

What can one say about vascular surgery? Cardiovascular disease is by far the common cause of morbidity and mortality in the UK and worldwide. Learning about vascular surgery not only increased my knowledge of surgery, but my knowledge of medicine, my interdisciplinary skills, my knowledge of the MDT, my appreciation of what it means to be a junior doctor and all the advantages and disadvantages that are associated with being a doctor, the importance of communication skills, the importance of leadership skills, the importance of being able to deal with stress, the importance of having balance in your life and so on.

One's elective was in St Peters hospital surrey in order to expand and amplify one's knowledge and interest in vascular surgery exponentially. Whilst staying in the UK may not have been as exciting as perhaps travelling to an exotic country and doing one's elective there, one was most aware of the fact that one would be working in the UK after all and therefore it was most important for one to become truly acquainted with one's healthcare system.

One could say that one has gained a lot of practical hands on knowledge via this elective experience, something which could give one a lot to reflect on. By spending one's elective in vascular surgery, one would definitely be most appreciative of what vascular surgery involves, particularly as one has not really been acquainted with the field as of yet, what with one's prior engagements with other fields.

Being able to expend time in one's elective whilst having the freedom that one was divulged via their elective experience and the knowledge that one has obtained over the six years that one has been at the medical school establishment, one could say that one has truly appreciated the art of surgery, the mastery of it, the sheer audacity of it, the skill that is required of one, the majesty with which each surgery takes place, the team spirit that infuses the theatre just as much as the propofol running through the patient's veins, the drama of it all, the excitement that comes with operating on patients, each as different and unique as the very fingerprints on one's hands, the genius that is utilised and magnified in the process of making incision and thereby opening a realm into the hidden world of secrets and mystery. One has most certainly developed a thirst for surgery, a desire to pursue it, whether this journey results in failure or success is no concern to one, as failure and success are not one's goals – surgery is.

Aside from the otherwise ephemeral nature of the elective, the more practical matters of one's elective primarily involved sitting in clinics where one would converse with patients whilst seated in one's chair, leaning forward so subtly in order to indicate one's interest in the patient's most delightful reports of their ailments, writing down each word as it leaves the patient's mouth, nodding one's head in agreement, smiling when the patient smiles, empathising with the patient when the patient reports something empathy worthy, evaluating the patient's risk factors in real time, calculating the risk factors via google operated risk factor evaluation contraptions that one can gain access through the tool that has both benefited and been the source of many of the ills that exist both in society and at medical school, we are of course referring to the most ingenious of inventions, one which would no doubt changed the face of history and the face of medical knowledge for ever and the way it would disseminated to the inhabitants of our world, that is the Internet. As well as observing actual surgical operations in the surgical theatre itself. Just a handful of the operations one could observe include angioplasties (though this is the reserve of the Interventional Cardiologist – the discussion of the overlap of these two almost parallel yet shockingly

different specialities was most intriguing!) AAA repairs, carotid endarterectomies, stenting, varicose vein surgery. The breath taking amount of skills required to do these surgeries simply took my breath away. I was worried that I would require 100% Oxygen via a non rebreath mask! That's how excited I was!