

**Faculty of Medicine Siriraj Hospital,
Mahidol University**

Siriraj Fellow Exchange Program

To University of Florida, USA

Period of Visit from 05/01/19 to 05/30/19



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Study Year: Year 1, Pediatric Rheumatology Fellow

Overseas Clinical Elective Rotation Final Report

1. Introduction

My name is Sirikarn Tangcheewinsirikul. I have graduated medical degree from the Faculty of Medicine Ramathibodi Hospital and residency training in pediatrics from Maharaj Nakorn Rachasima Provincial Hospital. I am currently a first year fellow-in-training at the Division of Rheumatology, Department of Pediatrics, Faculty of Medicine Siriraj Hospital.

2. University Review



The Department of Pediatrics at the University of Florida, Health Shands Children's Hospital located in Gainesville, comprises of faculty staff in many divisions including allergy-immunology-rheumatology, infectious disease, nephrology, endocrinology, hematology and oncology, all of which dedicate to the highest quality of patient care, research, and educational activities devoted to improving the health of children.

3. Expectation and Objective

I am very interested in pursuing a medical elective overseas at The University of Florida, Health Shands Children's Hospital to strengthen my knowledge and clinical experiences in pediatric rheumatology. The reasons to support my decision for choosing this institution are as follows:

Firstly, I would like to gain more knowledge and clinical experiences in pediatric rheumatic diseases which are rare in Thailand, such as autoinflammatory diseases, sarcoidosis, and juvenile psoriatic arthritis. I hope that I will have the chance to observe and see some patients with rare diseases that I have not yet encountered during my training.

Secondly, I would be most interested in attending the biologics infusion clinic, particularly those which do not exist in Thailand. I would like to learn more about the drugs,

especially the mechanism of actions, side effects, monitoring protocols, and organization of the services provided for the patients.

Thirdly, I would be very pleased to attend and observe musculoskeletal ultrasonography from pediatric rheumatologists certified with Musculoskeletal Ultrasound Certification in Rheumatology (RhMSUS). Presently, such certification and formal training for rheumatologists has not existed in Thailand. My aim is to further train and be able to perform ultrasonography in my patients at the pediatric rheumatology clinic at Siriraj Hospital because ultrasonography is a minimally invasive procedure which could aid diagnosis and management.

4. Knowledge/Experience gained

The division of rheumatology consists of four attending physicians and one fellow. I mostly shadowed Associate Professor Akaluck Thatayatikom, pediatric rheumatology fellowship training director of Health Shands Children's Hospital. He is one of the two who received Musculoskeletal Ultrasound Certification in Rheumatology (RhMSUS) in Florida. I had the opportunity to experience the rare diseases that I have never seen before such as periodic fever, aphthous ulcer, pharyngitis, adenitis (PFAPA), STAT3 mutation gain of function, pediatric Sjögren syndrome, Blau syndrome, and juvenile psoriatic arthritis. I had the opportunity to attend both in-patient and out-patient settings within the division.

Moreover, I had the chance to attend the biologics infusion clinic which provided service to so many patients. They receive regular biologic drug infusions by the one-day service clinic, similar to that of Siriraj Hospital, although there are more varieties of biologic agents compared to Thailand. For example, in a patient with systemic juvenile idiopathic arthritis (SJIA) having high grade fever, we have to find out the cause of fever whether it comes from infection or the active disease itself. Interleukin-1 (IL-1) is major cytokine that plays role in active SJIA disease. Anakinra, a short acting anti-IL1, could be considered as a guide because if the fever subsides after Anakinra injection, the cause is likely active disease but if fever persists the direction of treatment has to change to eradicate the infectious cause. In that way, biologics become helpful to clinician. However, Anakinra is currently not available in Thailand. Therefore, in the resource limited settings like Thailand, our management nowadays is waiting for bacterial growth on hemoculture at least 3 days, and if there are no positive results, then methylprednisolone or Tocilizumab (anti-IL6R) could be the choices for the patient.

I had the opportunity to visit Doctor Cha at oral medicine clinic. She is a dentist who expertise in Sjögren syndrome. Apart from her reserch about salivary analysis in Sjögren

syndrome, she collaborated with Doctor B, pathologist who do salivary gland biopsy himself. Interestingly most pediatric Sjögren syndrome has anti-SSA/RO and anti-SSB/La negative but proved by sicca symptoms and salivary gland abnormality.



Doctor Thatayatikom schedules MSK ultrasound clinic on every Thursday. This clinic affirms me that MSK ultrasound is a minimally invasive procedure which could aid diagnosis and management. Children may not be able to explain well what happened with their joints or limbs but this procedure can help whether they have arthritis or just periartthritis. Aside from MSK ultrasound, procedures performed on salivary glands (parotid gland and submandibular gland) were done and this could detect the anatomical abnormality found in Sjögren syndrome as well.

5. Benefits

As I mentioned that I am very interested in pursuing a medical elective overseas to strengthen my knowledge and clinical experiences in pediatric rheumatology. I experienced cases with autoinflammatory syndromes, pediatric Sjögren syndrome, salivary gland biopsy and pathology in pediatric patients first time in my life. My acquisition of knowledge is more effective by seeing the patient rather reading the textbooks because I encounter the real patients to experience pattern recognition of the diseases and ultrasonography by myself. Apart from learning, I am more than happy to pass on my skills and knowledge to my colleagues such as medical students and residents.

6. Life in abroad

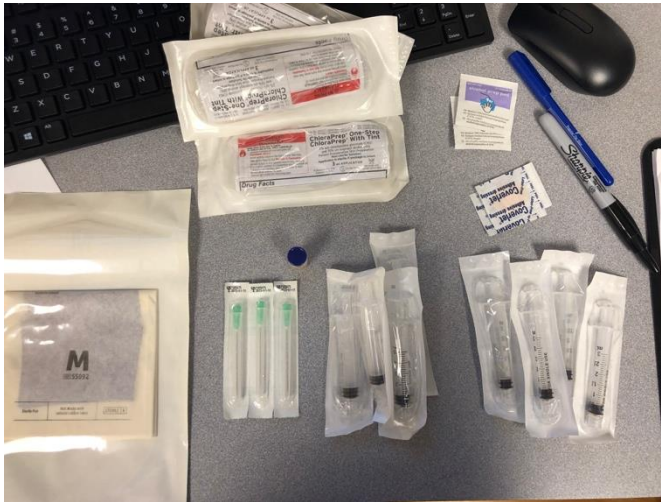
I stayed with my pediatric rheumatology colleague from Ramathibodi Hospital near the campus. We learn a lot how to live a good life outside in the country area. We cooked together and also took the opportunity to explore Florida on weekends. Nowadays, the world's economy has changed. A majority of people prefer online shopping because the free-shipping and returnable goods within 30 days of purchases. Some of the department stores were closed and surprisingly turned into a hospital with out-patient clinics and minor surgery

clinics. This also lead me to think more thoroughly about the future world's economic directions.

7. Future plan

As fore my future plans, it would be great if I have the chance to participate the Musculoskeletal Ultrasound Certification in Rheumatology (RhMSUS) or another program in a European country to assist the pediatric rheumatology group in Thailand and, foremost, to enable me in taking the best care to my patients.

8. Recommendations



If possible, it would be great to extend the period of studying abroad to more than 4 weeks in order to gain more experiences and attend more academic activities such as synovial biopsy or ultrasound guide arthrocentesis with steroid intra-articular in operating room. In UF, the fellowship program takes a period of 3 years. Fellows will take absolutely one year to do only research

and two years for mainly clinical in each division and a few months for elective program within those two years. This also make me think about my training because at Siriraj Hospital, there are a diversity and large volume of patients that make me enhance my clinical skills, but had limitation of time to do the research project.