly in inborn metabolic diseases, infections such as acquired immunodeficiency, tuberculosis and nutritional problems. By joining lectures and journal clubs at University of Cape Town, I had also the opportunity to interact with my colleagues and experts at different fields of Chemical Pathology.

It was an exciting experience for me to spend my leisure time at the beautiful City of Cape Town that has numerous interesting sites to visit like Table Mountain and Cape Point, and famous beaches like Muizenberg or attractions such as hiking and surfing.

I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Tahir S. Pillay, head of department, and Dr George Van Der Watt, his co-worker and consultant pathologist. Without them my experience would not have been the same.

I would also like to thank Dr Peter Berman for accepting me at his tutorials, Dr Tricia Owen and Ms Surita Meldau for teaching me how to perform PCR, and the registrar team Drs Fierdoz Omar, David Haarburger, John Stanfliet and Ryan Benjamin, who were very kind, generous and hospitable. I acknowledge the support of the entire staff of the Chemical Pathology laboratory at Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital for their cooperation and contributions to the success of my programme.

I appreciate the support from Professor Jocelyn M. Hicks and also thank the Turkish Biochemical Society (TBD) for supporting my application for the PSEP, and the staff at Gazi University, Ankara, Turkey for allowing me the time to participate in this programme.



Dr Bahar in company of the staff of the Chemical Pathology laboratory

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