

Japan Young Investigator Exchange Program (YIEP)

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Introduction

My name is Cezary Niszczoła, and I'm pediatrician and paediatric cardiologist. For 10 years I worked as a clinical fellow, and then as a member of imaging team and cath lab in the paediatric cardiology clinic in the Medical University of Warsaw. Before that I was interested mostly in cardiovascular morphology, since the academic years I've worked in the Department of Descriptive and Clinical Anatomy, where I did studies based on anatomy of congenital heart defects in fetuses. From very beginning my interests varied, but I was always involved in morphology-clinical correlation of heart anomalies in children. Nowadays, I'm working in Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, where the area of my interest is still cardiac intensive care and neonatal interventions.

Reason for Applying

The Young Investigator Exchange Program (YIEP) offered by the AEPC gave me a fantastic possibility to cooperate with a brilliant and clever international team in Japan. Before my fellowship in Nagano Children's Hospital, I have no foreign experience in the area of my interests, except some short visits in European centers. Moreover, participation in this program changed my current field of work.

Application Tips

During the selection it is crucial to mark your current career way, but, what is more important, to align the specific field that you are interested in, and how you can reach your goals thanks to participation in the program. On the other hand, the involvement in AEPC activities can be an additional advantage. On my application I emphasized my contribution in organization of cardiovascular workshops during different AEPC annual meetings, active participation on the research done by Cardiovascular Morphology Working Group and work as a junior councilor in this WG for a few years.

Center Selection

I was not involved in choosing of the center I have visited, but I can only suppose that committee did take some individual preferences into account. Personally, the choice of Nagano Children's Hospital for me was perfect opportunity to work for a month with excellent people.

Practical Details

Before arrival I was in contact with my supervisors, and they gave me all the most important information about documents I need, logistics and travel tips. I had no problem with

accommodation, I lived in the apartment just in the opposite site of the hospital. Dr. Takigiku, a chair of the department, and dr. Yonehara – both still are my mentors, but also good friends I did not suppose to meet.

Daily Experience

Every day I started in clinical rounds, mostly concentrated in extremely sick children in paediatric intensive care unit. During my fellowship I was let to attend in different clinical activities – the Nagano Children's Hospital is specialized in modern echocardiography techniques, fetal cardiology, cardiac intensive care and interventional cardiology. Entire team of fellows was very helpful and make me feel good. Moreover, attending in surgical procedures and active participation in the intraoperative imaging was also possible.

Impact

This experience for me was inspiring and gave me new research and everyday practice suggestions. I think that understanding the cultural and organizing differences was fantastic occasion for increasing my own way of work. The relationship and tools I gained will be probably one of the most important in my practice. I truly recommend to apply for Japan YIEP.