

# Shifting paradigms – how a visionary can change a specialty

BY MUAZ TARABICHI

The Tarabichi-Stammberger Ear and Sinus Institute came about because of a close working relationship and friendship between two senior figures in the specialty.

**Professor Muaz Tarabichi** tells us the story.



Heinz following up on construction of the TSESI and inspecting progress in spring of 2018.

**TSESI**  
TARABICHI - STAMMBERGER  
EAR & SINUS INSTITUTE



Final construction touch-ups of the TSESI project.

My first meeting with Heinz Stammberger was in 1988 in Montreal, where I was in my last year of training at McGill University and Heinz came to the Royal Victoria Hospital as a visiting professor to talk about a new approach to the diagnosis and treatment of sinus disease. I remember vividly sitting at the back of the lecture room and having a light conversation with a fellow resident: 'Is he telling us that you can take polyps out with the endoscope? Does he think that we do not operate on nasal polyps and we do not know how much it bleeds? I think he is showing us his one lucky case.' We just did not believe it.

Of course, that conversation mirrored the initial response of the ENT community around the world. Heinz persisted, trotting around the globe and advocating the technique. The community's response developed from scepticism about the feasibility of the technique to cries of alarm of how dangerous and irresponsible it was.

As I started doing and advocating endoscopic ear surgery, I was faced with

the same attitudes that he faced a decade earlier. Heinz was very supportive of my efforts. He wanted to know more about my work and he kept telling me stories of his initial interactions with some of the stalwarts of the ENT community when he started with FESS. This was a great source of support in my personal journey.

The development of the Tarabichi Stammberger Ear and Sinus Institute (TSESI) was a joint dream of Heinz Stammberger and mine. Of course, everybody knows that Heinz was a great teacher and innovator. But he would not have been the Heinz we all knew if it was not for his global perspective; he had the same commitment to teaching FESS in Indonesia as he did in his home country. He was a true globalist. We had long discussions and shared observations in regard to the state of practice of ear and sinus surgery around the globe. We have both met so many younger otolaryngologists who are driven by higher callings to improve their skills but are limited by their environment they are practising in. If only someone

could give them a helping hand and some guidance. Much of that talent exists outside the developed world, mainly in Asia and Africa. We also shared the observations that when you get those young doctors together around a shared objective of learning and improving patient care, they form beautiful friendships across geographic, ethnic and religious lines. This led to our mutual dream of building the TSESI, dedicated to the art and science of endoscopic ear and sinus surgery. We wanted to build a place that would welcome everyone who shares our objectives of improving care across the globe, be it teacher, clinician or student. We wanted to expose trainees to the full experience of the practice of endoscopic ear and sinus surgery, from observing the initial examination in the clinic and relating clinical to radiographic findings, to observing surgery and practising the technique on cadavers, all in one place. We also wanted to be able to certify their level of skill and competence and allow them to use their time at the centre to further pursue their careers.



Trainees and faculty take a pledge to preserve Prof Stammberger's legacy at the Jakarta Ear and Sinus Course.

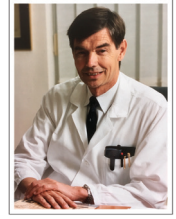
The dream of the TSESI has long been in planning, from design to the construction. This culminated in a 2017 meeting with the leadership of Karl Storz endoscopy, Mrs Sybil Storz, Heinz and myself, where we put the finishing touches on this endeavour. We started with multiple educational initiatives, including offering scholarships to young physicians around the globe which included airfare and hotel accommodation. Heinz was greatly involved in the design of the physical facility and closely followed the construction process. It really is sad that Heinz has left us just as we are putting the final touches on the construction of this facility. I have decided to pledge my life, financial resources and all my efforts to the realisation of our shared

dream and I pledge to all that TSESI will be the leading educational, research and clinical centre for endoscopic ear and sinus surgery. I particularly welcome any teaching help and involvement of other leaders of our specialty, with the shared objectives of maintaining Professor Heinz Stammberger's name and legacy.

I am presently writing this memo from Jakarta, Indonesia. The organisers dedicated much of the opening ceremony to Heinz's memory including a moving video tribute which can be found in the online version of this article. Dr Wardani, the Course Director, was in tears when she described her long association and interactions with Heinz. We all took the pledge to preserve his legacy.

WE PROMISE

We will  
preserve  
your  
Legacy



AUTHOR



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