

## **ELECTIVE (SSC5c) REPORT (1200 words)**

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

I did a 6 week elective abroad in Kuala Lumpur General Hospital in Malaysia. I wanted an experience abroad to find out how the health system in another country differs to the United Kingdom. I have been exposed to and have learnt about the NHS for a number of years however have not had any experience about the healthcare systems anywhere else. I chose Kuala Lumpur General Hospital because I had heard good things about it and have always wanted to visit Malaysia.

I was given the opportunity to choose 2 specialities I wanted to do my elective in over the 6 weeks. I chose the Accident and Emergency department firstly because it was an area I thought would benefit me as an F1 helping me have more confidence in dealing with emergency situations and developing my clinical and practical skills. Paediatrics was the other speciality I chose because I have always thought about doing paediatrics later in life and wanted more experience dealing with the health of children.

### **1. Describe the pattern of disease/illness of interest in the population with which you have worked and discuss this in the context of global health.**

During the time I spent in the Accident and Emergency department in Kuala Lumpur, I came across many emergency cases including trauma and disease. Trauma was a main presentation to the Emergency department. However the pattern of diseases seen within the majority of cases presenting acutely were not very different to the pattern seen to diseases in the UK. Common conditions presenting in the UK were also the conditions presenting most in Kuala Lumpur General Hospital. During my placement in the Accident and Emergency department in the Royal London Hospital In London, I noticed cardiac conditions such as angina, pulmonary diseases and musculoskeletal pains were commonly presenting. These were such diseases that I saw in Kuala Lumpur Hospital. I did paediatrics at the hospital as well, however most patients were admitted via the Accident and Emergency department. This department did not have a separate Emergency department for children but everyone was seen and triaged in the Accident and Emergency department.

Trauma was a main presentation to the Accident and Emergency department which is similar to that of England. Most of these were road traffic accidents. I think there were more road traffic accident presentations to Kuala Lumpur Hospital as a ratio of all trauma presentations when compared to the Royal London when I was there. This I believe may be due to the larger numbers of motorcycles on the road. Countries such as Malaysia and others in South East Asia have many motorcycles on their roads due to the fact that they are cheaper. This may contribute to the greater road traffic accidents.

### **2. Describe the pattern of health provision in relation to the country in which you have worked and contrast this with other countries, or with the UK.**

During my time at the Accident and Emergency department, I noticed how the system

differed to the UK. The cases coming into Kuala Lumpur Emergency department were categorised based on severity into red, amber and green. Red containing the most severe cases, green the least severe cases and amber those that were in between. There are not this many categories in the UK where there is mainly minors and majors. Following on from the pattern of disease mentioned above. As said trauma was a main presentation to the Emergency department and these were especially useful to be triaged into red, amber and green as the most serious traumas were in red where most help was available as needed.

Another main factor about the health provision in Kuala Lumpur General Hospital is the fact that it is a government run hospital and therefore is a public hospital. In Malaysia there are mostly public hospitals with private hospitals running alongside. This is similar to the NHS in the UK in that way. However in Kuala Lumpur there was a small fee when attending the Emergency department. This is something I have discussed previously before my elective as something that could be implemented in the NHS so it was good to experience that in practice. I did think that there are benefits to this system because it may deter those less serious cases that do not need to attend the Accident and Emergency department.

**3. Health related objective: To find out more about the most prevalent health conditions in Kuala Lumpur and experience treating and educating patients on the public health problems that are specific to this part of the world.**

It is hard to explore this objective in detail because as outlined above many of the presenting diseases to the emergency department was similar to that in the UK. The top 5 health conditions in Malaysia are ischaemic heart disease, mental illness, cerebrovascular disease, road traffic accidents, and cancers. The most prevalent health conditions are in fact very similar to the UK. I managed to experience road traffic accidents and acute presentations of the other disease except for mental illness which I would have liked to have seen more of.

There were also diseases specific to Malaysia which were less common. Mostly these were infectious diseases. There were greater numbers of these in Kuala Lumpur that seen much less in the UK often such as dengue fever, malaria and TB. Also AIDs is more prevalent in Malaysia than the UK, also causing more deaths which is trying to be addressed.

The same applied to the paediatrics department where similar paediatric presentations were seen in Kuala Lumpur as the UK. Mainly infectious diseases were causes of acute presentation.

**4. To build up my confidence to cope in a completely new setting when interacting with a brand new patient demographic, in which there is a language barrier, and where they are aware that I am a junior clinician with not much experience.**

With regards to interacting with patients, this was made harder due to the language barrier. I was able to interact but not to the level at which I would hope for. This made me appreciate how to deal with such experiences that I may encounter as an F1.

I was not able to be as hands on as I had hoped however there were many learning opportunities and I feel I have developed more confidence in my knowledge and application of that knowledge into clinical decisions.

In paediatrics the language barrier was felt less.

—

I thoroughly enjoyed my 6 week placement at Kuala Lumpur Hospital, especially the 3 weeks in Accident and Emergency. I was not expecting how modern the hospital was and similar to the UK. It was a very well run hospital with great learning experiences with very helpful doctors throughout the hospital. It has definitely given me more confidence for my Foundation Year especially as I have one job in acute medicine.

However I would like to experience the accident and emergency department in a less developed country with a less developed health care system or not in a city.