

Breast Cancer Reconstruction Fellowship Report

July 1st 2015 – June 30th 2016

Toronto General Hospital (UHN)/ Mount Sinai Hospital (MSH)/ Women's College Hospital (WCH)

Supervisors: Dr. Toni Zhong, Dr. Stefan Hofer, Dr. Anne O'Neill & Dr. Mitch Brown, Dr. John Semple

Sponsor: Allergan Canada

I had the pleasure of completing the University of Toronto one year Breast Cancer Reconstruction Fellowship at University Health Network, Mount Sinai Hospital, and Women's College Hospital. Overall, this was an excellent experience clinically and professionally. The fellowship provided a great opportunity to further expand my knowledge of breast reconstruction and aesthetic breast surgery.

The arrangement of the fellowship into two 6 month blocks afforded the opportunity to cover a wide range of advanced techniques. The first block was at UHN/ MSH with Drs Zhong, Hofer, and O'Neill. The focus of this block was on microsurgical breast reconstruction using largely DIEP or MS-TRAM flaps, however there was also a large number of alloplastic techniques. In addition, fat grafting/ lipofilling for an adjunct to implants and flaps was also used quite frequently. I was also able to participate in other reconstructive cases such as lower extremity sarcoma, pelvic and urogenital, and thoracic wall reconstruction using either free or pedicled flaps. This block also gave me the opportunity to participate in multiple research projects allowing me the chance to present at two national meetings during my fellowship year.

The second block at WCH with Drs Brown and Semple focused mainly on alloplastic techniques, as well as pedicled TRAM and latissimus dorsi flaps, in addition to a large volume of cosmetic breast cases including challenging or revision cases. The unique ambulatory setting and short-stay unit also helped me to improve upon my peri-operative care of patients. I was able to be involved with many novel techniques including BRAVA pre-expansion and fat grafting, pre-pectoral direct to implant cases with ADM, micro-fat grafting for radiated delayed reconstruction prior to tissue expander placement, and nipple-sparing mastectomy and immediate reconstruction. The wide exposure during this time to many different techniques helped to improve my knowledge and skills regarding all types of breast surgery.

Overall there was a very enjoyable fellowship year that allowed me to improve my surgical skills, increase my knowledge of breast surgery, expand my research endeavours, and lastly help to build lasting collaborative relationships. This is a busy academic center that affords many opportunities.