

The Department of Urology and Paediatric Urology in Bamberg

A state-of-the-art medical centre in a historical German city



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When Franz Ludwig von Erthal, prince-bishop of Bamberg and Würzburg, founded the General Hospital in Bamberg in 1789, not only has it been one of Europe's most modern hospitals at that time, but it has also served as an example for many decades to other medical institutions throughout Germany.

In 1984 the General Hospital – since then renamed Klinikum am Bruderwald – relocated from Bamberg's historical centre to the town's wooded outskirts, and was completely reconstructed to meet once again, after almost 200 years, the highest level of medical care for Bamberg with its 70,000 inhabitants, and serve the outlying regions of Northern Franconia and Southern Thuringia. A teaching hospital, it is affiliated with the Friedrich-Alexander-University of Erlangen-Nuremberg.

At present the department consists of the head of department, four senior urologists and five residents. The medical staff is supported by 42 urological nurses as well as five specialised nurses and three X-ray assistants in the urological outpatient and diagnostics department. The department has three urological wards for adults and one urological-surgical ward for children, for a total of 44 beds.

Every year our department admits an estimated 1,800 patients, while the outpatient department treats almost 3,000 patients annually. Operative treatment is comprehensive and ranges from tumour and reconstructive surgery of the urinary tract, male genitalia and female urology to paediatric cases, urological endoscopic standard procedures and minimal invasive laparoscopic surgery. These procedures are performed daily in our two specially equipped operating rooms in the central OR area.

In addition, our department performs ESWL, brachytherapy, laser therapy as well as chemotherapy.



The staff of the Department of Urology and Paediatric Urology in Bamberg, Germany

Every year approximately 1,200 adults and about 150 children are surgically treated. Postoperatively our ward patients are cared for by specially trained nurses. After extensive surgeries such as radical cystectomy, patients are monitored in our intensive care unit, followed by treatment in the ward for intermediate care. An additional surgical area enables us to perform smaller operations on an outpatient basis for the convenience of our paediatric patients and their parents.

In our outpatient department we provide state-of-the-art diagnostic procedures such as urological digital X-ray (modernised in 2010) and sonography, including Doppler sonography, urodynamics and endoscopy of the urinary tract. All admitted patients are referred by the outpatient department which is responsible for complete diagnostic procedures, enabling treatment and the evaluation for possible surgical intervention.

Residents training

All five residents training in our department are encouraged to actively participate in national and international training courses and congresses, and to write articles for acknowledged urological journals.

Moreover, we offer them the opportunity to participate in the written part of the European Board of Urology (EBU) exam. We also consider EBU

certification an essential element that enables us to provide a structure to the urological training of our residents, thereby contributing to our efforts to improve urological training in both national and international levels.

Our head of department is qualified to provide training on the full range of urological specialities, fulfilling the requirements of urology training in Germany which takes around five years. Our department also actively participates in the hospital's Continence and Pelvic Floor Centre, responding to the needs of urological trainees with special interests on functional urology. Furthermore, our quality management system has been certified by LGA/Intercert in 2008 and is constantly updated.

During their training in our department, residents rotate through all urological in- and out-patient wards. They are trained in urological standard procedures including diagnostic processes, operative as well as conservative treatment, based on current urological guidelines. Our residency training is considered unique due to an individually-tailored educational programme, and for providing our young colleagues with the necessary skills at an early stage of their training. And with our multi-cultural staff, the working atmosphere inspires respect and openness for various perspectives and mutual learning.



Training scheme

An overview and objectives of our residency training programme in urology are listed below.

- First year: surgery of the external genitalia (e. g. orchidopexy, hernia and varicocele repair), ESWL, diagnostic and therapeutic endoscopic procedures, percutaneous nephrostomy;
- Second year: resection of small bladder tumours, internal urethrotomy, resection of the prostate, exposition of kidney and ureter, improve skills in surgery of the external genitalia;
- Third year: enlarging the spectrum of transurethral operations (TUR-B and TUR-P), simple nephrectomy, pyeloplasty, TVT, assistance in laparoscopic procedures; and
- Fourth and fifth year: ureteroscopy, percutaneous nephrolitholapaxy, incontinence surgery, pelvic lymphadenectomy, assistance/ surgery in radical prostatectomy and cystectomy cases.

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The working day starts with the ward rounds at 7:30 (where every resident is guided by a senior urologist), followed by the morning meeting at 8:00. The morning meeting discusses problems in the wards and the OR plan for that day and the next. A morbidity-and-mortality conference is held every Monday morning, alternating weekly with a staff meeting that includes a journal club.

Every Wednesday afternoon an interdisciplinary oncology meeting is held and attended by the hospital's radiologists, pathologists, oncologists, radiotherapists, gynaecologists, general surgeons, orthopedists, neurosurgeons and colleagues from all internal medical departments.

All these aforementioned activities are offered and implemented as part of our efforts not only to provide an up-to-date urological training but also to keep abreast of the latest developments in international urology.

EBU Certified Centres

Steady growth in EBU's online In-Service Assessment

Active participation from urologists in Baghdad, Iraq

By Joel Vega

Compared to its initial launching four years ago, the online In-Service Assessment annually offered by the European Board of Urology (EBU) has seen a significant and steady growth this year with the online assessment taken by 399 participants.

With a total of 790 participants from 28 countries who took the assessment last February 18, 389 opted for the written (on paper) assessment, reflecting the growing and overall tendency for online assessment. Aimed to assist programme directors and residents to identify deficiencies in their training and skills level, the in-service assessment allows trainees or participants to assess and compare their experience with a peer group.

“We have noted the trend towards more online assessment through the years since this proves to be more convenient to many participants. In the future we expect the numbers to gradually increase for the online assessment,” according to the EBU.

Taken as a preparatory exercise to the FEU (Fellow of the EBU) examinations, 100 questions (MCQs) covering 10 different topics (oncology, urolithiasis,

BPH, traumatology, incontinence, andrology, nephrology, infections, congenital anomalies and surgery), are given during the assessment.

The assessment for participants coming from Australia and New Zealand, however, was affected by the earthquake since the calamity somehow prevented organisers from properly retrieving the answer sheets and complete the evaluation process.

Meanwhile, and in other parts of the world, organisers in Iraq have seen the enthusiastic participation of 20 urology trainees in Baghdad.

“Participation in the In-service Assessment is a very good stimulus for our students to read more and improve their level,” said Prof. Issam Al-Azzawi of the Al-Yarmouk Teaching Hospital's Department of Urology in Baghdad. “In its current format, the In-Service Assessment meets the needs of most of our participants. I hope that the number of participants will increase each year.”

Al-Azzawi said he is convinced that EBU activities in general not only provide an extra stimulus for practicing urologists to improve their skills but it can also assist in updating the quality of urology into more international standards. “With this in mind, we have succeeded to encourage our colleagues here in Iraq to acquire an international orientation or look beyond national perspectives,” added Al-Azzawi.



In-service assessment participants in Baghdad

He said he recognises the significant role played by the EBU to serve as an international standardisation body.

“After a gap of more than 25 years between Iraqi doctors and their colleagues from other parts of the

world mainly due to recurring conflict and the embargo imposed on our country, we see the need to bridge this gap, and this could be partially addressed with the educational support from the EBU,” said Al-Azzawi.

European Board of Urology (EBU)