



# APSS NEWS

News From Your Regional Spine Society

Issue 9 / Dec 2019  
www.apssonline.org

## President Elect's Message



Dear Colleagues and Members,

The APSS wrapped up the year 2019 with the APSS Operative Course in Lahore, Pakistan, and the inaugural APSS Spine Cadaver Course in collaboration with Tzu Chi University in Hualien, Taiwan. I am pleased to report that both the events attracted many surgeons from the region! You may read more about these courses in this issue.

To promote our aim of advancing education in spine surgery, APSS strives to continue offering more fellowship opportunities to spine surgeons in the Asia Pacific region. The 2020 APSS DePuy Synthes Clinical Fellowship, APSS-SICOT DePuy Synthes Spine Exchange Fellowship, APSS Medtronic Fellowship, APSS Miraculus Fellowship and APSS-Ganga Hospital Fellowship have opened for applications. I invite young spine surgeons from all chapters to submit their applications and take advantage of these learning opportunities. There is more information about these fellowships on APSS website. In this issue, we will be featuring highlights from our past award recipients so that you can have a glimpse of their experiences.

In addition to fellowship programmes, we have established a Research Committee that aims to promote academic excellence and integrity within APSS. The Committee has been actively generating international collaborative projects that will contribute towards raising the academic standards of society and optimising research output. I would like to take this opportunity to strongly encourage all members to submit collaborative research proposals that would improve the clinical outcome for our patients. Visit our website for more information about APSS Collaborative Research.

While we are already busy preparing for the APSS 2020 Annual Meeting in Shanghai, China from June 5 to 7, 2020, we are also gearing up for the upcoming APSS Mumbai Operative Spine Course from February 13 to 15, 2020 and the SpineWeek 2020 from April 27 to May 1, 2020. You may have a glimpse of our upcoming activities in the Diary of Events on the back cover.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude for supporting our mission and we look forward to another successful year ahead. The warmest greetings of this festive season and best wishes for this New Year, from us to you and your family!

Yours sincerely,

**PROFESSOR S RAJASEKARAN**

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- Reduced registration rates for APSS Meetings, Conferences and Operative Courses
- Free subscription of Asian Spine Journal and Journal of Orthopaedic Surgery, APSS e-news and APSS newsletter
- Opportunity to apply for Fellowship Awards to further your education and career at international level
- Connect with a growing global network of specialists in spine surgery
- Access the members-only services provided on our website
- Contribute actively to orthopaedics and spine subspecialty in your region

For more info, visit

[www.apssonline.org](http://www.apssonline.org)

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**APSS MUMBAI  
OPERATIVE SPINE COURSE**  
**13<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2020**  
**LILAVATI HOSPITAL & NANAVATI SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL  
MUMBAI, INDIA**

## Board Member's Message



Dear Colleagues,

I am currently the Head of Spine and Orthopaedic Surgery at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Bangladesh. I have been involved in the APSS since 2009 and became a Board member of APSS Bangladesh Chapter in 2014. When I first joined the APSS, there were only 14 members from my Chapter. Five years later, the member count has increased to 52 good standing members. This led to an increase in number of Board members from Bangladesh.

With the APSS offering numerous educational activities for spine surgeons in the region, I have been able to send a good number of junior spine surgeons from Bangladesh to different operative spine courses, seminars, symposia and meetings. Moreover, they have been provided with financial compensation in the form of subsidised registration and course fees. About 10 members from Bangladesh received APSS travelling and academic scholarships thus far. Through APSS, I have initiated collaborative workshops and research work where several doctors from different countries have participated.

Besides that, my involvements in the APSS include the operative courses and annual meetings of APSS. I had the opportunity to attend as a faculty in 5 operative courses in different countries.

Finally, I would like to create a bridge between the developing and the developed countries via APSS and thus strengthen the brotherhood of surgeons across the globe and ensure advanced diagnosis and treatment of spinal disorders.

Yours sincerely,

**PROFESSOR MD SHAH ALAM**

## APSS Spine Cadaver Course 2019 in Hualien



*Group photograph of the faculty and delegates of APSS Spine Cadaver Course 2019 held in Hualien.*

In collaboration with Taiwan Spine Society, APSS held a spine cadaver course in the Medical Simulation Centre of Tzu Chi University on November 12 and 13. 70 local and international participants attended the course. A team of 16 invited faculty members from the Asia Pacific conducted a well-integrated course consisting of short clinical lectures, discussion of live surgery cases, and hands-on cadaver operative course.

The cadaveric aspect of the course covered the following procedures: Prone position, TL spine: Wiltse approach and MIS TLIF/ CBT screw/ S2A/ PCO/ PSO/ PVCR; Prone position, C spine: Pedicle & lateral mass screw/ Occipital screw/ Laminoplasty; Supine position: ACDF/ L5-S1 ALIF; and Lateral decubitus position: OLIF/ DLIF/ Approach to TL Junction.

“It’s our great honour to run the cadaveric course with the help of the Medical Simulation Centre of Tzu Chi University, Taiwan Spine Society and Asia Pacific Spine Society”, said the local organising chairman, Dr Wen-Tien Wu. He added that following the first jointly organised cadaver course in 2018 that was held as a pre-congress course during the APSS Annual Meeting in Taiwan, a different batch of participants attended the recent course and highly appreciated the scientific contents and networking opportunities especially the interaction they had with the faculty members during two days’ course.

The course was made possible and successful because of the contribution of the four international faculties including Dr Yat Wa Wong, Dr Hiroshi Ozawa, Dr Chung Chek Wong and Dr Pankaj Kandwal and the domestic faculties. Members may look forward to such fruitful cadaver courses in the future.

## APSS Lahore Operative Course 2019



*Faculty and delegates of APSS Lahore Operative Course 2019 held at Doctors Hospital.*



*APSS international faculty with the Organising Chairman, Dr Muhammad Tariq Sohail.*

The APSS, Pakistan Orthopaedic Association, Society of Spine Surgeon of Pakistan, Lahore General Hospital and Doctors Hospital collaboratively hosted the APSS Operative Spine Course from October 24 to 26, 2019 at Doctors Hospital and Medical Centre in Lahore.

The aims of the course were to teach young Pakistani surgeons the basic skills in spine surgery and to promote APSS within the region. APSS international faculty from Malaysia, Korea and China consisting of Dato' Dr K S Sivananthan, Dr Brian Teo, Dr Seung-Woo Suh and Dr Hui-Ren Tao were invited for the course which gathered 50 course delegates from Pakistan.

Didactic spinal lectures were delivered, and live surgeries demonstrations were broadcasted in the seminar hall. Additionally, saw bones workshops were also conducted to reinforce the knowledge imparted by the faculty. During the transmission, the local and international faculty stimulated questions and discussions among the delegates in the auditorium with the respective surgeons performing the surgeries. More than 25 surgeries were performed which included ACDF in C5- C6, growing rods in congenital scoliosis, DLIF, TLIF, short segment fixation PSO, lumbar discectomy and laminoplasty.

## APSS Basic Spine Course 2019 in Tokyo



APSS Basic Course 2019 in Tokyo co-chaired by Professor Masaya Nakamura and Professor Yukihiro Matsuyama was held on June 29, 2019 at Keio University in collaboration with the Japanese Society for Spine Surgery and Related Research (JSSR). A total of 34 participants completed the course including participants from Hong Kong, Taiwan, Indonesia and China. Lectures were given by JSSR International Committee faculty members and APSS Faculty from Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and Taiwan.



Following the lectures, a lunch seminar was given by Ken Ishii on Minimal Invasive Spine Surgery. In the afternoon, hands-on workshops on cervical spine (C1/C2 fusion, lateral mass screws, pedicle screw and cage placement) and thoraco-lumbar spine (Pedicle screw placement in the thoracic and lumbosacral spine, lateral interbody fusion and minimally invasive surgery) techniques were performed with enthusiastic faculty members eager to teach the young surgeons.

*(1) Group photo comprising APSS International Faculty - Dr Hu-Ming Hsio, Dr Chris Chan, Dr Gabriel Liu, and Dr Kenny Kwan - and the delegates of the course; (2) Dr Daisuke Sakai, co-chairman presented about Asia Pacific Spine Society (APSS) and encouraged membership application; (3) Delegates listened as the lecture began; and (4) Delegates eagerly interacted with the Faculty members during the hands-on workshops on cervical spine and thoraco-lumbar spine techniques.*

# APSS



# 2020 SHANGHAI CHINA

Shanghai International Convention Center  
5 - 7 June

## ASIA PACIFIC SPINE SOCIETY 2020 ANNUAL MEETING

## 亚太脊柱学会年会

COMBINED WITH THE 4TH ANNUAL MEETING OF CSSME

暨中国医药教育协会骨科脊柱分会第四届年会

### *Important Dates*

ABSTRACT DEADLINE: **DECEMBER 30, 2019**

EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION DEADLINE: **JANUARY 31, 2020**

STANDARD REGISTRATION DEADLINE: **APRIL 30, 2020**

ON-SITE REGISTRATION DEADLINE: **JUNE 5-7, 2020**

[WWW.APSS2020.ORG](http://WWW.APSS2020.ORG)

## 2018 & 2019 APSS – Ganga Hospital Fellows’ Testimonials



*Dr Biswas (right), APSS-Ganga Hospital Fellow 2018, with Dr S Rajasekaran (left).*

“

The number of cases in the centre is very high and I am thankful to the spine team who have taught me all the aspects of spine surgery. All the pre-operative and post-operative cases were thoroughly discussed. The entire faculty gave their opinions and critical reviews on each case. I had the chance to scrub in and assist in spine cases at the centre. Prof Rajasekaran performed operations expertly and explained all the tips and tricks regarding the exposure and instrumentation. I observed for the first time and learnt a great deal about the O’ arm and navigation technique from him. To add to the excitement, I also had a chance to attend the Ganga Spine Microsurgery Course and Ganga Hospital Trauma Course during my short stint. ”

**Dr Sanjoy Biswas (India)**

“

During my fellowship programme, I joined many operations as an observer and this enhanced my skills a lot. I learnt the pros and cons of every surgery and understood my previous limitations and errors. I also joined as an assistant in many cases that I had never come across before in my centre. I observed and handled for first time newer cases such as ACM, rigid scoliosis, foramen magnum decompression, use of O-arm and neuromonitoring, posterior cervical instrumentation, SNRB, use of microscope, etc. After completing my fellowship, I am now performing SNRB, free hand pedicle screw insertion, posterior cervical instrumentation cello, etc. I am very grateful for the guidance provided by Prof Rajasekaran and his spine team. ”

**Dr Mohammad Abdul Hannan (Bangladesh)**



*Dr Hannan (left), APSS-Ganga Hospital Fellow 2019, with Dr S Rajasekaran (right).*

“

I have always wanted to go to Ganga Hospital because this is one of the most famous spine centres in India, so I applied for the fellowship programme. I was very surprised by the number of spine surgeries performed daily. Furthermore, there were many severe spinal trauma cases I have hardly ever seen in my country. I learnt some most valuable tips for speeding up surgery. Experiencing local culture and hospitality was very interesting since my fellowship coincided with the Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights. ”

**Dr Tomohiro Banno (Japan)**



*Dr Banno (left), APSS-Ganga Hospital Fellow 2019, with Dr S Rajasekaran (right).*

APSS-Ganga Hospital Fellowship Programme was launched in 2018. Every year, two members who applied for this fellowship programme will be selected to visit the Orthopaedic Surgery Department of Ganga Hospital for three weeks. Flight ticket, airport transfer and lodging are provided to the fellows. This programme is sponsored by Ganga Hospital and APSS Immediate Past President, Dato’ Dr K S Sivananthan.

Visit [www.apssonline.org](http://www.apssonline.org) to read the complete fellowship reports of the APSS—Ganga Hospital Fellows 2018 and 2019.

## 2018 APSS Medtronic Fellow's Testimonial



*Dr Patil was invited by his host, Dr Abumi (left) to attend the JSSR Meeting in Yokohama.*

*Dr Patil (seated third from the left) with his host, Dr Abumi (seated left) and the Sapporo Orthopaedic Hospital team*

Working in a spine unit, Dr Nirmal D Patil has learnt how spine surgeons can help patients and change their lives. As a trainee spine surgeon, he has experienced patients' joy when their spinal deformity was corrected, and they were no longer bedbound. The immense satisfaction that surgeons get when they make a difference in patients' lives has made him pursue the dream of becoming a spine surgeon. Dr Patil is currently an orthopaedic registrar at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust, Kent, England. He learnt about the fellowship programme through internet and was very impressed after having read the reviews of the previous fellows. He believes that training under a world class surgeon, understanding his decision making and attitude can greatly influence one's career in the future. Having successfully completing the APSS Medtronic Fellowship between March and June, 2019 under the guidance of Dr Kuniyoshi Abumi at the Sapporo Orthopaedic Hospital, Centre for Spinal Disorders in Sapporo, Hokkaido University Graduate School of Medicine and its affiliated hospitals, Dr Patil is pleased to share with us his fellowship experience.

Firstly, I would like to thank APSS for awarding me this fellowship, which covered the travel conveyance and accommodation. I am really grateful to be hosted by Dr Kuniyoshi Abumi. It was a very well organised fellowship with a personal touch. My host was kind enough to send his personnel to receive me at the airport and arranged the basic daily utilities. My accommodation was equipped with all the basic cooking equipment, which proved truly useful throughout the 90-day fellowship. During the fellowship, I was allowed to scrub in with my host and visited hospitals around Hokkaido. Whenever there was a good spine surgery, Dr Abumi scheduled my travel to that hospital for me to observe or participate. Throughout the fellowship, I have seen a variety of spine surgeries, ranging from basic degenerative to scoliosis and cranio-vertebral spine surgeries. I witnessed a novel technique of cortical bone trajectory screws free hand and using 3D template. I have learnt the techniques for laminoplasty and cervical pedicle screw fixation. These have enabled me to build on my confidence and experience to be able to start practising them at home. Besides clinical exposure, I had the opportunity to attend the JSSR 2019 Meeting to learn from and interact with great Japanese spine surgeons and other surgeons from around the world. To put it all together, it was a very memorable experience. APSS has taken a great initiative to broaden the horizons of all young spine surgeons and metamorphose them into world class surgeons.

APSS Medtronic Fellowship Programme offers 4 Awards annually. We are now calling for applications for APSS Medtronic Fellowship 2020. The deadline for application is March 31, 2020. Visit [www.apssonline.org](http://www.apssonline.org) to find out more.

A promotional banner for APSS 2020 Spine Week. On the left is a yellow diamond-shaped sign with a black kangaroo silhouette and the text '2020 SPINE WEEK 27 APRIL - 1 MAY'. The background shows a city skyline with several skyscrapers under a blue sky. The text '27 April - 1 May, 2020' and 'Melbourne, Australia' is in the top right. In the center, 'REGISTER UNDER APSS!' is written in large, bold, black letters. Below it, 'Early Bird Registration Deadline: 15 February 2020' is written in smaller black letters.

# APSS-SICOT Spine Exchange Fellowship 2019

Dr Dilip Chand Raja Soundararajan (India) and Dr Azizul Akram Salim (Malaysia) were the recipients of the APSS-SICOT Spine Fellowship 2019. They were selected for the fellowship, which is an exchange programme with SICOT, to visit a SICOT spine centre of excellence respectively for three weeks. It was a unique opportunity for these two members to interact with and learn from renowned spine surgeons in the two SICOT centres which are Evangelisches Waldkrankenhaus Spandau, Berlin in Germany and Aarhus University Hospital, Aarhus in Denmark.



*Dr Soundararajan (third from the right) with his host and the Spine team at the Evangelisches Waldkrankenhaus Spandau.*



*Dr Salim (right) with his host (left), Dr Cody Bunker at the Aarhus University Hospital.*

I met a lot of travelling fellows from all parts of the world with their own way of doing things when they visited my hospital. Therefore, I applied for APSS Fellowship to gain further knowledge. My fellowship was well organised from the beginning as Dr Miguel Alquiza, the Head of Spine Services, and Dr Ralph Schernberger had chalked out a schedule for me. I had the opportunity to assist in 23 spine surgeries and a variety of injection therapies, out-patient clinics and ward rounds during my fellowship. I saw many exciting cases, but four cases were particularly interesting to me. A three-level cervical disc arthroplasty for a young patient with cervical disc degeneration and myeloradiculopathy. In a case, of severe osteoporosis, cement augmentation was performed in the fenestrated pedicle screws along with vertebroplasty at the fractured vertebra. We performed percutaneous long segment pedicle screw instrumentation in an unstable three-column fracture in ankylosing spondylitis. The most interesting of all cases was to see the L5-S1 disc replacement, performed through a paramedian approach in a young patient. A Conrad ring frame was used which helped in visualising the disc space with great ease, and the disc arthroplasty was meticulously performed. Overall, the fellowship was very useful for me, and I strongly believe that young surgeons would benefit from such fellowships offered by APSS.

## Dr Dilip Chand Raja Soundararajan



*Dr Soundararajan (right) operating with the Spine team of his host centre, On the left is Dr Schernberger, a former SICOT fellow who joined the exchange programme to APSS Fellowship 2017.*

I chose the APSS Fellowship Programme because I aspire to learn from established and skilful spine surgeons outside of Malaysia. During the three-week stint, I experienced and assisted in 21 spinal operations especially on neuromuscular scoliosis and degenerative spinal stenosis, where I gained a lot of new knowledge and enhanced my operative skills through learning new and advanced techniques and methods. Thanks to the helpful and skilful spine team at Aarhus University Hospital, the fellowship has given me a great opportunity as a junior spine surgeon to handle cases related to spinal problems which I never encountered in Malaysia. Two cases left a deep impression. A T12 burst fracture where N-Force system by Medtronic was used. This system allows the specific correction to the spinal alignment especially in correcting thoracic kyphosis and disc height. The other case was excisional biopsy of myolipoma S2 via retroperitoneal approach using the unique Synthes circular retractor to hold the soft tissue. Overall, this exchange fellowship programme is a great head start in embarking my ambition as a spine surgeon. It is extremely beneficial and valuable.

## Dr Azizul Akram Salim



*Dr Salim (left) with Dr Valancius, a former SICOT fellow who joined the exchange programme to APSS Fellowship 2016, during the memorable operation of T12 burst fracture.*

Visit [www.apssonline.org](http://www.apssonline.org) to read the complete fellowship reports of the APSS—SICOT Spine Exchange Fellows 2019.



## 2020 Diary of Events

| Activity   | Date                     | Venue  |
|--|--------------------------|--|
| APSS Medtronic Fellowship 2019/2020                            | Oct 2019 – Jul 2020      | National University Health System, Singapore<br>Peking Union Medical College Hospital, Beijing, China<br>Sapporo Orthopaedic Hospital - Center for Spinal Disorders, Japan<br>Ganga Hospital, Coimbatore, India    |
| APSS Mumbai Operative Spine Course 2020                        | 13 Feb – 15 Feb 2020     | Lilavati Hospital and Nanavati Super Speciality Hospital, Mumbai, India  |
| APSS Dhaka Basic Spine Course 2020                             | 18 Apr – 19 Apr 2020     | National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopedic Rehabilitation, Dhaka, Bangladesh  |
| SpineWeek 2020   | 27 Apr – 1 May 2020      | Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Center, Melbourne, Australia   |
| APSS DePuy Synthes Clinical Fellowship 2020                    | 17 May – 5 Jun 2020      | Sapporo Orthopaedic Hospital - Centre for Spinal Disorders, Japan<br>Hamamatsu University School of Medicine, Shizuoka, Japan<br>Dr Orso L Osti's Practice, Adelaide, Australia                                    |
| APSS DePuy Synthes Travelling Fellowship 2020                  | 17 May – 5 Jun 2020      | University of Malaya, Malaysia<br>National University of Singapore (NUS), Singapore<br>Seoul St Mary's Hospital, Korea<br>Kyung Hee University Hospital, Korea<br>Keio University, Tokyo, Japan                    |
| APSS 2020 Annual Meeting in China                              | 5 Jun – 7 Jun 2020       | Shanghai International Convention Centre, Shanghai, China  |
| APSS Miraculus Fellowship 2020                                 | 17 Aug – 5 Sep 2020      | Sendai Nishitaga Hospital, Japan<br>Kyung Hee University Hospital, Korea   |
| APSS Medtronic Fellowship 2020/2021                            | 1 Jul 2020 – 30 Jun 2021 | Xi-Jing Hospital of the Fourth Military Medical University, China<br>Samsung Medical University, Korea<br>Keio University, Tokyo, Japan<br>Sarawak General Hospital and University Malaya Medical Centre, Malaysia |
| 21 <sup>st</sup> Asia Pacific Orthopaedic Association Congress | 23 Sep – 26 Sep 2020     | Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre, Malaysia   |
| APSS Kota Kinabalu Operative Spine Course 2020                 | 26 Oct – 28 Oct 2020     | Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia   |



### Asia Pacific Spine Society

The APSS started with the Western Pacific Orthopaedic Association - Spine Section in 1979 as an educational and scientific forum for the advancement of knowledge in the field of spine surgery.

Our mission is to advance knowledge in the field of spine surgery and promulgate the maintenance of professional standards in order to provide the best professional care to patients with spinal problems.

### APSS News

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