

## **ELECTIVE (SSC5b) REPORT (1200 words)**

A report that addresses the above four objectives should be written below. Your Elective supervisor will assess this.

### **Elective Report**

**Moritz Rademacher**

I did my elective in Germany, my country of origin. It was a very interesting experience and one that I will not forget anytime soon. I learned what real discipline means and what hard and long working hours are truly like. At the same time it allowed to refresh my German medical terminology, which is very difficult if you studied in English. This at times created some misunderstandings and awkward moments, as I am a native German speaker and people therefore expected me to know the German medical terminology.

I did my elective in Berlin in one of Europe's most renowned hospitals "The Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin" it is affiliated with both Humboldt University and Freie Universität Berlin. With numerous Collaborative Research Centers (CRC) of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, including three Nobel Prize Laureates working as research fellows in the Einstein Foundation, Charité is one of Germany's most research-intensive medical institutions. For the past five years (2012 to 2017), Charité has been ranked by Focus as the best of over 1000 hospitals in Germany. More than half of all German Nobel Prize winners in Physiology or Medicine, including Emil von Behring, Robert Koch, and Paul Ehrlich came from the Charité. Its medical school is widely renowned in Germany for clinical and scientific excellence.

Having done my elective here allowed me to have a very in-depth understanding of orthopaedic surgery and the newest developments in the field.

**Compare and contrast the pattern of health provision in Germany in relation to the UK.**

The German Health care system is the oldest in the world. It was founded in 1882 by Bismarck. Since then it has developed into a state insurance system and a private insurance system. Often workplaces give health insurances to their employees. There are hundreds of different insurances in Germany. For the one who cannot afford health care the state comes up for them. Therefore it is means dependent.

However prescriptions cost varying amounts and being over 60 does not qualify you for free prescriptions. You are always charged a fixed amount each month with the state insurance, but it is similar to the amount that is taken away in taxes for the NHS in the UK. So it costs about the same as health care does here.

Overall the German health care system has about 30% more money in it than the UK. Therefore the machinery is high tech and hospitals have a very high standard. It is normally 2 patients per hospital room and waiting times are very short, due to German efficiency.

**What is the incidence of melanoma and other cutaneous malignancies in Germany and what are the associated factors that warrant tumour surgery. Compare this to the UK and list the various types of tumour surgery that was seen during the elective.**

**Describe the pattern of hand trauma in the population in Germany and discuss the national measures taken to reduce the incidence.**

**Germany has extremely good healthcare facilities to take care of traumatic hand injuries. In case of emergency, you will receive treatment the same day and will be seen by specialists in the field. The most common conditions are fractures and dislocations. With fractures of the scaphoid being common surgical issues. Deep lacerations are other more common traumatic events that are present. Infections of the hand are rather uncommon though, as antibiotic treatment is good and at a high standard. On our team, we had a world famous infectiologist. He would always try to cure the patient before the surgeons were called and that with great success. He knew exactly what generation of cephalosporin to use and when to apply them.**

**Other common traumatic hand injuries were burns. Skin grafts were applied to many patients, as well as vac dresses. Finally, there were also a number of patients with high-pressure injuries.**

**In general, there are a number of national measures taken to reduce the incidence of hand trauma in Germany. Companies have to abide to high health regulations and the state supports any measures taken to prevent traumatic hand injuries from occurring. However, poor lifestyle choices, motor vehicle accidents and simply bad luck cause a number of people to come into hospital each day.**

**What is the incidence of melanoma and other cutaneous malignancies in Germany and what are the associated factors that warrant tumour surgery. Compare this to the UK and list the various types of tumour surgery that was seen during the elective.**

**The incidence nationwide in Germany is about the same as in the UK. It lies at around 4% of new cancers occurring. Of all different types of skin cancer, it is the least common, but the one with the highest mortality rate. This is why large-scale excisions have to be applied to remove the cancer. At the same time, it has to be done in a very timely manner, as melanoma is known to metastasise to various parts of the body extremely quickly.**

**Melanoma tumour surgery is done as long as there are no metastases present in the body. The different radius of tumour excision is dependent on the size of the melanoma present.**

**One of the tumour surgeries I witnessed was the excision of a lipoma. This was very interesting to watch as it was removed very precisely and in a smooth surgical fashion.**

**Describe the principles of trauma care that a junior doctor should be familiar with**

**Good trauma care is extremely important for a positive outcome. Trauma comes at different sizes and scales and therefore the care widely differs as well. Therefore, it is extremely important to understand the pre hospital triage system, so that the patient can directly be categorised. Part of being able to**

triage patients is by understanding the 3 major groups that make up triaging. These are the patient's physiology; here vital signs such as the blood pressure and the patient's pulse are taken into consideration. Then if any obvious anatomical injuries are visible. This means any immediately evident injuries such as long bone fractures and spinal cord injuries. Finally the mechanism of the injury, if it was a fall from a high building, or a vehicle accident. This is important to understand to be able to find out if the patient has polytrauma.

These are very important things that every junior doctor needs to know about. As they make up an essential part of good medical care and a vast amount of patients.

To conclude I enjoyed my 6 weeks at Charite very much. It was both an enlightening time, as well as an interesting time. I would like to do a fellowship here in the near future. However, before I do so I will freshen up medical german beforehand.