

## **Section II: IN MY EXPERIENCE – Education through Visitation**

Interview conducted by Stephanie West, DePuy Spine Manager, Medical Education



The DePuy Spine Education Through Visitation Program is designed for orthopaedic and neurosurgeons who have completed their residency and fellowship training, and who devote a substantial portion of their practice to spine surgery. Qualified participants will have the opportunity to meet experienced surgeons in either a one-on-one setting or in a small group setting. Participants attend live surgery and discuss surgical technique, indications and clinical results. Program content is customized according to the needs of the participating surgeon.

Dr. Patrick Cahill is an Orthopaedic surgeon from Philadelphia Shriners Hospital. He has recently participated in the DePuy Spine Education Through Visitation Program. I conducted an interview with Dr. Cahill to hear how this program benefited him in his professional career and the impact it had on his patient care.

**SW: Please describe your experience with the Education Through Visitation program.**

PC: I spent 2 days with Dr. Frank Schwab at the Hospital for Special Surgery. During my time there I was also able to meet with Dr. Schwab's partners Drs. Baron Lonner and Thomas Errico, which was added bonus.

Before the surgeries Dr. Schwab and I discussed the case and the possible treatment options. He showed me the software he uses for pre-operative planning. The software allows Dr. Schwab to create digital images of the spine to allow him to understand the impact of his surgical plan on spinal alignment before he operates on the patient. I spent one day in the OR with Dr. Schwab and observed 2 adult deformity cases. I watched his technique on treating patients with sagittal imbalance. I also spent some time in the OR with Dr. Lonner and observed a surgery involving a patient with adolescent idiopathic scoliosis.

Dr. Schwab and his partners joined me for dinner after the first day of surgery. This was a great opportunity to "pick their brain" on topics such as how to seek out career building research projects and how to build a successful practice.

During my fellowship I had the opportunity to spend 2 days with Drs. Harry Shufflebarger and Michael O'Brien. That experience was also very beneficial to me.

**SW: How did you learn about the program and how does it work?**

PC: My senior partner suggested that I take advantage of the program. For this visitation I actually e-mailed Dr. Schwab myself and mentioned that my senior partner suggested that I come for a visit. This time it worked out nicely for me but I wouldn't recommend doing the legwork yourself as it can be very time consuming. DePuy Spine has the resources and the expertise to plan the visitation for you through the medical education department and the sales network.

**SW: What are some of the benefits of this program?**

PC: This program allows me to learn the surgical approaches that I am most interested in learning in a one-on-one or in a small group setting. I can select the surgeon or if I have a specific interest but not sure of the best surgeon DePuy Spine has a comprehensive list to choose from.

This is also a tremendous networking opportunity. I now feel like I have a relationship with Drs. Schwab, Lonner and Errico. We discussed collaborating on a future research

project and I feel very comfortable reaching out to any of them if I am in need of some advice on a case.

**SW: Would you recommend this program to a friend or colleague? If so, why?**

PC: Absolutely. The learning opportunity during a visitation is really second to none. I strongly recommend this program for those who are just starting out in practice. You will have the opportunity to learn how an experienced surgeon manages his/her practice and treats his/her patients.

Taking part in this program has had a very positive impact on my practice.