



RCSI

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS IN IRELAND

COLÁISTE RÍOGA NA MÁINLEÁ IN ÉIRINN

Grant/Fellowship Report Form

Fellowship/Grant Holder Name	Joseph S. Butler
Brief biography, including qualification and year of graduation (no more than 100 words)	Joseph Butler completed surgical training in Trauma & Orthopaedic Surgery at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. He subsequently completed clinical fellowship training in complex spine deformity and tumour surgery at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, Stanmore, UK; spine trauma and degenerative spine surgery at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Harvard Medical School, Boston, USA; and complex, revision and minimally invasive spine surgery at the Rothman Institute, Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, USA. He is an active clinical and laboratory researcher, now based at Trinity College Dublin. He has been awarded a PhD in bone biology by University College Dublin and has over 100 publications and 100 presentations at national and international scientific meetings. He has 40 major national and international awards for his research work and is on the editorial board of several major journals in the fields of Trauma & Orthopaedic Surgery and Spine Surgery. His h-index is 18, i10-index is 27 and he has over 1000 citations of his research.
Title of Project/Fellowship	RCSI Colles Travelling Fellowship in Surgery
Year of Award: Commencement Date: Conclusion Date:	2016 01/08/16 31/07/17

Summary (no more than 250 words)

The spinal service at the Rothman Institute, Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, is the largest of its kind in the United States. It acts as both a tertiary and quaternary referral centre for complex spinal surgery and provides unrivalled opportunities for research and training, with a case mix that is not seen at other spinal surgery centres within Europe. During my year I performed over 400 surgical cases, with a broad mix of degenerative, deformity, trauma, tumour and infective pathology. This case load included both primary and revision cases, in addition to both open and minimally-invasive surgical techniques.

The spine fellowship at the Rothman Institute provided an exceptional didactic educational environment to train to the very highest standard in the evaluation, diagnosis, non-operative and operative treatment of spinal disorders. This fellowship educated me in the management of complications of surgical treatment and the planning and execution of complex revision surgery.

The outpatient environment taught me how to evaluate, manage and follow patients in an outpatient setting. During my year I developed my teaching skills, educating junior and senior residents and medical students. Furthermore I was trained in how to amplify my research skills and I performed several clinical and laboratory research projects. Active weekly spine conferences and multidisciplinary didactic lectures, were coordinated by myself as the spine fellow, allowing me to develop a more analytical approach to problem solving.

The fellowship had a well-rounded and structured schedule, offering a balanced exposure to the outpatient clinic, operating room, and research environment. Unique to this fellowship was the synergistic relationship between the orthopaedic and neurosurgical departments, which allowed exposure to the complete spectrum of spinal disorders.

Grant Report (in the region of but no more than 500 words)

Objectives of Project/Fellowship:

Clinical training in spinal surgery at a high volume major international centre, with a strong research and academic component.

Did you achieve these objectives?

Yes.

In your opinion, what is the value of your award to:

(a) Yourself

I have developed a clinical and technical skill set to keep me well equipped to deal with the full range of pathology that will present on my return to Ireland. I have strengthened my research and academic portfolio to allow me to gain traction in my academic career in Ireland and I have developed a strong network of peers and mentors to provide significant support as my career progresses.

(b) The institution in which you worked

The attending staff at the Rothman Institute had a very positive experience training me. I was a dedicated hard working and enthusiastic fellow, who brought a slightly different outlook than the standard US-trained fellow. I feel they were impressed with my attitude, level of knowledge and my clinical competency. The attending staff have been left with a very fond connection to Ireland and I have opened the doors to this superb unit for further Irish trainees to follow in my footsteps.

(c) In the future for Irish patients

As I return to commence practice at the National Spinal Injuries Unit at Mater Misericordiae University Hospital and Tallaght Hospital, I hope to provide the very highest standard of care to Irish patients suffering with the full range of spinal problems I have been trained to treat. This very high level of training and its future impact on the Irish healthcare service would not have been possible without the generous support of this RCSI grant.