

**Hand Surgery Fellowship Erasmus MC, Rotterdam.
3 months. Jan – March 2012**

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Objective

To further my interest and experience Paediatric / Congenital hand surgery

Also:

To gain further experience in Adult hand surgery

To learn new / alternative techniques

To experience plastic surgery in a different health-care system

To make professional contacts

Weekly programme

I had access to operating theatres and clinics in Erasmus, Sophia and Sint Fransiscus Gasthuis and also to the microsurgery skills centre. The usual weekly routine is shown below.

Weekly Activities	
Monday	Paediatric Hand Surgery (Sophia)
Tuesday	Microsurgery Skills Lab
Wednesday	Paediatric Hand Clinic (Sophia)
Thursday	Adult Hand Surgery or Clinic (EMC or SFG) Indication Meeting
Friday	Adult Hand Surgery or Clinic (EMC or SFG)

Sometimes I attended facial reconstruction theatres and assisted with major trauma cases during the evening.

I observed or assisted with 126 surgical cases.

Adult Hands 71, Paediatric Hands 42, Facial / Nasal 8, Other 5.

Paediatric Cases Seen

Summary of Paediatric Hand Cases		
	Clinic	Theatres
thumb hypoplasia	17	4
sybrachydactyly	16	3
syndactyly	14	8
polydactyly other	13	4
polydactyly thumb	12	4
apert hands	10	3
radial dysplasia	10	3
constriction ring	8	2
grieg syndrome	7	
neurological conditions	7	
arthrogryposis	6	
camptodactyly	6	
ulnar dysplasia	6	1
clasped thumb	4	
macroductyly	4	1
trauma	20	6
secondary syndactyly surgery		3
cleft hand		1
misc	37	
Total	197	43

Surgical skills

The microsurgery skills lab was available weekly. This was an excellent facility and I improved my microsurgical skill and confidence in these regular sessions and I completed 32 microvascular anastomoses.

Research

I helped Erik Walbeehm and David Krijgh with an outcome study of midcarpal stabilization in Ehlers Danlos Patients.

Summary of techniques experienced

Below is a list of techniques / cases which I had not previously experienced during my training.

- Management of radial dysplasia
- Tri-phalangeal thumb
- Ulnar dysplasia
- Grieg Syndrome
- No need for z-plastys to correct constriction rings
- 6 week paediatric leukoplast bandage for hand surgery
- Liga-clips for Stelling Type 1 postaxial polydactyly
- Beaver blade for paed surgery
- Needle fasciotomy with fat transfer
- Trapeziectomy – abductor pollicis longus and ECRL slings
- Wrist Arthroscopy using small scope – 1.9mm
- Endoscopic cubital tunnel decompression
- Scapholunate dissociation
 - Baxamura flap
 - ECRB tenodesis
- Blast injuries (fireworks)
- Rehab and tetraplegia practice

Other details

I gained insight into organizational aspects of the unit. The weekly Indication meeting was an excellent way of communicating the activity in the department, ensuring high quality surgical care and teaching.

I saw some telephone follow-up consultations taking place and I want to explore this further when I am practicing in the UK.

The system of training at Erasmus seems is well coordinated with trainees staying in Rotterdam for the whole of training except to do fellowships. This is much better than the UK model where we rotate between at least 3 or 4 units during training.

Summary

The fellowship at Erasmus was an excellent and enjoyable experience and I felt very welcome in the department. I improved my experience and learned a variety of new techniques which I will incorporate into my own practice. I look forward to visiting again one day. Thank you.