

GENERAL

CHOPRA

MEDICINE

Lina

Elective Report

Following a nine hour flight with a stop-over in Dubai we had finally reached our elective destination, Kuala Lumpur the Capital city of Malaysia. The drive from the airport to the hotel was filled with a scenic route via the Grand prix track and breath taking beauty of palm trees and terrain the country had to offer. Thankfully, the language barrier wasn't a problem as many people could speak good English. Therefore we were given a guided tour as soon as we hit the country from our very own taxi driver.

The hotel was in a busy location within the hustle and bustle of the commercial end of Kuala Lumpur. The place was teeming with traders and markets selling everything from food to designer labels. Malaysia is an Islamic country and Kuala Lumpur was extremely culturally diverse, comprising a range of ethnic origins including Malay, Chinese and Indians.

With no time to spare, we unloaded our luggage into the hotel then set out to find Hospital Kuala Lumpur (HKL), the hospital we were going to be working in for the next 5 weeks.

My first impression of the hospital was that it was extremely large, it had 49 different departments and 83 wards spanning over a large area. It is the largest hospital under the ministry of health of Malaysia and is primarily a government tertiary referral hospital, dealing with a wide range of specialities.

We met with one of the medical directors who gave us essential information about the hospital ID badges and a guided tour of the hospital. I was taken to the busy obstetrics & gynaecology department situated in a separate building and introduced to the team. They all seemed extremely friendly and willing to allow me to shadow them.

Working within the hospital I found that professionalism was an important concept, which was emphasised to the students and staff at all times. It was also compulsory for all doctors within the hospital to wear a clean white coat on a daily basis. This is similar to the hospitals in the U.K, where professionalism is an important part of being within the medical profession, even as a medical student. Within the U.K hospitals, it is not required to wear white coats as infection control has become significantly more important over the years. Therefore a smart dress code

which includes bare above the elbows must always be maintained in the U.K.

The hospital daily routine was very similar to the way the hospitals run in the U.K. On a daily basis there were ward rounds carried out by the team. The team worked closely to ensure patient well-being and they communicated effectively with other medical professionals to ensure excellent patient care.

Within the field I specialised in, although I was unable to assist with deliveries and Caesarean sections I was able to observe. There were different pregnancy complications seen. A common complication seen was post partum haemorrhages, there is now a major government intervention which has been put into place to try and bring down the rates of such complications which have led to high levels of deaths during pregnancy.

I had the chance to speak to patients about their care especially their pre-natal checks and difficulties they may have been faced with. I learnt in detail how certain complications such as induction of labour due to early rupture of membranes and breech presentations were dealt with. I also learnt how they dealt with emergency situations such as preeclampsia and placental abruption.

I noticed that a greater emphasis was made on taking a thorough history from patients and really thinking about possible differential diagnosis, less onus was put on carrying out numerous investigations to make a diagnosis. This was not just because certain facilities were not readily available, but because it was encouraged as a good skill to be developed through the course of medical training.

In conclusion, I had the opportunity to learn about a range of different pregnancy complications and management strategies for each of them. I was able to work with a team of inspiring and knowledgeable doctors who were keen to impart their knowledge and provide advice at all times.

I will never forget how welcome the people of Malaysia made me feel. They are full of warmth and happiness and always eager to help. I would love to return to this country one day as it was a wonderful experience.