

Madagascar 2018

Dr Michael Osborn

I was kindly invited by the British Division of the International Academy of Pathology (BDIAP) & the Royal College of Pathologists to travel to Madagascar in September 2018 to attend the Association of Pathology of East Central & Southern Africa (APECSA) conference 2018 and to run a pre-conference teaching day for the East African British School of Pathology (EABSofP), the teaching organisation supported by the BDIAP. The organisation of these events was supported by the local pathology organisation Societe Malagache De Pathologie (SOMAPATH).

On 22nd September I duly arrived in Antananarivo, the capital and largest city in Madagascar, home to approximately 1.5 million people. My accommodation was the Chinese owned Le Paon D'or hotel a short ride from the airport. A very pleasant hotel ideal for our purposes.

On the first day, Sunday 23rd September, I met Dr Robert Lukande and Dr Francine Adriamampionona, respectively president and chair of APECSA at the hotel and together with other delegates we travelled the hour across the city to the University Hospital, were in the main lecture theatre, on behalf of the EABSofP, I gave three interactive lecture presentations each followed by a slide seminar on various aspects of gastrointestinal pathology which the organisers had felt were relevant. These included infection, eosinophilic gastroenteritis and inflammatory bowel disease and its mimics. The session was well attended with 25 participants, of whom 20 were locals - 16 being Pathology trainees. The session was chaired by Dr Ahmed Kalebi from the East African Division of International Academy of Pathology who was excellent at ensuring everyone understood each other and was included in the discussion and learning experience. The session was very well received despite the slight language issue with the vast majority of the audience having French as their main language.

On the second day, Monday 24th September, the main APECSA 2018 conference took place - "Addressing Global Health Challenges in sub-Saharan Africa: The Role of Pathology". The meeting was held in the large conference room in our hotel so travel to and from the venue was not an issue. The meeting started with brief addresses from the conference organisers and APECSA & SOMAPATH council members together with members of the Madagascar government department of health and education. There was also a traditional music interlude. All of this made us feel extremely welcome and valued as delegates. The main session then began with the key note presentation from Dr. George Kontogeorgos, president of the International Academy of Pathology (IAP), discussing the "diversity of education in Pathology within the frames of IAP", a most informative session with some interesting insights. Subsequent sessions were equally informative, dealing with what pathology tests are unnecessary and tumour markers. The afternoon session covered post mortems, including an excellent session from Dr Jonee Taylor a junior Medical Examiner in New York City. Following this Dr Taylor chaired the main afternoon BDIAP & RCPATH sponsored session dealing with post mortem provision in sub-Saharan Africa in which Prof. John Obafunwa from Nigeria, Dr. Rudo Mutasa from Zimbabwe and I each made a presentation on various aspects of post mortem provision and then, together as a panel answered questions from the floor. This was a very informative and interactive session and has highlighted ways

in which RCPATH & the BDIAP may be able to assist our African colleagues in the future.

The third day, Tuesday 25th September was equally interesting with topics ranging from comparative pathology between great apes and man and new methods for screening for breast cancer mutations.

I was unfortunately unable to attend the final day of the conference due to the constraints of travel arrangements but this day dealt mainly with provision of future pathology services in Africa.

Overall both the EABSofP pre-conference teaching day and the APECSA conference were excellent and the feedback from the organisers has been extremely positive. The members of the East African Division of International Academy of Pathology, APECSA & SOMAPATH were extremely warm and friendly making me feel most welcome. The facilities were good and the atmosphere at the meeting very warm and friendly. Madagascar was a wonderful location with the locals being extremely welcoming and friendly. I even managed to fit in a brief visit to the Zoo to meet the lemurs with Dr Ahmed Kalebi which was a truly wonderful experience.

I would like to thank the BDIAP & RCPATH for giving me this wonderful opportunity.



Dr Osborn lectures at the APECSA conference



Lemurs.