

Voice of the International Students

VIS

医学研究院
国際連携部門だより
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What is VIS ?

The International Relations Division of the Faculty of Medicine issues VIS to send out the live messages from International Students of Graduate School of Medicine, Graduate School of Biomedical Science and School of Medicine, and to 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、医学院・医理工学院・医学部医学科の留学生の生の声を発信することと、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立つことを望みます。

WELCOME EXCHANGE STUDENTS

From Medical University of Vienna, Austria

My clinical elective at the Department of Neurology at Hokkaido University Hospital was an outstanding and truly enriching experience. From the very first day, I was welcomed with warmth and kindness, which made me feel immediately integrated into the team. The atmosphere within the department was highly professional yet supportive, allowing me to learn in a setting where questions were encouraged and collaboration was valued.

The elective was excellently organized and provided me with a comprehensive overview of neurological practice. Thanks to a clear schedule, I was able to gain insight into a wide range of clinical settings, including outpatient clinics, inpatient ward work, daily ward rounds, journal clubs, neuroradiological case conferences and interdisciplinary team meetings. In addition, I had the privilege of receiving private lectures from faculty members, which made the experience even more personal and intellectually stimulating.

What impressed me most was the respectful, patient-centered approach consistently demonstrated, as well as the outstanding teamwork within the department. These qualities not only created an excellent learning environment but also left a lasting impression on me. The respectful and supportive atmosphere made it easy to learn, ask questions, and contribute wherever possible.

I am deeply grateful for this opportunity, and I would wholeheartedly recommend the elective at Hokkaido University Hospital to other international students.



Lena Rabacher

Department of Neurology
Period: August 25 – September 19, 2025

WELCOME EXCHANGE STUDENTS

From Chulalongkorn University, Thailand

Firstly, I have to thank Hokkaido University for giving me an opportunity to be part of the clinical observation program for 4 weeks. It was such a very great and memorable time spending here. I have learned a lot from professors and residents who have highly outstanding knowledge and experience. I have learned many things that I have never known and never practiced before which greatly expand my knowledge and experience.

I was in 2 departments during my programs, rehabilitation and neurology. In rehabilitation, I have learned a lot about dysphagia and other specialties of rehabilitation as well like MSK rehabilitation, pulmonary rehabilitation etc. During the time in rehabilitation medicine, professors were taking private classes for me many times and demonstrated me how to diagnose patient with dysphagia using fluoroscope and endoscope for a precise grading of dysphagia level in order to treat patients more accurately for their condition, which was very educational. The staffs and residents here are also very kind, welcoming and supportive since the staffs explained all the information in their lectures, at OPD and ward round very clearly and answered all my questions very well so that I could truly understand all the information thoroughly while residents also helped explain many useful information about patients and some procedures.



Kanntatee Harnkijroong

Department of Rehabilitation Medicine
Department of Neurology
Period: September 8 – October 3, 2025

In neurology, every staff and resident are very kind and supportive. They tried at their best effort to explain me the details of many diseases from how the patient is diagnosed to treatment plan in both OPD and IPD and I had seen lots of useful and proper way of how to approach patient professionally such as manners and working processes. Moreover, they taught me lots of useful diagnosis procedures such as EMG and also demonstrated how to use those procedures and how they can be applied to patients. I also had an opportunity to observe both muscle and nerve biopsy in the operating room with residents explained and clarified all the procedures and had an opportunity to attend neuroradiology conference which expanded more perspective of neurological diseases.

This rotation in Hokkaido University has broadened me lots of knowledge and experience. The staffs and residents are very welcoming and helpful. I have learned a lot from them. This is the experience that I will never forget.

From The University of Queensland, Australia

I am extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to complete my observership at Hokkaido University Hospital, where I joined the Cardiovascular Medicine and Cardiovascular Surgery departments.

In my time with the Cardiovascular Medicine Department, I was exposed to a wide breadth of clinical practice across subspecialties in echocardiography, electrophysiology, and interventional cardiology. A unique experience I had was seeing hand-grip exercise stress tests, which I learnt are an avant garde technique only practiced at this hospital.

With the Cardiovascular Surgery Department, I had continuous opportunities to scrub in and witness open heart surgeries up close, and also had the novel experience of watching operations in real time through 3D glasses. I am thankful that the team always ensured I felt involved by in clinical discussions and took the extra effort to explain each operation with hand-drawn diagrams.

Outside of the hospital, I had amazing experiences exploring Hokkaido's beautiful autumn foliage across its natural parks, and had fun trips to Hakodate, Noboribetsu, Jozankei, and the Shakotan coast.

I am very thankful to all the people who helped make this experience possible and I want to share my gratitude for all the small kindnesses I was given that accumulated into such an unforgettable trip!



Nathan Nguyen

Department of Cardiovascular Medicine
Department of Cardiovascular Surgery
Period: September 22 – October 31, 2025

WELCOME EXCHANGE STUDENTS

From Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

I chose Hokkaido University for my medical school overseas elective because it is a partner school with my university, making the application procedure straightforward. I also wanted to see Hokkaido as it is a beautiful place, and the university campus itself is picturesque. Everyone, from the International Relations department, medical school staff and hospital staff was friendly and welcoming. They included me in case discussions and I was allowed to observe the patient resuscitations and inpatient treatment. There were many learning opportunities due to the case mix the hospital received, and the doctors were passionate about teaching. They answered our questions and put in effort to translate for us when there were terms we did not understand. It was also a good opportunity to observe differences in how medicine is practiced in Japan compared to my home country, Singapore.

I would wholeheartedly recommend placements at Hokkaido University Hospital to international medical students. However, it would be best for students who speak at least some Japanese as all the conferences are in Japanese and speaking the language would be very helpful in understanding.

I am very grateful for the opportunity to do a clinical elective at Hokkaido University Hospital. I have learnt a lot and truly enjoyed my time in Hokkaido.



Chia Shu-En, Stephanie

Department of Acute and Critical Care Medicine (Emergency Med.)
Period: September 29 - October 10, 2025

During my two-week clinical placement at the Department of Acute and Critical Care Medicine, Hokkaido University, I had the valuable opportunity to observe emergency and critical care practices in a highly advanced, well-equipped environment. I attended daily morning conferences and observed several resuscitations and emergency interventions, including Priority 1 cases such as a lithium overdose and a cardiogenic shock, for which extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO) was used as part of the resuscitation.



Hong Jia Jun, Athan

Department of Acute and Critical Care Medicine (Emergency Med.)
Period: September 29 - October 10, 2025

What stood out most to me was the department's exceptional teamwork and composure during high-pressure situations. The staff demonstrated seamless multidisciplinary collaboration among physicians, nurses, and other healthcare professionals, ensuring efficient and coordinated patient care. Witnessing this emphasized how effective communication and clear role allocation directly influence outcomes in critical settings.

This rotation was also unique in exposing me to the complexity of cases seen in a tertiary emergency department, which differs greatly from what we typically encounter in hospitals in Singapore.

Overall, this placement deepened my understanding of acute and critical care medicine and provided valuable insight into Japan's medical system and work culture. I am sincerely grateful to the faculty and staff of Hokkaido University for their kindness, guidance, and willingness to share their expertise.

WELCOME EXCHANGE STUDENTS

From Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Coming to Hokkaido University to study Rheumatology, I had no idea what to expect. Whilst my seniors who visited beforehand spoke fondly of their internship at Hokkaido University, I had no idea if I would enjoy it as much as they did. Thankfully, my worries were for naught. Despite not knowing Japanese, the doctors of the Rheumatology department welcomed my friend (Anthony) and I with open arms. They always took the time to translate for us, to make sure we were learning, and to make sure we always felt welcomed. I was especially surprised and heartened when the Rheumatology team invited and treated us to a dinner on a Friday night! Our experiences in the hospital were also very interesting. The medical cases were very different from Singapore, constituting a broad spectrum of diseases such as Systemic Sclerosis, Dermatomyositis and Behcet's disease – all which are rare in Singapore! We also had the opportunity to witness the research done by the Rheumatology department, which was an eye-opening experience, given my limited experience in lab work. Thank you Hokkaido University, for such a beautiful 2 weeks! Special shoutout goes to Professor Kohei Karino and his invaluable guidance during our time there!



Dalton Chee Shaohan

Department of Rheumatology, Nephrology and Endocrinology
Period: September 29 – October 10, 2025

The International Hour

The 71st International Hour

Multicultural Meeting
from Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Australia

Presenter: Su, Yin-Chu
Presenter: Jason & Keyi
Presenter: Jackie & Gloria
photo by Thomas

Time & Date:
Thursday, Nov. 27, 2025 12:00-12:45
Come and go freely as your class allows
Venue: Medical Conference Room
IP Administration Bldg.
School of Medicine

Participation is Free
Snacks & Beverages will be served

Organizer:
International Relations Office
relation@med.hokudai.ac.jp

Hokkaido University
Graduate School of Medicine
International Relations Office

The 71st International Hour – Taiwan, Hong Kong and Australia

We are delighted to report that we have held the International Hour!

On 27 November 2025, groups of three universities presented on topics related to their home country for the 71st International Hour.

This time, we featured presenters from Taiwan, Hong Kong and Australia, all in clinical year and started to take clinical electives at Hokkaido University School of Medicine this November.

The presenters:

Mr. Su, Yin-Chu from National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University, Taiwan,

Ms. Wong, Tsz Ki, Jackie & Ms. Ng, Wing Tung, Gloria from the University of Hong Kong,

Hong Kong,

and Ms. Keyi Lau & Mr. Jason Lin from the University of New South Wales, Australia.

We thoroughly enjoyed this multicultural time together!



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