

REPORT

Japan visit (23d September to 19th October)

Introduction

My name is Dr Anna John Sanyiwa, An ophthalmologist and the head of the department of ophthalmology of the Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS). MUHAS has been supported by Japan-Tanzania ophthalmic Medical Support Team since 2007. The support through this team is focused in three things, donation of various ophthalmic equipment, drugs and consumables required for cataract surgeries. The other important part of the support is professional training focused on converting the ophthalmologists at MUHAS from manual small incision and ECCE to Phacoemulsification and training local biomedical engineers to care the donated and repair ophthalmic equipments. These all are part of efforts to prevent avoidable blindness due to cataract.

My visit to Japan was part of the effort to convert from manual small incision cataract surgery to Phacoemulsification. I was lucky to be the first ophthalmologist to visit Japan through this project. I visited Japan from September 23rd to 19th October. Many thank to Prof Yamasaki who made sure the visit became a success story.

During my stay in Japan I was privileged to visit and work with several renowned eye hospitals and work with blessed and highly skilled ophthalmologists. I had a chance to work and observe surgeries of these highly skilled and hard working surgeons. In all clinics the preparation for surgeries were performed at high level and in a teamwork manner. The lists of surgeries were not less than 25 patients per session of four hours compared to my institution where the list has ten patients or less per day. All my days in Japan were learning and memorable moments.

My stay in Nagoya was hosted by Prof Yamasaki and his family. I commend the kindness of this family. Yamasaki Sense had done arrangement with Alcon and Kowa companies for training in wet laboratories. I had three sessions with excellent trainers. I had step by step guidance and could see myself improve in the skills, from stage of handling the instruments to the actual phacoemulsification of nucleus of different hardness. I also observed the day to day running of Prof Yamasaki eye clinic including watching his several cataract surgeries records. I was impressed by the smooth running of the clinic and the high quality of standard of care. I had chance to visit kimiida eye hospital, where I observed several surgeries performed at high level of sterility and standards.

I was lucky to have free of charge training on phacoemulfication using wet and dry Kitaro. This was conducted at Vision Centre at Koshienguichi. The centre is under the leadership of Akura

the inventor of Kitaro labs. I had hands on training of phaco using both dry and wet Kitaro. This was an extremely useful moment for me. Dr Akura took to me through the training in stages, from the stage of how to use and manipulate the different instruments used in phacoemulsification, through the stages of phacoemulsifying soft nucleus to medium and then hard nucleus with tips of how to manage complications.

Many thanks go to Fujita Sense who hosted me in TOKUSHIMA. It was an encouraging moment for me to work with this highly skilled surgeon; he motivated me to improve my skills. At Fujita Eye Clinic, professionalism is highly observed and quality of care for patients and staff is excellent and worthily to take home to implement. The clinics are well planned and heavy; a thing which reflects the excellent services provided by this clinic. The charisma of his leadership and the will of donating was a learning experience too.

Kaneda Sense hosted me at Mizumini. I had a chance to observe and assist his surgeries. I could pick few important skills which I have continued to practice as I am working to improve more of my surgical skills. The teamwork at work is extended to even social events.

Another great experience while in Japan was my stay at Yamaguchi Prefecture. The stay was hosted by Hirota Sense. Hirota eye clinic was another state of art clinic I had observed surgeries and the running of the clinic. The brief history of Hirota Sense encouraged me working hard to achieve the standards of his skills and clinic.

I also visited Yamaguchi University for few hours and realized that the public institutions suffer the same problems as public institutions in Tanzania.

Hurio Sense is one of the role models for me and other members of the department who met him when he came in Tanzania. I visited his hospital and observed his excellent surgeries. Discussed with him about the Idiopathic tropical neuropathy in Tanzania which he became interested to work with us to research the problem. He negotiated Tomey company to donate an electroretinogram machine to encourage the research efforts. Thanks to Prof Hurio, we have started using the machine though there is a little challenge on the interpretation of the information. We hope this will be solved when the team comes in September 2012.

Sense Inoue, you are not the last! Still recalling the team work at your hospital. At Inoue eye clinic I observed, phaco surgeries, tear way and glaucoma surgeries. It was again a blessing to work with you. I understand with practice my skills will continue to improve. Your encouragement is commended. Thanks a lot for the presents of books for my sons.

I had also an opportunity to attend one of the Komaki Lions club meeting where I was given a chance to speak few words about Tanzania and the project. I was privileged to meet the people who donated the valuable equipment to my institution. It was an important activity as it was possible to meet the mayor of Komaki city a sister town of Moshi in Tanzania who commended the effort of the project through Lions Club.

Last but not least to mention and thank Yamasaki Sense is the logistics he made to make sure I attend the Japanese Annual ophthalmological congress in Tokyo. This was an excellent opportunity to listen to several scientific presentations. I was also given a chance to say few words about the

project. I met several people and friends interested to hear about the practice of ophthalmology in Tanzania. I came across ophthalmologists interested in research like Professor Sasaki who discussed possible research to Tanzania. I am looking forward to see this happening.

The last and most important part of my visit in Japan was the well planned social events. I had a welcoming and a farewell party at all the places I visited. These parties were an opportunity for me to test all the delicious Japanese dishes. I tested all types of Sushi. Tested all famous dishes in the prefectures I visited. Many thanks for the pharmaceutical companies who supported some of these events to mention some, Santen, Alcon, Tomey. It was a memorable time as I visited many of Temples and the zoo in Nagoya to see the animals which are not in the tropics. I had dinner too in some families. Thanks to all the families. All the meals were delicious!! During my stay I gained two kilograms. All the accommodations were five star Hotels, thanks for the sacrifice

Sincere thanks to pharmaceutical companies who allowed some of their employee to escort and arrange my movements within Japan. I was escorted and picked on time. I felt at home in every place I visited. This was also learning as to how best can care visitors at my institution.

Babu (Mr. Takeuchi) I have not forgotten you. Thanks for taking me to see the Hiroshima Dome and the University..

My sincere greetings and appreciation goes to anyone who was involved in one way or another to support my travel and stay in Japan. Special thanks to Tanzaniaphilia, Frank, Mr. Yoshida, staff of the all hospitals I visited and spouses and children of all the families I met.

I liked the Japanese culture and customs!! You really feel honored all the time when you are a foreigner in Japan! I receive many valuable presents from almost all of you, Thanks!!

You are all welcome to Tanzania!! Tanzania mondai nai!!

Cheers! Ohio Arigatoh auhzamas

Dr Anna Sanyiwa(MD,MPH)