

Voice of the International Students

VIS

医学研究院
国際連携部門だより

(May 2026
Vol.43)

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 Technical University of Munich, Germany

My clinical placement in the Department of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery at Hokkaido University Hospital was an exceptional and highly rewarding experience. During my time there, I had the opportunity to gain valuable insight into a wide range of surgical procedures and clinical practices.

One of the most memorable aspects of this placement was the chance to observe numerous operations. The surgical team generously allowed me to be present in the operating room many times, where I could closely observe procedures, ask questions, and gain a deeper understanding of reconstructive techniques. In addition to the operating room experience, I also spent time in the outpatient clinic and on the hospital ward, which allowed me to see different aspects of patient care and the full clinical workflow.

Beyond the educational experience, what made this placement truly special was the people I met. The doctors and staff were incredibly skilled, inspiring, and passionate about their work. At the same time, they were exceptionally welcoming, kind, and supportive. I was even warmly invited to several social events, which made me feel very included and allowed me to experience Japanese hospitality.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the entire department, and especially to my supervisor, Dr. Maeda, for his guidance, generosity, and support throughout my stay. This experience has been truly unforgettable and will remain an important part of my medical education.



Isabell Helfenbaeum

Department of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery
Period: February 9 – March 13, 2026

WELCOME EXCHANGE STUDENTS

From Ludwig-Maximilian-University Munich, Germany

My name is Mira Sedlak, and I am a fifth-year medical student from Munich, Germany. I am very grateful for the opportunity to complete an elective at Hokkaido University Hospital in the Acute and Critical Care Department. During the five weeks of my stay, I had the chance to observe many interesting and challenging cases. As a tertiary care facility, the severity and complexity of the patients' conditions initially surprised me, but it also



Mira Sedlak

Department of Acute and Critical Care Medicine (Emergency Med.)
Period: February 9 – March 13, 2026

allowed me to gain insight into emergency situations that I had not previously encountered.

Observing different approaches and protocols in emergency medicine was particularly fascinating. I was impressed by the calmness and professionalism of the doctors, even in critical situations. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Ota from the Trauma Surgery Department. Through his explanations and surgeries, I learned a great deal, and my interest in this field grew even stronger. I greatly appreciated that he always took the time to answer my questions and explain procedures.

Beyond the hospital experience, I was also impressed by Hokkaido itself. Its beautiful nature, especially in the winter snow, was truly captivating. Finally, I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the partnership between LMU Munich and Hokkaido University, which made this elective possible. International exchange opportunities like this are incredibly valuable for medical students.

During my stay at Hokkaido University, I had the wonderful opportunity to gain insight into the Japanese healthcare system while also experiencing the culture, food, and beautiful nature of Hokkaido. My time in the emergency department was particularly impressive. Observing the doctors and medical staff showed me how important professionalism, teamwork, and efficiency are in providing high-quality patient care.

During my placement, I was also able to attend three trauma surgery operations. Watching these procedures gave me a deeper understanding of surgical practice and the structured workflows in Japanese hospitals. I found it especially interesting to see how certain medical processes and professional attitudes differ from those in Germany. Experiencing these different perspectives was both inspiring and very valuable for my future career and I am deeply thankful for this opportunity.

Beyond the hospital, I greatly enjoyed exploring the Hokkaido University campus. The historic buildings and beautiful green spaces create a very special atmosphere. I also visited the Hokkaido University Museum and the famous Clock Tower, where I learned more about the university's history and the wide range of its faculties.

I am very grateful for the opportunity to spend five weeks at Hokkaido University. It was truly a privilege to be part of this experience, and I sincerely thank everyone for their warm hospitality and for welcoming me so kindly. I am truly looking forward to welcoming exchange students from Hokkaido University to our partner program at LMU.



Julia Ellmann

Department of Acute and Critical Care Medicine (Emergency Med.)
Period: February 16 - March 19, 2026

WELCOME EXCHANGE STUDENTS

From Mahidol University, Thailand

I am very happy to have had the opportunity to participate in the elective program at Hokkaido University. It was a meaningful experience that allowed me to learn both academically and culturally.

During my time in the Department of Cardiovascular Medicine, I was able to observe the daily clinical workflow and many cardiovascular procedures. Most days began with morning ward rounds, where the team discussed patient conditions and management plans. After that, I had the chance to observe several interventions such as TAVI, M-TEER, catheter ablation for arrhythmia, echocardiography, right heart catheterization, and PCI. I also observed outpatient clinics, including follow-up visits for patients with heart transplantation and LVAD support. These experiences helped me better understand the practical aspects of cardiovascular medicine and the teamwork involved in patient care.

Outside of the academic experience, this elective was also very memorable. It was my first time seeing snow, which was very exciting for me. I also enjoyed the beautiful scenery of the city and the local food, which was delicious and unique. The professors and senior residents were very kind and supportive, and they helped explain many things while I was observing the procedures.

As a fourth-year medical student from the Faculty of Medicine Siriraj Hospital, Thailand, this elective broadened my perspective and was a very valuable experience.



Pacin Sinsawasmongkol

Department of Cardiovascular Medicine
Period: February 16 – March 13, 2026

From Catholic University of Korea, South Korea

Hello, I would like to begin by expressing my sincere gratitude for the opportunity to participate in this four-week internship. I have focused on the experiences that left the strongest impression on me.

First, I had the opportunity to gain hands-on experience with the MRI scanning process. It was extremely valuable to operate the MRI equipment directly. I was involved in activating the magnetic field, adjusting the patient bed, setting the scan range using low-resolution scans, and configuring the desired imaging sequences by adjusting various parameters. Based on the data obtained through this process, I also delivered a student presentation in radiology.

Second, I found the case of AI development for the quantitative evaluation of surgical skills particularly interesting. This research, initiated in response to the needs of neurosurgeons, utilized methods such as analyzing the variance in the trajectories of surgical instruments. I found this approach especially novel and memorable.



Park, Kiyong

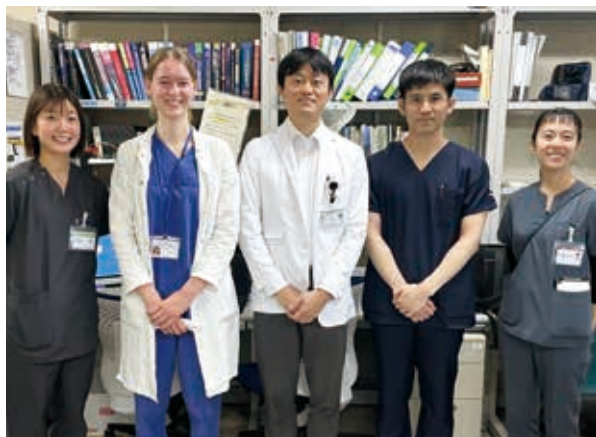
Department of Diagnostic Imaging
Period: March 16 – April 10, 2026

Lastly, I would like to share my impressions of the medical environment in Japan. Overall, physicians appeared to have a relatively more balanced workload, which seemed to allow them more time for collaboration with researchers. It was common to see researchers actively participating in clinical settings, observing procedures, and discussing technical improvements with medical staff. There was also strong investment in research infrastructure, such as the acquisition of expensive MRI equipment dedicated to animal studies. I felt that such an environment provides an important foundation for fostering innovation and interdisciplinary research. As someone with a strong interest in basic science and engineering, I truly appreciated the opportunity to experience this environment firsthand.

WELCOME EXCHANGE STUDENTS

From Eberhardt-Karls University Tübingen, Germany

During my clinical placement in the Department of Cardiovascular Medicine at Hokkaido University, I had a very positive and enriching experience. I particularly enjoyed gaining insight into the daily clinical routine and being part of the department over several weeks.



Emilia Schneider

Department of Cardiovascular Medicine
Period: February 24 - March 19, 2026

My days typically included morning case discussions, ward rounds, and time spent in different clinical settings such as the catheter laboratory, the operating room, and the outpatient department. Being able to follow procedures and discussions in these environments was especially valuable and gave me a broader understanding of the specialty.

What stood out to me was the structured and calm working atmosphere within the team. It was interesting to see how clinical decisions were discussed and how patient care was organized in a different healthcare system.

Living in Sapporo was also an important part of this experience. Adjusting to a new environment and language required some adaptation, but it was very rewarding. I especially appreciated the winter atmosphere and the campus.

As a suggestion, offering small opportunities for practical involvement could further enhance the experience for future students.

This experience gave me a better understanding of both the specialty and everyday clinical work in a different system. It was a valuable opportunity for me.

International Hour

The 72nd International Hour – Switzerland

We are pleased to announce that we will hold the next International Hour in June 2026.

We, the International Relations Division, are hosting the event to welcome exchange students as speakers and share students' knowledge of the cultural backgrounds of their individual countries.

On Tuesday, June 9, we welcome a student from Switzerland, Mr. Arnaud Séchaud from University of Basel, as a presenter of the 72nd International Hour.

Those who just missed the last meeting can always catch up with us. We look forward to having you!

<Event Information>

• Date/Time: Tuesday, June 9, 2026 @ 12:00- 12:45

Come and go freely as your class allows.

• Venue: Medium Conference Room, 1F Administration Building, Graduate School of Medicine

Admission is Free. Snacks and Beverages will be served.

* Registration preferred. Still, we welcome walk-ins!

Coming Soon!





Hokkaido University
Graduate School of Medicine
International Relations Office
cordially invites you to join

The 72nd **International Hour**



Basel, Switzerland
Swiss, but different

Presenter: Arnaud Séchaud (University of Basel)
Date & Time: Tuesday June. 9th, 2026 12:00- 12:45
Venue: Medium Conference Room, 1F Administration Bldg.





Participation is Free
Snacks and Beverages will be served

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





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Issued by the International Relations Division, Faculty of Medicine, Hokkaido University

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