



Ethicon Grant/Fellowship Report Form (Please complete in type print)

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| Grant Holder Name | Dr Shirley Potter |
| Brief biography, including qualification and year of graduation (no more than 100 words) | <p>Dr Shirley Potter Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeon MB, BCh, BAO, BSc(Anat), FRCS(Plast), PhD</p> <p>I qualified from NUI Galway in 2003, with an honours medical degree and an intercalated BSc in Anatomy. I progressed through basic surgical training in Galway University Hospital and Mater Hospital, Dublin. I then completed a PhD in tumour biology under the supervision of Professor Michael Kerin, NUI Galway, and under clinician scientist scholarship from the Health Research Board of Ireland. I then progressed directly into specialist training in Plastic Surgery and was awarded FRCS(plast) in 2015. I have since been on specialist fellowships in Melbourne, Australia.</p> |
| Title of Project/Fellowship | Fellowship in Oncoplastic and Reconstructive Surgery |
| Year of Award: Commencement Date: Conclusion Date: | Aug 2015 to Dec 2016 |

Summary (no more than 250 words)

This fellowship was in Oncoplastic and Reconstructive Surgery, with an emphasis on Microsurgery. It was based at St Vincents Hospital and The Peter Mac Callum Cancer Centre, Melbourne, Australia. During this fellowship I worked alongside some of the world experts in Microsurgery and Reconstructive Plastic Surgery. I was both humbled and honoured to have had this opportunity, and I am grateful to Ethicon for making it possible. During this fellowship I was exposed to a huge variety of oncoplastic cases, including Head and Neck reconstruction, Breast reconstruction, Sarcoma reconstruction and Colorectal/Gynaecological reconstruction, as well as advanced melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancer. Each day I was faced with several different oncological defects and had to come up with, and execute, a reconstructive plan. I was also intimately involved in the multi-disciplinary meetings for each of the above oncological sub-specialities. On a weekly basis I attended combined oncoplastic reconstructive clinics. I was also involved in translational research at Peter

Mac Callum Cancer Centre, which has dedicated on-site molecular laboratories. This fellowship has undoubtedly broadened my experience and left me confident that I will be able to deal with whatever oncological cases I will be faced with as a consultant Plastic Surgeon. A special thank you to Ger Conroy, RCSI and Ethicon for their help and support.

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

Objectives of Project/Fellowship:

- (1) To become a technically skillful microsurgeon.
- (2) To engage in translational research in this world renowned institute.
- (3) To become an active member of the academic program of the department and further perfect my skills as a surgical educator
- (4) To make international connections and friends, with some of the leaders in the fields of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery
- (5) To develop a unique skillset and attain a body of knowledge that I can bring back to Ireland, foremost to benefit the Irish patient population, but also to pass on to other Irish surgeons and surgical trainees.

Did you achieve these objectives?

Yes, I achieved all of the above objectives. I was exposed to and involved in a huge case load of surgical oncology and reconstructive cases, allowing me to perfect my microsurgery skills. I was involved in translational research on the clonality of melanoma in situ lesions. I was an active educator at the institution and developed an online e-learning program for nurses and surgical residents. I have made valuable connections with the surgical colleagues that I worked with, connections that I will be able to call on for advice in the future should I need it.

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

(a) Yourself

This award from Ethicon allowed me to travel to Australia to complete this fellowship. This experience taught me new techniques and skills which serve to improve the outcome in oncoplastic reconstruction. In addition it has emphasised the importance of multi-disciplinary meetings, specialist nursing care and how a team approach contributes to higher levels of success in such complex reconstructive cases.

(a) The institution in which you worked

During my time at Peter Mac Callum Cancer Centre I was intimately involved in the surgical education program. I developed an online e-learning module to upskill nurses and surgical residents. I was on the residents training committee. I also completed translational research on the clonality of melanoma in situ, which is awaiting publication. At the end of the year, I was awarded the annual Peter Mac Award for Best Cancer Care, an award which acknowledges outstanding achievements in cancer care.

(a) In the future for Irish patients

This fellowship has provided me with a greater understanding of how to manage a successful oncoplastic reconstruction practice. For the patient this means higher success rates and a greater

choice of reconstructions. The experience has given me a greater appreciation of how the efficiency of the surgical process including multi-disciplinary meetings, team approach and nursing care all contribute to ensuring the best possible outcome both from a reconstructive perspective and patient experience.

In summary, this fellowship has allowed me to develop a unique skillset and attain a body of knowledge that I can bring back to Ireland, foremost to benefit the Irish patient population, but also to pass on to other Irish surgeons and surgical trainees.