

Elective Report

SARA
MOEEN

RESPIRATORY
MEDICINE

To further gain experience in the common diseases present in east London such as TB and common blood disorders.

I was working in the acute medical ward in Whipps Cross University hospital under Dr John Flood, in the endocrinology department. By working on the ward and being on call I had the opportunity to see a lot of patients with many usual and unusual diseases. There were many patients that presented with medical problems such as diabetic ketoacidosis, myocardial infarction and many other medical emergencies. I had the opportunity to see the initial presentation and initial management of these patients in the A&E department. After the patients were stable I was able to clerk them and play an active part in their care. It was a great experience to be able to see patients from the point of admission to the point of discharge.

One of the patients presented with a sickle cell crisis. The patient was known to have sickle cell disease. He presented with severe chest pain and shortness of breath. It was again a new experience for me, as I had not seen such an acute scenario before. The patient was in agony and the medical team managed the patient very effectively; from fluid management and doing basic investigations such as chest x-ray and many different blood tests. As the patient was very young, I learnt that besides the medical management it was very important to calm the patient down with very good communication skills. This gave me an opportunity to further improve my communication skills. The medics in the A&E department were very good at doing this and they were also very keen to take me through every step of management. I was very grateful for this opportunity.

Overall being on the medical ward and having the opportunity to play an active part in the management of the patient was a very good learning experience. It gave me insight as to what I would be doing in a few months time when I start my job as a foundation year doctor.

To understand the workings of NHS and health provision in Barts Health in preparation for F1.

During my elective period with Dr Flood, I had a great opportunity to have a detailed conversation with Dr Flood and his team about the NHS as a healthcare system. Until this point in my medical career I always visited hospitals as a medical student and did not have the opportunity to see the political side of the NHS. I found out that a lot of doctors were working extra hours and were not being paid for the time they were working. Many of the doctors including the consultants were not happy with this situation. However as the current workings of the NHS is, there is not much the doctors can do about it as the patient care is paramount and takes priority. The best piece of advice I was given was that 'your

patient should always take priority and you should never forget that you came into medicine to help people to the best of your ability'. Even after so many political problems with the systems with doctors being underpaid and nurses getting fired, I did not see any healthcare professional compromising patient care and this was very inspiring to me as a newly qualified doctor.

To clerk and examine patients, to learn to formulate diagnosis and management plans and to be familiar with common scenarios in acute medicine.

As described above I had a lot of opportunities to clerk, examine patients and be involved in their management. Dr Flood made sure that we were present and involved in patient care. We were given responsibility of patients as F1s would be given responsibility. It was an excellent experience to be trusted with patient care and as it was under consultant supervision I was more confident to make decisions. It was one of the best learning experiences I have had in medical school.

There were also times when I clerked complicated patients in the A&E and presented them to the consultant. Dr Flood has an amazing teaching technique, as he would discuss each part of the clerking and help us to come up with the diagnosis ourselves. To be able to diagnose a complicated patient was one of the best feelings. I am very grateful to Dr Flood to provide me with such learning opportunity.

To prepare myself for my F1 post and reflect on areas of improvement and formulate action plans for those areas

When we were on the acute medical wards, we were given roles of an F1 doctors. We were given the roles of writing in the notes during the ward and carrying out the jobs for all the patients. The jobs included, taking bloods, cannulating the patients, doing their discharge summaries and referral letters as well as updating the patient list. I was also able to lead endocrinology clinics with the help of Dr Flood. At the beginning doing the paperwork for the patients such as discharge letters and referral letters was a very daunting task. However, with the help of the other doctors this became easier and easier. Towards the end of the elective period I was able to do a lot of jobs that a foundation doctor does. It was a great learning experience to help us make a transition between a medical student and a foundation doctor.

In addition to all these great opportunities, Dr Flood also provided us with the opportunity to do some audits. The audit that I am still undertaking is in radiology, 'the effectiveness of ordering CT scans in A&E after hours'. Once again I am very grateful to Dr Flood for this opportunity.

Overall the elective was a very enjoyable and a great learning experience. I learnt to manage acute patients, sharpen my clerking and examining technique as well

learnt the admin side of the foundation doctor. I would definitely recommend this elective to the future finalist.