

BSGE travelling bursary report

I am currently an ST7 trainee in London, approaching CCT and trying to complete my ATSM in benign abdominal and laparoscopic surgery.

The BSGE trainee travelling bursary gave me the opportunity to attend the 'advanced techniques in operative gynaecological endoscopy' course at the Institute of Research into Cancer of the Digestive Tract (IRCAD) in Strasbourg, France from the 6-8th March 2017. This course was led by Professor Wattiez who is an international expert in minimally invasive gynaecological surgery.

During the course, we were taught by numerous laparoscopic experts how to perform laparoscopic hysterectomies and other complex laparoscopic procedures and how to identify and manage complications.

The most valuable experience was learning all the techniques and tips for laparoscopic suturing from the different ways to load a needle to throwing a knot.

Professor Wattiez was a fantastic, enthusiastic teacher who shared videos and stories about his experiences and techniques, explaining evidence and theories behind his practice. His team of experts were constantly on hand to teach and support us.

I found the most enjoyable part of the course was the hands on live surgery of the anaesthetised pigs. This gave me the opportunity to practice suturing and knot tying, use different haemostatic instruments and perform procedures such as ureteric stenting, lymph node biopsies and a nephrectomy, all under the guidance and support of expert faculty who were able to offer hints and tips about performing procedures, suturing and use of equipment.

It was a luxury to work in an integrated theatre with several different types of expensive energy devices at our disposal. This allowed me to familiarise myself with equipment I cannot usually use at work. This experience has given me the confidence suturing, using ultrasonic energy devices and familiarity with procedures.

This course was an amazing opportunity to meet trainees and experts from around the world, share ideas and learning about current techniques and created a platform to learn how to further improve my clinical practice. I left the course eager to return to my own hospital and try out the new techniques I had learnt. After returning back to my own workplace, we had a bladder injury during a laparoscopic hysterectomy and I found the course had given me the baseline information about how to identify and treat the complication. This course gave me the confidence and skills to successfully complete my ATSM. Thank you to the BSGE for granting me a travelling bursary, which was very gratefully received.