



EPILEPSY SURGERY TRAINING CAMP

February 7th-15th 2026

Kigali, Rwanda

CHUK - University Teaching Hospital of Kigali



Republic of Rwanda
Ministry of Health

 **Hospital del Mar**
Barcelona



San Servolo Epilepsy Summer School

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SILENE
FOUNDATION

A Warm Welcome to Our International Colleagues

Your presence in Rwanda contributes not only to advancing epilepsy care, but also to strengthening global medical collaboration and capacity building. We deeply appreciate your commitment and hope your time in Rwanda is both professionally rewarding and personally enriching.



Introduction

Epilepsy surgery remains one of the most effective treatments for drug-resistant epilepsy, yet access to structured epilepsy surgery programs is still extremely limited in many low- and middle-income countries. Addressing this gap requires not only technical expertise, but also sustainable educational models, strong international collaboration, and close engagement with local health authorities.

The **Epilepsy Surgery Training Camp** was conceived as a first, concrete step toward the progressive development of an epilepsy surgery program in a resource-limited setting, using education, telemedicine, and multidisciplinary collaboration as its foundation.

The idea for this initiative originated during the **20th Advanced San Servolo Epilepsy Course**, where a group of trainees, later known as the **ToBe Group**, were asked to develop a project related to epilepsy surgery.

This work was conducted under the supervision of **Professor Carlo Efisio Marras** (Neurosurgeon) and **Professor Hans Holthausen** (Neurologist), whose guidance was instrumental in shaping both the scientific rigor and the practical vision of the project.

The **ToBe Group** is composed of **Caterina Caldeiras** (Neurologist), **Arminas Jasionis** (Neurologist), **Nagino Naoto** (Neurologist), **Nicolò Orlandi** (Neurologist), **Maria Victoria Piccirilli** (Pediatric Neurologist), and **Alain Sayinzoga** (Neurologist).

The group chose to focus on the development of an epilepsy surgery program in a resource-limited country, integrating telemedicine and international expertise. Following the presentation of this project in Venice, the group remained in close contact, motivated by a shared commitment to translate this conceptual work into a real-world initiative.

It was subsequently decided to begin in **Rwanda**, leveraging local clinical engagement and institutional support. Contacts were established with the **Ministry of Health of Rwanda** and the **Rwanda Association of Neurological Surgeons (RANS)**, which expressed strong support for this educational and capacity-building initiative.

The agreed strategy was to start “from the beginning,” with an intensive **one-week Epilepsy Surgery Training Camp**, combining hands-on clinical exposure, structured teaching, and multidisciplinary case discussions.



This initial phase will serve as the foundation upon which next steps can be defined, with the goal of progressively and sustainably establishing an epilepsy surgery program.

The Training Camp brings together a truly **international and multidisciplinary faculty panel**. In addition to the **ToBe Group**, several experienced professionals joined and supported the initiative and will actively participate in the course.

Their involvement ensures comprehensive coverage of the full spectrum of epilepsy surgery care, from presurgical evaluation to surgical techniques and postoperative management.

The scientific program emphasizes presurgical evaluation, seizure semiology, neuroimaging, video-EEG monitoring, neuropsychology, neuropathology, epilepsy nursing, and surgical strategies, while maintaining a strong focus on local case presentations and real-life clinical decision-making.

The course will be delivered in a **hybrid format**, combining **in-person training in Kigali** with **online lectures and remote expertise**, reinforcing the role of

telemedicine as a key enabler for epilepsy surgery development in settings where subspecialty expertise and resources are limited. Importantly, this initiative is designed as a **reproducible model**, applicable to many other resource-limited countries where epilepsy surgery does not yet exist.

By fostering local capacity, international mentorship, and institutional engagement, the ultimate goal is to **improve the quality of life of patients with drug-resistant epilepsy** who currently have no access to surgical treatment.

The Project is supported by **Hospital del Mar** in Barcelona (Spain), a leading healthcare institution committed to the national and international dissemination of epilepsy surgery, and by the **Silene Ideas for Care Foundation**, which among its objectives promotes training in the field of healthcare professions, with a particular focus on neurosciences. The **Epilepsy Surgery Training Camp Project** is part of its educational program **EduCare**.

Scientific Program

Day 1 Monday 9.2

9:00 - 9:30	Introduction of the EpiSurg Training Camp
9:30 - 10:30	Surgical cases - <i>A. Sayinzoga</i>
10:30 - 11:30	Presentation of the Project - <i>The ToBe Group</i>
11:30 - 12:30	Q&A
12:30 - 13:00	Presurgical diagnosis in epilepsy - <i>R. Rocamora</i>
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 - 14:30	Particularities of presurgical epilepsy diagnosis in children - <i>M. Piccirilli</i>
14:30 - 15:00	Q&A
15:00 - 15:30	Case presentations by trainees

Day 2 Tuesday 10.2

9:00 - 9:30	Surgical cases - <i>A. Sayinzoga</i>
9:30 - 10:30	Semiology in focal epilepsies - <i>R. Rocamora</i> / <i>A. Jasionis</i>
10:30 - 11:30	Semiology in epileptic encephalopathies - <i>M. Piccirilli</i>
11:30 - 12:30	Cases by the Faculty - <i>C. Caldeiras</i>
12:30 - 13:00	Q&A
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 - 14:45	Temporal lobe Epilepsy - <i>A. Jasionis</i>
14:45 - 15:15	Temporal lobe surgery - <i>N. Infante</i>
15:15 - 15:30	Q&A
15:30 - 16:00	Coffee break
16:00 - 16:30	Case presentations by trainees

Day 3 Wednesday 11.2

9:00 - 9:30	Surgical cases - <i>A. Sayinzoga</i>
9:30 - 10:15	Minimally invasive Surgery - <i>N. Infante</i>
10:15 - 11:00	Epilepsy in Rwanda - <i>F. Sebera</i>
11:00 - 12:00	Cases by the Faculty - <i>N. Naoto</i> / <i>M. Piccirilli</i>
12:00 - 12:30	How to present a case - <i>R. Rocamora</i>
12:30 - 13:00	Q&A
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 - 14:30	Fundamentals of VEEG - <i>A. Jasionis</i>
14:30 - 15:00	Fundamentals of Neuroimaging - <i>M. Viles</i>
15:00 - 15:15	Q&A
15:15 - 15:45	Coffee break
15:45 - 16:45	Case presentations by trainees

Day 4 Thursday 12.2

9:00 - 9:30	Surgical cases - <i>A. Sayinzoga</i>
9:30 - 10:15	FCD and LEATs surgery - <i>A. De Benedictis</i>
10:15 - 11:00	Neuropathology of epilepsy - <i>V. Zshernack</i>
11:00 - 11:30	The Relevance of Epilepsy Nursing - <i>M. Albert / M. Civillé Mora</i>
11:30 - 12:30	Cases by the Faculty - <i>N. Orlandi / R. Rocamora</i>
12:30 - 13:00	Infectious causes of seizures and epilepsy in the developing countries - <i>P. Munyemana</i>
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 - 14:30	Pediatric epilepsy surgery in countries with limited resources - <i>H. Holthausen</i>

Day 5 Friday 13.2

9:00 - 9:30	Surgical cases - <i>A. Sayinzoga</i>
9:30 - 10:30	Connectome in Epilepsy Surgery - <i>A. De Benedictis</i>
10:30 - 11:00	Cases by the Faculty - <i>R. Rocamora</i>
11:00 - 11:30	Case presentations by trainees
11:30 - 12:00	Fundamentals of neuropsychology in epilepsy - <i>C. Helmstaedter</i>
12:00 - 12:30	Q&A
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 - 14:30	Challenges, opportunities, and the road ahead of epilepsy surgery in Rwanda - <i>E. Shingiro</i>
14:30 - 15:00	Final remarks and conclusions

Faculty Panel

Maria Albert	Nurse	Spain
Caterina Caldeiras	Neurologist	Portugal
Mireia Clivillé Mola	Nurse	Spain
Alessandro De Benedictis	Neurosurgeon	Italy
C. Helmstaedter	Neuropsychologist	Germany
Hans Holthausen	Neurosurgeon	Germany
Nazaret Infante	Neurosurgeon	Spain
Arminas Jasionis	Neurologist	Lituania
Carlo Efisio Marras	Neurosurgeon	Spain/Italy
Sevérién Muneza	Neurosurgeon	Rwanda
Paulin Munyemana	Neurosurgeon	Rwanda
Nagino Naoto	Neurologist	Japan
Nicolò Orlandi	Neurologist	Italy
Maria Piccirilli	Pediatric Neurologist	Argentina
Rodrigo Rocamora	Neurologist	Spain
Alain Sayinzoga	Neurologist	Rwanda
Eric Shigiro	Neurosurgeon	Rwanda
Fidel Sebera	Neurologist	Rwanda
Marc Viles	Neuroradiologist	Spain
Valentina Zshernack	Neuropathologist	Germany

Murakaza Neza (You Are Most Welcome)

Rwanda is a landlocked country in East Africa, known as the “Land of a Thousand Hills”.

After the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, Rwanda has made remarkable progress in peace, governance, and development, becoming one of Africa’s fastest-growing nations.

As you join us for the Epilepsy Surgery Camp, we are honored to welcome you not only as medical experts, but also as guests in a nation that deeply values human dignity, community, and partnership.



Culture and Social Values

Rwandan culture is rooted in respect, humility, and community solidarity. Greetings are important, and politeness is highly valued in both professional and social interactions. Elders and guests are shown great respect, and collaboration is seen as a shared responsibility.

A defining cultural principle is *Ubumuntu*—the essence of being human through compassion and empathy. This value aligns closely with Rwanda’s commitment to inclusive healthcare and care for vulnerable populations, including people living with epilepsy.



Safety, Cleanliness, and Organization

Rwanda is widely recognized as one of the safest and cleanest countries in Africa. Environmental protection is a national priority; plastic bags are banned, and cities are meticulously maintained. Visitors often note the sense of order, efficiency, and calm, particularly in Kigali.



Health Care

Rwanda has made significant progress in health care, with over 90% national health insurance coverage through **Mutuelle de Santé**. While initiatives such as the **Human Resources for Health (HRH)** and **4x4 surgical training programs** have strengthened the health workforce, access to highly specialized services like epilepsy surgery is still developing, offering key opportunities for partnership and growth.



Language and Communication

The official languages are *Kinyarwanda*, English and French, with English widely used in medical, academic, and professional settings. Rwandans are generally eager to communicate and assist visitors.



Nature and Scenic Beauty

Beyond its healthcare and social achievements, Rwanda is blessed with extraordinary natural beauty:

- Rolling green hills and terraced landscapes across the countryside.
- **Volcanoes National Park**, home to the iconic mountain gorillas.
- **Nyungwe Forest**, one of Africa's oldest rainforests, rich in biodiversity.
- **Lake Kivu**, offering serene views along Rwanda's western border.

These landscapes reflect the harmony between people and nature that Rwanda strives to preserve.



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