

## ISPAD Allan Drash Fellowship Report

Recipient: Deepika Harit  
Year Awarded: 2021  
Host Center: Barbara Davis Center for Diabetes, Aurora, CO, USA  
Mentor: Dr. Guy Todd Alonso  
Duration of the Fellowship: 6 weeks (24<sup>th</sup> April, 2023 – 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2023)

Personal note: My Allan Drash fellowship at the Barbara Davis Center for Childhood Diabetes began in April 2023, after a very long wait (due to the COVID pandemic). It was a combination of clinical and research experience. My fellowship's main goal was to improve my clinical expertise in the management of pediatric T1D. Because BDC is one of the key research institutes in the United States for all T1D-related developments, I had numerous opportunities to examine not only the day-to-day care of Diabetes, but also the most recent diabetes technologies, some of which are available in only handful of countries.

Activities: I observed Dr. Todd Alonso's daily routine. He helped me put together a training schedule that covered all I hoped to learn in such a short amount of time. At BDC, I was taught how to treat childhood diabetes holistically from the moment it was diagnosed. It was fascinating to see how the complete team of medical professionals, diabetes educators, dieticians, nurse practitioners, social workers, and psychologists collaborates to offer newly diagnosed children and their families with a day-by-day education plan. Their outstanding team not only helps families manage diabetes effectively, but also inspires them to do so. Their thorough diabetes education efforts and support are amazing. Even other parents who themselves had T1D for many years acknowledged that they wished they had visited BDC sooner because no one had previously given them such thorough education.

I attended the in-depth sessions conducted by all the team members. Fortunately, I was able to participate clinic visits with the majority of the faculties. The new insulin pumps, Omnipod and Tandem, which are unavailable in India, were intriguing to see. I was gladly instructed by the various research team members on how to start and program various insulin pumps. Through their telemedicine option, I was able to have in-depth online pump training sessions with the parents of some patients, which helped me understand the pumps better and gave me confidence in every aspect of it. Jean even offered me a pump to try on so I could feel how it works on my body. I learned about the newest CGMs, including the Dexcom G6, G7, Guardian 4, and Libre 3, which are not yet available in my country. I also learned how different cloud-based apps work, allowing doctors to view CGM readings remotely and provide guidance as needed. I could also attend to a few grand rounds and the launch of the Medtronic 780 G.

At the adult clinic at BDC, I also had the chance to learn from the professionals like Dr. Satish Garg, which gave me firsthand experience of how the patients are handled as adults. Dr. Bucca eagerly walked me through the cutting-edge testing equipment his clinic has to screen for diabetic retinopathy at an early stage.

*Gained Fresh Insights:* Throughout my fellowship, I was exposed to and absorbed a great deal of fresh information and experiences. The Inpen, Omnipod 5, T Slim X2 pump, Dexcom G6, G7, Synergy, and Libre3 (which have not yet been made available in India) were among the devices I learned how to use. It was fascinating to watch a patient with early T1D receive teplizumab infusion. I acquired knowledge of BAQSIMI and Iyumjev use. During the last couple of days, I attended the lifestyle, PCOS, and T2D clinic at Children's Hospital Colorado, where I learned about new treatment options like as Ozempic, Mounjaro, topiramate, and Phentermine. I could observe a modified Euglycemic Clamp technique too. It was fascinating to see so many topics that I had previously only read about in books or papers in action at BDC.

It was interesting to know how the DAISY and TEDDY studies were conducted. Dr Brigitte Frohnert happily explained to me about the ongoing Autoimmunity Screening for Kids (ASK) study, wherein they are inviting all US children (ages 1-17) including those with no family history of either disease, for a free health screening for Type 1 Diabetes (T1D) and Celiac Disease. We exchanged a lot of perspectives and discussed about the disparities in health system in the two countries.

I want to sincerely thank Dr. Todd Alonso for his guidance and support throughout my fellowship. His professional knowledge, insight, patience, and support have been of immeasurable use to me. He taught me how to empower patients and their families when they feel that living with diabetes makes life tough. He spent a lot of time and effort helping me to shorten my learning curve, and for that, I am sincerely grateful. The interesting, thought-provoking, and profound conversations we had are something I genuinely miss. He is not only a superb mentor but also a friend, and I have no doubt that he will continue to assist ISPAD fellows in receiving training under his capable direction. Special thanks to him for hosting my family and I to his lovely house for a fantastic American dinner!

One of my favourite memories now is the time I spent at BDC. There, I made one of the friendliest and most friendly acquaintances. Although I was hesitant to go there at first, it did not take me long to feel at home. Working with such a talented and helpful team of professionals was enjoyable. Whether it was for work, a commute, an adventure, or for fun, they were always willing to assist! I was also invited to join the lunch on staff appreciation day, and it was entertaining to observe the bustling food trucks on campus.

ISPAD has given me a chance to learn and develop as a physician caring for children with diabetes, and I am incredibly grateful for that. I now have the assurance to give my patients the finest care possible, and the insights I gained through this fellowship have assisted me in developing a fresh strategy for overcoming the difficulties associated with managing diabetes. I already have a ton of experience using the knowledge and abilities I have acquired from this program, and I am confident that I will continue to benefit from them in the future. I am really appreciative of the chance to learn from the pioneers of Pediatric Diabetes.



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*Deepika Harit*