

BSSH Educational visit, Dhaka, Bangladesh May 25-27th 2019

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The BSSH Overseas Committee accepted an invitation to work with the Bangladesh Society for Surgery of the Hand (BdSSH) to help their efforts to improve the provision of hand surgery in this rapidly developing country. This is the first country we have worked in that has its own hand society. BdSSH was formed in 2008 and now has over 100 members with annual scientific meetings. Previous UK support has come from BFIRST with provision of burns care and tendon repair training.

Our faculty for a combined scoping visit and educational programme consisted of Steve Hodgson - Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon & BSSH Overseas Committee Chairman, Sanjib Majumder - Consultant Plastic Surgeon & BSSH Overseas Committee member, Matt Nixon - Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon, and finally, Shahrier Fazal - Senior Trauma & Orthopaedics trainee.

Following discussion with officers of the BdSSH, it was agreed to cover the topics of hand and wrist fractures, congenital hand and the spastic hand. The remainder of this report contains description of the experience from the UK trainee perspective (written by Sharier) and a summary of lessons learnt and suggested next steps for what should be a mutually beneficial relationship between the two societies

We first started planning this trip in October 2018 and within a few months we were arranging flights and accommodation. There were months on emails accompanied by video conference calls which helped to setup the groundwork for this trip. This was meant to be an initial visit as well as a scoping visit to see how we could help the Bangladesh Society for Surgery of the Hand (BdSSH)

I was the first to arrive in Bangladesh and took the opportunity to meet the local faculty and visit some of the local hospitals. Bangladesh is a developing country and one of the most populated countries in the world. The population density in Dhaka, the capital city is very high and as such, the hospitals are increasingly stretched. I met Dr Sajedur Faruquee at the Greenlife Hospital on Friday 24th May 2019. They had a full day of operating planned and it was mainly trauma cases. The workload is predominantly trauma cases with some elective operations. I was introduced to Prof Kairy, the founding member of the BdSSH. He then met some of the local registrars, and took the opportunity to go through the educational programme that was planned to start on Monday 27th May 2019.

Matthew Nixon arrived that morning and took some time to explore old Dhaka on his own to the surprise of the local faculty. In the eyes of the locals, he was either crazy or brave, or a combination of both.



Fig 1: Mr Nixon off to old Dhaka



Fig 2: Rickshaws resting



Fig 3: Poori and curry

The team then met the current president of the BdSSH, Prof Kalam in his luxurious office at the Plastic Surgical Unit at the Dhaka Medical College. After a short discussion, they were taken to the building site of the Sheikh Hasina National Institute for Burns and Plastic Surgery. The 500-bed hospital is said to be the biggest burns hospital in the world and will house a hand surgery department as well. It was supposed to be the original site of our 3-day workshop but is scheduled to open in July 2019. It looks to be a fantastic location and surely will be the site for future courses.



Fig 4: SHNIBP



Fig 5: The lecture theatre



Fig 6: ICU being built



Fig 7: View of new Dhaka from the roof



Fig 8: View of Old Dhaka from the roof

On Sunday, the rest of the faculty arrived. The location for the workshop was the Dhaka Club. The faculty from the UK also took up accommodation in the Guesthouse on the grounds of the Dhaka Club. The Dhaka Club is the oldest recreational organisation and social club in Bangladesh. It's history dates back to 1825 and was officially registered in 1911 by

the British! It has been described as “An oasis of calm in a frantic city, a colonial relic with several acres of lawns...”. The faculty felt this was a better place to stay as opposed to the 5-star hotels that surrounded us. This was probably a good decision as the guesthouse had a certain charm attached to it and it saved them from travelling in the hectic traffic of Dhaka.



Fig 9: Outside of Dhaka Club



Fig 10: Setup of room

After a lovely dinner, the faculty retired to their rooms in preparation for the busy 3 days ahead.

Despite it being very hot (around 35 degrees) and in the middle of the Holy month of Ramadan, there was a great turnout of around 40 to 45 delegates made up of plastic surgeons and orthopaedic surgeons of various grades. We were welcomed by Prof Abul Kalam, the president of the BdSSH, Dr Nakul Datta the Vice President, Dr Sajedur Faruquee the Secretary and the rest of the committee including Dr Krishnapyra Das, Dr Mohiudeen, Dr Tanvir Ahmed and the rest of the members of the BdSSH. Mr Steve Hodgson kicked off the talks with his welcome speech. The first day covered Hand Trauma and there were great talks by Mr Hodgson, Mr Sanjib Majumder from Leeds and some talks by me. Mr Majumder, being originally from Calcutta wowed the audience with his fluent Bengali and instantly made a connection with them.

The day ended with a talk by Prof Alam talking about hand surgery training in Bangladesh and the history of the BdSSH. It was very reassuring to see their vision of hand surgery training in Bangladesh and how it can fit in very well with the aims of the BSSH Overseas Mission. The highlight of his talk however was that they could not call themselves the BSSH as it was already taken by us!



Fig 11: Delegates waiting patiently



Fig 12: Mr Hodgson giving the welcome talk

The days ended at 2pm to allow for people to travel back home in time to break their fasts with their family. In the afternoon, the faculty took the opportunity to rest and recover from the jetlag. In the evening, the BdSSH invited the UK faculty for a Ramadan Buffet at the Intercontinental Hotel next door. The spread was amazing, and the UK faculty were able to sample many of the local delicacies. It was very good to speak to the members of the BdSSH and hear about their thoughts of their thoughts on the partnership with the BSSH. The faculty members were each given a souvenir of a “nouka” which is essentially a boat which is very symbolic in Bangladesh and happens also to be the logo of the current ruling party in the Government.

The 2nd day focused on wrist trauma and the talk on the DRAFFT Study generated a lot of discussion just as it does in the UK. The day ended with a talk by Dr Faruquee talking about the scope of hand surgery work in Bangladesh and it was clear to see that they had a very interesting case mix and saw many interesting cases. Their main work was trauma, but there was a huge backlog of cases and it could be seen that they were in need of more hand surgeons. They had a waiting time of about 3 months for tendon repairs! You could tell that many of the surgeons here were excellent and worked very long hours.

After the course, Mr Majumder got the help with 2 of the delegates to go saree shopping for his wife. I tagged along to experience the shopping malls. The malls were packed as it was leading up to Eid and everyone was buying gifts for family. The evening saw the faculty take a trip into old Dhaka to sample some of the best biryani made in Bangladesh and it was trip worth its while. They sampled some of the local desserts as well.



Fig 13: Old Dhaka



Fig 14: Waiting for the food to arrive



Fig 15: The queue near break fast time.



Fig 16: Famous Khachi Biryani

The final day focused on paediatric hand and hand flaps and the lectures by Mr Matthew Nixon and Mr Majumder covered the basics excellently. Prof Kalam was unable to give his closing speech as he had been called to the Ministry of Health with matters regarding to the opening of the Sheikh Hasina National Institute for Burns and Plastic Surgery. Instead, Dr Tanveer Ahmed, who will be speaking at the BSSH Overseas Day Symposium in Edinburgh later this year, delivered the talk on future developments and lessons learnt from these 3 days.



Fig 17: Paeds talk by Mr Nixon.



Fig 18: Audience hooked by Mr Majumder



Fig 19: Mr Majumder in his element

The delegates were all given certificates after filling up their feedback forms and they took the chance to take selfies with the UK faculty. You could tell that they had enjoyed themselves and were looking forward to the next visit.



Figure 20: Members of the BdSSH



Fig 21: Handing out of certificates

Mr Majumder and Mr Hodgson soon left for the airport after the close of the day and Mr Sarker left to visit some family. Mr Nixon met up with one of his registrars from Manchester who used to live in Bangladesh prior to moving to the UK and visited some of the local hospitals such as the National Institute of Traumatology & Orthopaedic Rehabilitation.



Fig 22: Mr Nixon finding the ads!



Fig 23: The operating theatre!



Fig 24: NITOR



Fig 25: The crowded inpatient wards

He made it back in one piece and caught his flight later in the evening.

Looking back, I felt that this was a trip which left a strong impression on me. I was grateful to the BSSH in helping this dream become a reality. I felt that both the UK faculty and the local faculty learnt so much from this trip. It is easy to see the local surgeons want to learn and develop the specialty of hand surgery in the UK and there is enough infrastructure there to help them have a very good hand surgery unit within the next 5 to 10 years. I made some very good friends with the UK faculty and the local delegates as well. The feedback was excellent and will help us plan for the future programmes.

BANGLADESH SOCIETY FOR SURGERY OF THE HAND/BRITISH SOCIETY FOR SURGERY OF THE HAND EDUCATIONAL VISIT MAY 27th 29th 2019 REFLECTIONS AND SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS

BSSH Faculty would like to thank the local hosts for their hospitality during the stay including efficient transportation to and from the airport on arrival and departure, the excellent dinner at the Intercontinental Hotel and for the excellent organisation both in advance and during the Educational Programme. We were very impressed by the current status of hand surgery in Bangladesh and convinced there is a huge potential for further development. BSSH is keen to support that development. This is BSSH's first Overseas Project in a country that already has hand surgeons, providing an excellent opportunity for productive collaboration.

PROGRAMME REFLECTIONS AND DELEGATE FEEDBACK

The following comments are based upon formal written feedback provided by 30 delegates and informal feedback gathered during the 3 days of the programme.

1. Overall feedback was generally positive with 24 out of 30 delegates rating the quality of CME A+ or A.
2. The most popular component of the programme was the discussion groups, the majority of the delegate feedback stating that this was the main thing that went well and

that it should be kept for future programmes. Discussion groups are a key component of our Educational Programmes being demonstrated to be one of the most effective methods of learning. We are keen that these are given more time in future programmes.

3. Most delegates requested practical hands-on content in the next programmes. This is something we would be keen to provide but experience has taught us not to commit to this in the first visit to a new country.
4. Twelve of the Plastic Surgical Trainees felt that course content did not compare to presumption, suggesting that we should share the content of the programme with all delegates in advance.
5. Having the meeting during Ramadan should not be repeated.

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS

The following are suggested on the basis of discussion with Dr Faruquee and Dr Tanveer at the end of the programme and supported by further discussions amongst the BSSH Faculty.

1. BSSH aim to contribute to the November 2019 BDSSH Scientific Meeting, making a contribution to the 1½ days of the meeting and aiming for a 1½ day Educational Programme immediately after the meeting. Sanjib Majumder to lead on behalf of BSSH, aiming to support hand surgery by having a Plastic Surgery and Orthopaedic components. Potential topic suggestions are a small bones workshop and nerve repair. Local faculty to have a key role in choosing topics.
2. Aim to have annual educational visits aiming to cover the hand surgery syllabus over a rolling 3 year schedule. All sessions to have practical components. We will work together to develop a shared Memorandum of Understanding to ensure clarity of commitment.
3. BDSSH to have access to BSSH educational resources. This could include choosing 5 Senior Trainees or newly appointed specialists to take part in the BSSH Webinars and explore electronic access to the Journal of Hand Surgery. BSSH prepared to invite one BDSSH representative to attend the BSSH/BFIRST Overseas Educational Day in Edinburgh on September 13th 2019.
4. Develop a plan for supporting regional training in hand surgery across Bangladesh, Nepal, Maldives, Sri-Lanka, Myanmar and Bhutan. BDSSH and BSSH to develop a joint funding bid to Tropical Hygiene Education Trust (THET) to support their training programme.