

*Voice of the International Students*

# VIS

医学研究科  
国際連携室だより

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## What is VIS ?

The International Relations Office of the Faculty of Medicine issues VIS to send out the live messages from International Students of Graduate School of Medicine and School of Medicine and promote the exchange of intercultural information. We hope VIS helps to cultivate intercultural communications and boost international exchanges.

VIS の発行の目的は、医学研究科・医学部の学生の生の声を外に出すことと、異文化間の情報交換を促進することです。VIS が異文化間のコミュニケーションを養い、国際交流を実行していくうえで役に立つことを望んでいます。

## Amazing Academic Adventure in Hokudai



**Conscilliah Rhombohl Menda (Papua New Guinea)**  
MMedSc., Hokkaido University Graduate School of Medicine

**B**efore I arrived, I was told that Sapporo is still cold but spring has already started. My idea of spring was sunshine and blooming flowers. So I must admit I didn't expect the huge layers of snow when I dragged my suitcase from the train station to the dormitory. All my idea of spring vanished upon the first sight as the train pulled out of New Chitose airport. And that was just the beginning of an amazing academic adventure in one of world's most snowiest city.

I tend to get asked a lot why I chose to come to Hokkaido. My reason is simple, to study and experience what's it like to live in a more colder environment. I didn't really set any expectation but I have to say Hokkaido is very beautiful. Yes even the winter is beautifully cold. And I say that looking past the slippery pathways.

If there's anything that I wished was done better would be the lectures delivered in the Graduate School of Medicine. I'm aware I was a minority in many lectures and so most of the lessons were delivered in Japanese. Learning Japanese language for four months wasn't enough to help me understand the contents or even comprehend the lectures. That is why I deeply appreciate those professors who made tremendous effort to translate some lectures and even exempt me from exams instead gave me a report assignment.

Despite the little hump, I am proud of what I've achieved as a student in Hokkaido University. I will forever be in debt of all the knowledge and skills that I've acquired from my supervisors and colleagues. If I were to recommend Hokudai to others, I will whole heartedly do so.

# WELCOME EXCHANGE STUDENTS!

Importance of clinical training abroad is recognized by many medical schools. Students may be given opportunities to treat patients with illness they would not normally encounter in their home countries, learn about different procedures and health systems, increase cultural awareness and understanding.

In June 2015, four 3rd year students of Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine, University of Hong Kong participated in 4-week clinical clerkships at Hokkaido University. We would like to share their stories of experiences at Hokudai.



Students from the University of Hong Kong with Dean Kasahara (center), Vice-Dean Yoshioka (left) and Dr. Murakami (International Relations Office).



**Vei Chen Fan**

受入診療科：循環器内科、消化器外科Ⅱ

I spent four unforgettable weeks at the Cardiovascular Medicine and Gastrointestinal Surgery II departments at Hokkaido University this summer.

Two things struck me particularly. The first was how nice and willing to teach the doctors in Hokkaido University were, patiently explaining new or difficult concepts when necessary; the doctor-student relationship was much friendlier than what I was used to in Hong Kong. The second was the more practical, hands-on approach to medical teaching. I had opportunities to perform echocardiography in the Cardiovascular Medicine department, and to practice laparoscopic suturing and bowel end-to-end anastomosis in the

Gastrointestinal Surgery II department, all of which were new experiences for me.

I also had the chance to meet and become friends with people in Hokkaido: doctors, students, and their friends. We would go out for dinner together and bond over some delicious Japanese food and drinks. Everyone was really friendly, and I had many opportunities to practice my Japanese and experience the local culture firsthand. I had a great time and almost did not want to go back to Hong Kong!

I sincerely thank everyone who made my time at Hokkaido truly enjoyable. I will treasure these wonderful memories and would love to visit again in the future!

I was so impressed by all doctors and classmates I met at Hokkaido University. All doctors were so kind and passionate in teaching. They were willing to explain different medical cases with me in English, as I didn't understand Japanese.

In cardiovascular medicine department, I performed echocardiogram for the first time. It was amazing. Also, I was surprised that medical students in Hokkaido could join clinical conferences which I liked so much. I think medical students can gain a lot of clinical knowledge from all the cases. In ENT department, I observed a lot of surgeries I haven't observed before and doctors would explain what they were

doing after the surgeries. I also learnt to use the ultrasound to look for some thyroid problems.

Besides, all my classmates were also very nice. It was a very good opportunity to meet new friends. I met four groups of fifth grade medical students and all were so friendly. They invited me to drinking parties which I enjoyed very much. They also helped me a lot by explaining Japanese phrases on the lecture notes.

All in all, I enjoyed so much in four weeks. I miss the life in Hokkaido University. It is an unforgettable experience! I hope I can visit Hokkaido again someday as I love this city so much!



### Chun Yiu Leung

受入診療科：循環器内科、耳鼻咽喉科

The one-month attachment at Hokkaido University Hospital had been a wonderful experience for me.

During my attachment at Department of Gastroenterological Surgery I, I was given many opportunities to scrub in and join the surgeries. The doctors were all very nice, who were willing to spend extra time explaining the procedures in English to me. It was really eye-opening when seeing cases that were very rare in Hong Kong, such as Echinococcosis and pancreas transplantation. In Hong Kong, there is no

cure for type I Diabetes Mellitus yet. Pancreas transplantation will certainly be a future hope for the patients in Hong Kong!

On the other hand, I have met many friends at Hokkaido University as well! All medical students I met were very friendly and helpful. Without their help, it would not be so easy for me to be settled in Sapporo. Also, taking part in the Japanese drinking parties and karaoke were brand-new experiences to me! I had a really enjoyable stay at Japan, a huge thank you to everyone I met in the hospital!



### Wai-Yin Pearl Kwong

受入診療科：消化器外科 I、循環器内科

Working in the Pediatrics Department and Cardiovascular Medicine Department was a truly rewarding experience. I was honored to be taught by some of the greatest minds in both departments, who have shown great enthusiasm towards teaching. It might be at first challenging to survive in ward teaching and conferences where Japanese was the primary language, but thanks to the doctors and students, who were kind enough to do the translation, and sometimes illustrations and sketches of some complex anatomy when things did not translate, I managed to complete the attachment and gain a considerable amount of knowledge in the practical aspect of pediatrics and

cardiovascular medicine. I felt extremely fortunate to have been able to work in such an inclusive environment where questions were encouraged, speeches were inspiring, regardless of the language that the substance was delivered.

This experience would not be complete if there was not the Japanese cultural and 'play-hard' element. I was invited to countless dinners and parties. I had a great time with all the doctors and students, some of who even volunteered to be my guide when I was sightseeing in Sapporo. I really enjoyed the time we spent together and I would like to publicly thank them for their care, help and kindness.



### Hong Wan Ivan Lau

受入診療科：小児科、循環器内科

Hong Wan Ivan Lau (left) with 6th year medical students (Takeshi Uozumi, Yosuke Nakano and Naoki Ishibashi)

## Exchange Programme at Taipei Medical University

### Hitoki Arisato (Japan)

Final (6th) Year Student, Hokkaido University School of Medicine



(left to right) Hiroki Akamatsu, Lydia Wang (International Office/TMU), Mio Shibata and Hitoki Arisato

It was not my first time participating in clinical clerkship abroad and not my first time going to Taipei either. However, this experience is definitely one of my best memories.

In June 2015, three medical students from Hokkaido University including me were accepted to go to Taipei Medical University (TMU) for

two week clinical clerkship. I spent two weeks at General Surgery Department. During my stay there, all the doctors and an intern student, who was in charge of me, were so kind that they always helped me and allowed me to go anywhere I wanted to go, for example out-patient clinic, operation room, bariatric surgery department and so on. Thanks to these kind people, I could learn how doctors worked in Taiwan, also the difference of medical system between Japan and Taiwan.

Furthermore, when students study

abroad, I think taking communication with local students is very important. In May 2014, two students came from TMU to Hokkaido University for clinical clerkship, and one of them already started working at TMU Hospital as a medical doctor. Thanks to my friend, I could enjoy Taiwan-style drinking party and share how medical students spend their days at the university and their culture.

Of course, it was very hard to talk about medical issues in English because English is a second language for me as well as for Taiwanese doctors. But I'm sure this experience will help me grow up more and broaden my view. Thanks to all the people I met there, I could spend a valuable time.



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