

Fellowship in pediatric urology at UZ Leuven, Belgium

Dear members of the Swiss pediatric surgery association,

In summer 2021 I started my clinical fellowship in pediatric urology at the urology department of UZ Leuven. Having more than 10'000 employees, it's the biggest university hospital in Belgium.

In the beginning the main difficulty was orientation, it's truly for a reason the hospital's nickname is "doolhof", which is the Dutch word for labyrinth. The hospital's organization is designed for a flux of high number of patients per day, with the pediatric hospital unit resembling a modern airport gate and the neonatology unit a honeycomb.

I quickly got introduced to the team as well as the pediatric nephrologists, neonatologists and pediatric abdominal surgent.

Besides firsthand training in pediatric urologic surgeries, I also had the opportunity to assist pediatric abdominal surgeries, traumatology pediatric surgeries and robotic assisted urologic surgeries.

I was exposed to a high number of patients during consultation, usually about 3 times the number per day, that I was used to from my previous hospital. Due to an optimized electronic health record system which was created at Leuven university hospital itself, it was still possible to get done with administration in time. Of course, writing medical reports in Dutch language was a big challenge in the beginning.

Even though I am not a urologist, I got the opportunity to do urologic shifts. I got exposed to a high number of complex adult urology cases and was able to perform emergency urologic procedues by myself.

Till today it's an excellent experience and I'm looking forward to the year ahead.

Julia Rheinberger