

ELECTIVE (SSC5a) REPORT (1200 words)

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

Ghana encounters various conditions influenced by socioeconomic factors, healthcare accessibility, the environment, and cultural customs. Marginalized communities still face notable difficulties due to infectious diseases like malaria, HIV, tuberculosis, and gastroenteritis. Although cardiovascular diseases and diabetes are less frequent, they are beginning to become prevalent, particularly in urban communities. Although there have been improvements in maternal and child health services, issues still persist due to socioeconomic reasons and accessibility to health ser. Ghana's health challenges mirror prevalent issues in low- and middle-income nations, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. By addressing these challenges, we help deliver global health objectives by promoting equality and sustainable development. International collaborations and investments through international support are crucial in improving the healthcare system of Ghana and other third world countries.

The healthcare systems in Ghana and the UK are very different in terms of their structure, financing, service delivery, and health outcomes. In Ghana, there is a mixture of public and private funding, whilst the UK relies on the publicly funded NHS to deliver comprehensive care. Ghana's healthcare financing relies on government funding, insurance schemes, and patient payments. Providing healthcare in Ghana often faces challenges due to infrastructure and staffing limitations, particularly in rural communities. In contrast, the UK has well-established services accessible to all residents nationwide. Moreover, health outcomes tend to be better in the UK, particularly with communicable diseases. Both countries are currently dealing with healthcare workers shortages, but the UK is still managing to deliver comprehensive care despite these limitations. Overall, Ghana is taking measures to enhance its healthcare system by improving infrastructure, expanding insurance coverage, and strengthening the healthcare workforce, with the support of international collaborations and investments.

In Ghana, there are significant differences in trauma care and emergency service provision between urban and rural areas. Urban regions are significantly more accessible due to concentrated and resourced hospitals, trauma centers, and multidisciplinary teams. They also benefit from advanced medical technologies and shorter travel distances, permitting faster response times and efficient ambulance services. However, rural areas face challenges in providing trauma care and accessing emergency services due to reduced healthcare facilities, inadequate infrastructure, and a shortage of healthcare professionals. Rural communities often have smaller primary care clinics with limited resources, and patients often have to travel long distances even for emergency treatment. Additionally, emergency medical transportation is scarce in rural areas, leading to delays in accessing appropriate care. Often patients have to find their own way to the hospital, often by taxi. Solutions to this include infrastructure enhancements, increased ambulance availability, and healthcare professional training and recruitment. However, further investment and targeted interventions are needed to improve the gap between urban and rural areas with regards to trauma care and access to emergency service access.

During my placement, I was able to practice my clinical skills through procedures and clinical examination. I learnt that particularly in rural health centers, clinical examination is often the only method of diagnosis as even basic laboratory investigations and imaging takes days or is often impossible. On reflection, I was able to compare my experience at placement in the UK, where often investigations are done as a

precaution or form part of protocol for some conditions. However, from my time in Ghana, I have learnt the importance of thorough examination and recognition of clinical signs.