

## Report from Iceland

It was a gray winter day in Copenhagen, the day I traveled to Iceland. My PhD supervisor had arranged that I could have my stay out of Denmark in Reykjavik, Iceland and I was looking forward to this stay. When the plane landed in Iceland, it was a very beautiful, clear winter day – and I just arrived in time to watch the sun go down as I caught the shuttlebus to Reykjavik.

This beautiful, clear day turned into a beautiful, clear night, and I realized that this moment could be a perfect night to experience the Northern Lights for the first time in my life. In the darkness of the night, I went to the place where the American and European continental plates meet - and as I stood there, the most beautiful green light suddenly danced across the sky.

The next morning, Jón Guðmundsson, my contact person at the department was so kind as to pick me up at my hotel and take me to the hospital. All the staff at the interventional radiology department at Landspítali took really good care of me and they were all really nice to me. I had some exciting days at the department of interventional radiology, meeting many interesting patients with different problems from head to foot.

The purpose of the stay was to build a mature platform and understanding of research questions within my PhD context for future collaborations, and to observe how the workday in a hospital is in another Nordic country. The subject of my PhD project was vascular access complications after femoral percutaneous intervention. A substudy with focus on transfemoral transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR). Jón had arranged that I could spend some days at the department of interventional cardiology, where I was welcomed with just as much hospitality. TAVR procedures are scheduled only a few days a month in Reykjavik, so I was very lucky to be visiting just one of those days, which gave me the chance to observe these procedures. Almost all the doctors in the department had been specialized in Sweden or Denmark, which made communication flow easily in the Nordic languages. It has been interesting to observe, the workflow is similar to the Danish. It was surprising that it is not possible to get a specialty in radiology in Iceland so all the doctors mainly got there specialty in Denmark or Sweden.

There were not many hours of daylight so far north during the winter, and one day I went to one of Reykjavik's many outdoor thermal pools. Now I totally understand why the Icelandic people love to come here after a long day to relax and enjoy the heat. It was a bit surreal to swim laps in nice, warm water while there being minus degrees in the air. The school kids next to me had

swimming lessons from a teacher in a snowsuit and knitted hat.

I spent my evenings in cozy Reykjavik where the Hallgrímskirkja watches the city from the top of the hill and small, superb restaurants hide in the minor streets. I do not think I have seen so much great food anywhere else.

Over all I had a great stay in Landspítali, Reykjavik. I have to come back some day.

