

ELECTIVE (SSC5b) REPORT (1200 words)

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

Gaining an understanding of the healthcare system back home in Singapore is an aim that I have always wanted to achieve. I have had a few placements in Singapore before, such as cardiothoracic surgery as well as obstetrics and gynaecology. I have learnt a lot and gained a lot of insight into these specialities; however these placements are quite niche in nature and I had a more observational role.

Doing an Emergency Medicine placement really helped fulfill my aims of trying to learn more about the spectrum of diseases seen in Singapore and the demographics of the local population. Another key benefit of this placement was that I was able to actively participate in the clinical processes - clerking patients, presenting to the seniors, ordering key investigations, performing procedures and handing over patients.

The doctors have gave me very helpful feedback on some of the key questions as well as tips on presentation skills. Being supervised for procedures such as cannulation and taking blood cultures was unfortunately quite rare in my London hospital placements; however in this placement, I was supervised for all of the procedures I have done on a daily basis and I have received a lot of constructive feedback on how to improve these skills. I have also learnt more about the clinical reasoning behind the decision to discharge or to admit as an in-patient which was extremely useful as I had very little exposure on this in my placements in London.

I have seen patients with a variety of presenting complaints. Singapore is a country with an high immigration rate. This aspect is quite similar to London and there is a high level of alertness to infectious diseases. The control of infectious diseases is perhaps even more important for Singapore - a small country with a very high population density, as well as the prevalence of tropical parasites. Having experiencing the SARS epidemic in Singapore when I was young, I can really appreciate how vulnerable Singapore is to such diseases and how important it is to educate the public about infection control.

One interesting point that I have learnt is that there is an extremely high level of antibiotic resistance in Singapore such as EBSLs and MRSA's. Simple penicillins such as amoxicillin are no longer being prescribed to treat infections whereas that is the antibiotic of choice for many infections in the UK. This emphasised the importance of making the right clinical judgement, managing patient expectations as well as patient education and this is something that I will constantly remind myself no matter where I am practising as a doctor in the future.

All in all this was a very productive and educational placement. I have learnt a lot from the local students, the doctors as well as the various professionals I have had the chance to work with in this placement. I will be working in the A&E department in my housemanship year in the UK and this placement will really come in handy when I start work in the future.