



BAPRAS

British Association of Plastic
Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgeons

Student Elective Report

Please return to: secretariat@bapras.org.uk

Please complete this report form as honestly as possible so that others considering an elective may benefit from your experience. If you visited more than one place, please complete separate forms for each. Please bear in mind that we will be posting this report on our website for others to read.

Name	Luqman Al Hakim Tenang
Medical School	Imperial College London
Email (optional)	

Country visited	United Kingdom
City or town	London
Hospital/unit/clinic	Imperial Healthcare NHS Trusts
Dates visited	29/03/2022 to 30/04/2022
Supervising doctor	Ms. Amalina Bakri & Mr Richard Kwasnicki
Contact details of your host:	

Please give an overview of what you saw / did (200 words max)	<p>As part of my Intercalated BSc Research Project with Imperial College London, I led a study titled "Objective Assessment of Upper Limb Function in Patients with Breast Cancer-Related Lymphoedema."</p> <p>Through this research, I was given the opportunity to work with a team of academic plastic and breast surgeons based at Charing Cross Hospital. Our study's aim was to quantify the impact of breast cancer-related lymphoedema (BCRL), which would help clinicians better understand the burden of Lymphoedema on patients.</p> <p>The research conducted was a comparative observational study involving patients diagnosed with BCRL after receiving breast surgery. All of the patients recruited were advised to wear a pair of wearable activity monitors (WAM), one on each wrist for the course of one week, which will measure any arm movements. We then run a series of analyses with the data collected to spot any trends captured by the sensors.</p> <p>Our study highlighted that activity levels in the lymphoedema group were reduced by 32% when compared to non-lymphoedema patients. This study confirmed the significant burden of lymphoedema amongst breast cancer survivors.</p>
What were the best things about the visit? (120 words max)	<p>One of the best memories I made with this research project was the opportunity to visit patients in their homes and learn how lymphoedema has impacted their day-to-day living. It was inspirational to see these cancer survivors making adjustments in their lives and continuing to live purposefully despite the challenges posed by lymphoedema. Through conversing with these patients, I too uncovered the difficulties faced by</p>

	<p>them when seeking lymphoedema services. It seemed that the services with lymphoedema care were patchy, has very limited clinics and involved delayed diagnosis. This first-hand experience inspired me to work on a large-scale solution to improve patients' experiences with lymphoedema.</p>
<p>What problems did you encounter? (120 words max)</p>	<p>At the beginning stage of the research, recruiting patients was a huge challenge we faced as a team. Despite proactive communication with the supporting staff, I was not able to get a hold on the list of patients to be recruited. Even after obtaining the list, many of the follow-up clinics for lymphoedema were postponed.</p> <p>After raising this concern with my supervisor, we then discussed a number of ways to overcome this challenge. This led us to change our recruitment process from meeting patients at clinics to visiting their homes and recruiting them from there, which increased our recruitment rate.</p> <p>This experience taught me the importance of identifying and managing challenges.</p>
<p>What accommodation was provided?</p>	<p>No accommodation was provided.</p>
<p>Would you recommend this to someone else? (explain if necessary)</p>	<p>Through my experiences of leading a research study, I have learnt a lot of valuable skills both in clinical research and relating to working with people. Though it was challenging at times, I believe the skills I have acquired would make me a better clinician. With that, I can confidently say that my elective was worthwhile and I would recommend this to another medical student. The BAPRAS bursary definitely contributed to allowing me to take the extra mile in driving the research project to success and extracting as much value along the way.</p>
<p>Are you more likely to choose a career in plastic surgery as a result of this experience?</p>	<p>Yes. Through this research project, I was fortunate to learn a holistic approach to Lymphoedema care. I was able to work with surgeons performing the LYMPHA procedure, breast nurses diagnosing lymphoedema, and hear personal stories from lymphoedema patients. These experiences inspired me to be a plastic surgeon who will positively contribute in the care of Lymphoedema.</p>