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The Young Clinician Programme was held over 2 days prior to the World Gastroenterology Conference in Shanghai over the end of September 2013. Participants were selected from around the world and made for a fascinating group of trainee gastroenterologists.

The programme kicked off with a traditional Chinese welcoming dinner. Adding to the enjoyment of the food was the fun of getting used to eating with chopsticks with some of us proving more adept than others! More of a challenge came with the variety of dishes as culinary boundaries were pushed back with items such as steamed jellyfish and curried frog.

The next day consisted of talks by the local faculty and the participants who presented their research posters. The research presented was of a high quality with the Chinese participants specifically very impressive; the financial clout of the world's second largest economy was very evident in some of the molecular work being done. The participants were split up on the second day of the course and taken to endoscopy units in Shanghai. I was lucky enough to be taken to the Remji Hospital which is one of the premier hospitals in the region. Walking into a modern, bustling foyer with electronic signs directing patients to the correct departments and numerous escalators was reminiscent of walking into one of South Africa's shopping malls! We were first taken to the GIT outpatient clinic where we were informed that the average number of patients seen was over 500 a day including Saturdays! Bara suddenly didn't look too bad! The endoscopy suit was split over 2 levels with gastroscopy and colonoscopy on the first floor and ERCP and special procedures on the second floor along with a special VIP room! The endoscopy team consisted of an endoscopist, a theatre nurse, a cytologist and an anaesthetist and this was replicated many times over with an easy 15-20 teams scoping at any one time. My group consisting of an Italian, a Canadian, 2 pakistanis and 2 Emiratis were all left very impressed. Thereafter a doctor from the hospital took us out and showed us a bit of

Shanghai, taking us to the historic French quarter and the modern Bund area with its high rise skyscrapers.

The World Conference then kicked off with the Post Graduate programme which was held over 2 days and although still very good made me appreciate the SAGES meetings which were of a comparable or higher standard.

The networking that this opportunity presented was probably the most invaluable aspect and meeting individuals involved at the cutting edge of medicine including watching Yamamoto, the inventor of the Double Balloon endoscope remove a jejunal polyp was a certain highlight.

Shanghai itself is a very modern city with tall skyscrapers and modern buildings dominating its skyline. I was surprised to see how little of the communist past I could identify apart from an occasional statue here and there. Highlights included visiting the traditional Yanyui gardens and the Bund promenade. We were lucky to be there during the Chinese mid-autumn festival and were treated to a pyrotechnic show at the Bund.

I would like to thank the World Gastroenterology Organisation for sponsoring the trip and arranging the logistics for the Young Clinicians Programme and the local SAGES committee for nominating me to attend. It certainly was the highlight of my time as a GI Fellow thus far!

