

DIVISION OF PEDIATRIC UROLOGY , DEPARTMENT OF UROLOGY, HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY, Ankara TURKEY
Program Director: Prof. Dr Serdar Tekgöl FEAPU

Hacettepe Paediatric Urology Fellowship programme has started in year 1999 with the great heritage of Hacettepe Childrens Hospital which is currently named as Ihsan Dogramaci Childrens Hospital. Prof. Dr. Dogramaci (93) was an outstanding academic paediatrician who established the Institute of Child Health on July 8, 1958. That institute later developed into a Medical Center and later on June 15 1963 into a Medical School which became the leading medical school in the country. Currently Children's Hospital remains to be an icon as the leading academic unit within the Hacettepe Health Sciences Campus largest of its type in the country. Hacettepe Medical School as a whole accommodates nearly 500 faculty members and 2000 graduate and postgraduate trainees and researchers.

Since it started as a Children's Hospital, Pediatric Departments have always been the primary academic units in the establishment of the Medical School. Therefore the Department of Urology has also started as a Pediatric Urology Department and the founder of the department Prof. Dr Doğan Remzi had worked as a full time pediatric urologist between 1959 and 1963 till the adult hospital was established. He was probably one of the very few full time pediatric urologists of his time.



The pediatric urology team in the operating room.

The Department of Urology of Hacettepe University, Faculty of Medicine was established in the late 1963 by Prof. Dr. Doğan Remzi. Prof. Dr. Sezer Kendi who had been former programme director of the department of urology from 1997 to 2004, was the first resident of HU urology residency programme. Up to September 2008, 122 residents were certified as urologists from the urology residency programme of the department.

In the year 1996, Prof. Dr Doğan Remzi has taken the initiative to start subdivision training programs and fellow training programs in Uro-Oncology (in 1996), Pediatric Urology (1999) and Endourology (2002) have been inaugurated. These are still the only 3 established urology subspecialty fellowship training programs within the country.

Prof. Dr. Haluk Özen who is the present programme director of the department of urology is a well-know urologist -nationally and internationally. He is also directing the uro-oncology fellowship training program. He has been very active to improve resident education and postgraduate education of urologists. He is currently the president of Turkish Board of Urology.

Since the Prof. Dr Remzi's leading role as a pediatric urologist in the early days of the department in early 1960's, Pediatric urology has always been one of the leading practices within the department. Most of the first pediatric urology operations in the country like anti-reflux surgery, bladder neck procedures and Wilms tumor operations have been performed by him. The first article by a Turkish author cited in Campbell's Urology was by Dr. Remzi and it was about bladder stones in children.

In 1995, after Dr Tekgul had completed his training in Pediatric Urology at the University of Washington (Seattle) with Dr Micheal Mitchell and has come back to the department; he started to work as a full-time pediatric urologist and a division of Pediatric Urology has been initiated. Dr Tekgul has been the staff person in charge of this division since then. In the year 2000 the programme for Fellowship training has been started and the first fellow was Dr Cem Akbal, he was followed with Dr Berk Burgu, Dr Serkan Dogan and Dr Fatih Canaklı. The current fellow is Dr. Onur Kaygısız.

The Pediatric Urology fellowship program aims to produce fully trained paediatric urologists in all medical and surgical aspects of modern urological practice, familiar with research. The main goal is to train self sufficient and outstanding urologists both in academic and clinical arena.

One of the leading strong points of the pediatric urology fellow training program in Hacettepe University is that it has been established within such a well grounded urology training program with a highly prestigious academic tradition of more than 40 years. Under the supervision of Dr. Tekgöl the pediatric urology training programme is currently the only one within the country with an established and regular training program that has an allocated position for a trainee who is only being trained for Pediatric Urology.

Faculty-fellow - resident relationship is very unique and based on a 'expert- apprentice' perceptiveness. The surgical training includes a huge amount of cases with different types. Any kind of reconstructive surgeries for congenital and neurogenic anomalies of the genitourinary tract are being performed as well as transplantation, laparoscopic and endourological surgeries. The pediatric urology section has one of the largest series of bladder augmentation, percutaneous nephrolithotomy, ureterorenoscopy, shock-wave lithotripsy and metabolic evaluation data. Active surgical participation of the trainee is the mainstay of the program and the trainees are given surgical responsibilities in concordance with their position under supervision. The progress of trainees are controlled regularly and recorded electronically.

The well structured form of the programme provides all physicians at the department to know their responsibilities and limits. That structure helps to maintain an on going training with each person taking significant roles in the management of patients with graded responsibility. The program is unique as it also gives the pediatric urology fellow the responsibility in the training of urology residents. Therefore resident education for pediatric urology is also above standards compared to many centers around Europe.



The Urology Department with other staff members, fellows and residents.

Each year approximately 5000 outpatient admissions are managed within the paediatric urology division. Also in a wide range of variety, more than 500 pediatric cases are operated per year. Another 300 undergo day procedures. There is a 14 bed ward specific for pediatric urology within children's hospital. All diagnostic and therapeutic facilities like imaging, nuclear medicine, urodynamics, ESWL are well established and equipments are up to date. The operating rooms have recently been reengineered with all the new modern instruments.

All the doctors under pediatric urology training, including both residents and fellows, are encouraged to investigate and produce scientific data. The medical archive of the institute is one of the largest in the country. Besides this, data acquisition and electronic recording of groups of pediatric urology patients are shared by residents and fellows. Therefore, retrospective analysis is possible if necessary. On the other hand, prospective original study projects are also being carried on. The contribution of the division to the pediatric urology literature is evident with the presence at least 3 articles per year within the last 7-8 years. The department has also taken very important roles in organizing many national and international pediatric urological courses and meetings.

International relationship and communication desires of residents are highly encouraged. Three of the residents got scholars from short-term visits of EUSP, in years of 2002 and 2003, and three postgraduate scholarships were supplied from The Scientific and Technical Research Council of Turkey for 1 year fellowships in the USA (Dr Cem Akbal). Dr Burgu one of the previous pediatric urology fellows has received a one year EUSP grant to go and work in Great Ormand Street Hospital in London.

The pediatric urology section is evolving in time and continuing to support the pediatric urology area by providing qualified pediatric urologists. Within the last 8 years in addition 4 urologists completed 2-years pediatric urology fellowship programme and still performing full-time pediatric urology practice in different places of Turkey. Besides this, within this time period 4 more urologists have been working as visiting fellows for a time period of at least 6 months. There also have been many visitors staying in shorter periods both from Turkey and abroad.

Dr Tekgul's keen interest on postgraduate training has played an important role in the evolution of training in the division. The experience he has gained in the development of Pediatric Urology as a subspecialty in Europe during his position as the Chairman of the Educational Committee of EUSP has helped to establish the structure of training in the division. He is currently the chairman of the exam committee of Turkish Urology Board. He has been the organizer of the 4 nationwide board exams (both oral and written) and 4 educational meetings for residents. Dr Tekgul is also the coordinator for postgraduate training within the Hacettepe Medical School.

The main aim of the division is to improve the current standards of training with inclusion of new staff members. Improvement of a basic research facility in cooperation with other basic research units and recruitment of a second fellow will improve quality of training by allowing the trainees to have more time for research and reduce the clinical workload for each trainee.