



## SCHOLARSHIP REPORT

This report should be completed by recipients of awards and scholarships from the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow on completion of the activity for which they received their award or scholarship. Please complete all sections of the report form.

Please return your completed report via email to: **scholarships@rcpsg.ac.uk**

Or via mail to: **Scholarships Committee Administrator, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow,  
232-242 St Vincent Street, Glasgow G2 5RJ, UK**

Please use typeface when completing this form.

SECTION 1   PERSONAL AND AWARD DETAILS			
<b>Title</b>	Mr	<b>PID</b>	87664
<b>Surname</b>	Cheng	<b>Forename(s)</b>	Kelvin Kah Wai
<b>Scholarship/award awarded</b>	Medical Elective Scholarship	<b>Amount awarded</b>	£1,000

SECTION 2   PROJECT/VISIT DETAILS	
<b>Name/Title</b>	Dr Charles Stephen Foster, MD, FACS, FACR sfoster@mersi.com Telephone: 781-891-6377
<b>Location</b>	Massachusetts Eye Research And Surgery Institution, 1440 Main Street, Suite 201, Waltham, MA 02451
<b>Aims and objectives</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To recognise common presentations and findings in common conditions affecting the uvea and cornea and outline their aetiology, pathophysiology, investigations and management</li><li>2. To have a deeper understanding of immunomodulatory therapy and its use in ophthalmology.</li><li>3. To develop the ability to take a focused history and physical examination for patients presenting with common ophthalmological conditions.</li><li>4. To demonstrate competency in formulating differential diagnoses, planning investigations and subsequent management of patients.</li><li>5. To demonstrate competency in basic diagnostic and procedural skills relevant to ophthalmology.</li><li>6. To get involved in research projects running in the institution.</li><li>7. To have a better understanding of differences in medical practice between United Kingdom and United States.</li></ol>

<p><b>Summary</b> <i>Include methodology, results and conclusions if applicable</i></p>	<p>Clinics started at 7.30am and ended at 6pm daily. A typical week consisted of clinics from Monday to Friday with laboratory sessions on Wednesday, minor procedures on Friday and tutorials after clinics on Monday. My elective was 50% clinical- and 50% research-based. As this was not my first experience in Ophthalmology, this elective was an opportunity to further familiarise myself with the ocular examination and expose myself to the diverse presentations of uveitis and its various aetiologies. These included uncommon pathologies like ocular cicatricial pemphigoid and birdshot chorioretinopathy. I was allowed to take history from patients and examine them using slit-lamp. In addition to teaching sessions by Dr Foster himself, the attendings and fellows were very willing to teach in between patients.</p>
<p><b>Learning outcomes</b> <i>Detail here how the aims and objectives were met</i></p>	<p>Having developed an interest in ophthalmology in third year of medical school, I was very excited to organise another elective in ophthalmology after thoroughly enjoying myself during my junior elective in Glasgow. Although I have always toyed with the idea of furthering my career in USA, I believed that I needed first hand experience working there before making the leap. I also wanted to use this opportunity to decide with confidence whether ophthalmology was the right career choice for me.</p> <p>Due to the highly specialised nature of ophthalmology, I spent most of my time as an observer. Nonetheless, I used my time to hone my examination skills. The signs of ocular pathology can be very difficult to identify by the untrained eye as one needs to understand the intricacies of the slit-lamp to reveal certain pathological signs. As I spent most of my time looking down the teaching arm of the slit-lamp during my previous elective and was therefore not in charge of looking for clinical signs independently, I lacked practice using slit-lamps. As there were no teaching arms at MERSI, I forced myself to learn my way around the slit-lamp using more advanced techniques and look for signs independently besides hastening my process of examining the eye. I was also very pleased that I was able to perform fundoscopy easily using a Volk lens, a skill I found incredibly daunting during my previous elective. Discussing patients' optical coherence tomography and fluorescein and indocyanine green angiography results with the fellows also allowed me to develop my skills at interpreting these investigations.</p> <p>Being a tertiary centre that specialises in uveitis, most patients presented with conditions that were hardly seen anywhere else. For example, it was very common to see patients suffering from ocular cicatricial pemphigoid almost everyday at MERSI compared to my previous elective at Tennent Institute of Ophthalmology, Glasgow, where I saw only two of such cases throughout my whole elective. It was also very refreshing to see other pathologies that I had never seen before like birdshot chorioretinopathy, serpiginous choroidopathy and autoimmune retinal vasculitis. Due to the experience Dr Foster has in ocular immunology, it was common to see patients from all over the world travelling just</p>

to get his opinion.

I was fortunate to meet two UK fellows during my stint there. They were extremely encouraging upon hearing about my interest in ophthalmology and provided helpful hints on getting a training spot in this specialty. I spent most of my evenings revising as I was expected to read up on conditions that I encountered that day.

I was also involved in the academic side of Ophthalmology at MERSI. The fortnightly research meetings allowed everyone to get updated on ongoing research. It was interesting watching the clinical team morph into a research group during the meetings. Research ideas were constantly suggested and bounced off each other and everyone was very willing to support each other. On average, each fellow had 5 ongoing projects at any one time, something I felt was extraordinary. The high number of research projects being carried out was possible due to the supportive nature of the institution, mainly fuelled by Dr Foster's undying spirit of research.

As MERSI is one of the leading centres of ocular immunology, the treatment modalities used are cutting-edge. MERSI was actively recruiting patients for over 10 clinical trials during my stint there. One of the projects I found interesting was the use of iontophoresis as a drug delivery system into the anterior chamber of the eye, an approach that was abandoned many years ago but has recently regained interest. I was fortunate to be part of two projects led by fellows, one of which is in its review process for publication.

Talking to American patients was an experience in itself. The patients are much more involved in their healthcare and are extremely knowledgeable about their condition. It was not unusual for patients to attend appointments with a list of questions and to visit several institutions to gather opinions from different doctors before making their decision, something less heard of in UK. Medicine is undoubtedly a very lucrative business in USA. Speaking to the patients revealed that it was common practice for doctors in USA to order a whole barrage of investigations, some of which might not have been necessary, just to save themselves from lawsuits. It was very heart-breaking watching patients not get treatment due to insufficient funds or not having health insurance.

**Evaluation**

*How has this scholarship/award impacted on your clinical/NHS practice or equivalent?*

I am extremely grateful to the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow for their financial support. I believe that this elective has allowed me to further develop my interest in ophthalmology and reaffirmed my choice of specialising in this interesting and highly rewarding field. The skills I have obtained during my stint at MERSI will undoubtedly be useful during my training in the future. I would very much like to return to this institution as a fully qualified ophthalmologist in the future if I have the chance.

Getting involved academically with the research done at MERSI has also reaffirmed my aspiration of an academic career in the future.

### SECTION 3 | IMAGES

*If available, please provide some images to support your report*

MERSI Exterior



Examination room



Laboratory



## SECTION 4 | EXPENDITURE

### Breakdown of expenditures

*Please demonstrate how the scholarship/award funding was used to support your project/visit*

Flight tickets: £680.21  
Visa: £115.20 (visa fee) + £119.05 (travel to London)  
Accommodation: £1346  
Transport (bus monthly pass) : £45  
Food: £10/day. Total £280  
Medical insurance: £48  
  
Total: £2633.46

## SECTION 5 | PUBLICATION

**Scholarship/award reports may be published in College News. Please tick here if you agree to your report being published.**

I give permission for my report to be published in College News

*If your report is selected for publishing, the editor of College News will be in touch to discuss this with you.*

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