

ELECTIVE REPORT

Introduction

I have undertaken my elective in the Accident and emergency department of North Devon District Hospital. The objectives I have set are as follows;

- 1) Use my time in North Devon District hospital Accident and Emergency department to help prepare for my F1 job in the Peninsula foundation school and to understand how the demographic of the South West may vary compared to London.
- 2) Undertake as many practical procedures under supervision as possible so I am confident when starting my F1 post.

Report

I started my elective on the 7th of April, and from day one it was obvious that the demographic of the South West differed considerably from London. On my first day I saw 2 elderly patients with fractured neck of femurs following falls, and on day 2 I found myself canulating a 103 yr old who had broken her clavicle falling while getting out of bed. I have found that at any one time in the NDDH accident and emergency there can be 2 or 3 elderly patients who have fallen over in majors, showing that the elderly patients are a large part of the work load in a district general hospital in the South West.

Having an elderly population also means that I saw a large number of strokes and transient ischaemic attacks coming into the emergency department. One of my own close relatives was admitted with a large stroke during my time on elective. This was a particularly emotional experience but I believe it has made me strive to try and be the best doctor I can be and ensure that the highest quality of health care is delivered at all times.

The other group of patients that seemed to stand out was holiday makers. I saw many limb fractures in the minors department, head lacerations, and tourists who were having complications of their chronic conditions while on holiday. From my time in the North Devon District Hospital Accident and emergency department it would seem to be the case that exacerbation of chronic disease is common and potentially more severe while on holiday. This seemed to be due to patients trying to carry on and enjoy their holiday and ignoring their condition, and patients forgetting medications and not knowing where to seek medical attention.

While on elective I have improved my practical and examination skills, I have taken many sets of bloods, inserted numerous cannulas and inserted male catheters. I have also been doing ECGs, peak expiratory flows and importantly I have been requesting investigations and documenting in patients notes. I feel being well practiced at these practical tasks will help me considerably when I start my job in August.

I have worked with the junior doctors, the middle grades, the nurses and the consultants. Working with all members of the team has allowed me to appreciate the individual roles of team members and to appreciate how the team works as a unit to get insure that patients are receiving the best quality of care.

I split my time between resus, majors and minors to understand how each area operates. I enjoyed my time in all areas but particularly liked majors as it allow me to put my diagnostic and examination skills into action. When seeing patients in minors I would do everything for the patient from simple observations to requesting and carrying out investigation and helping decide on the management plan. I would see the patients care from start to finish (or from start to admission) I found seeing patients in this way insured I learnt the cases well.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at the North Devon District hospital accident and emergency department. The most enjoyable part of my elective was clerking and improving on my practical skills. I can see myself trying to get a job at the hospital in the future.

