

## Student Elective Report

<b>Name</b>	Louis Dwyer-Hemmings
<b>Medical School</b>	University College London
<b>Email (optional)</b>	

<b>Country visited</b>	India
<b>City or town</b>	Bambolim
<b>Hospital/unit/clinic</b>	Goa Medical College Hospital (GMCH)
<b>Dates visited</b>	1/4/2019 – 10/5/2019
<b>Supervising doctor</b>	Dr Yuri Dias-Amborcar
<b>Contact details of your host:</b>	

<b>Please give an overview of what you saw / did (200 words max)</b>	<p>For six weeks, I joined the Department of Plastic Surgery and Burns. In this time, I attended outpatient clinics (both general plastics and a specific lymphoedema clinic), theatre sessions, observed ward rounds, and examined patients on the ward (both general plastics and burns). I also took part in academic events in the department and hospital, including lectures by a Visiting Professor in Aesthetic surgery, a surgical skills workshop, and delivering my own presentation on the use of propranolol as a pharmacological modulator of post-burn hypermetabolism.</p> <p>The outpatient clinics exposed me to a wide variety of pathology affecting patients of all ages. This gave me experience in assessing several common plastic surgery presentations. The surgeons were responsible for all post-operative dressings, so I could follow the patient's entire journey from initial assessment to post-operative course and final discharge from clinic. This complemented my time in theatre, where I observed and assisted with cases, and gained insight to both the principles and practical aspects of a broad range of plastic surgical techniques. On the burns ward, I learnt about the initial resuscitation and assessment of patients with burns, as well as the ongoing management and indications for surgery.</p>
<b>What were the best things about the visit? (120 words max)</b>	<p>The best thing about my visit was the exceptional support afforded me by the plastic surgery and burns teams. They were extremely welcoming and ensured that my visit was as enriching as possible. Both on the ward and in theatre, they would readily explain surgical concepts and anatomical principles. This provided a framework upon which I could organise the clinical experience I gained, which was especially valuable as plastic surgery is often neglected in undergraduate medical curriculums.</p>

## Student Elective Report

	<p>Furthermore, I found the academic activities that I took part in extremely valuable. These exposed me to a broader range of plastic surgery techniques such as liposuction and abdominoplasty which were not regularly performed at GMCH. The surgical skills workshop I joined allowed me to practice my practical surgical skills under expert supervision with real-time feedback.</p>
<p><b>What problems did you encounter? (120 words max)</b></p>	<p>Organising the placement was time-consuming and occasionally difficult. GMCH is a government hospital, so foreign medical students require clearance from both the Medical Council of India and different government departments. To coordinate between these bodies and obtain the necessary documents to undergo the elective required organisation and forward-planning.</p> <p>Furthermore, it was sometimes difficult to adapt to different medical practices. For example, the organisation of clinics is performed very differently at GMCH, as several patients will be assessed, examined and advised at once. At first, these differences confused me as they were at odds with the clinical environment I was used to. However, by remaining flexible and patient, I grew accustomed to these differences with time, and I gained valuable experience from these varied learning opportunities.</p>
<p><b>What accommodation was provided?</b></p>	<p>I was hosted in a small apartment a bus ride away from the hospital, with all necessary facilities.</p>
<p><b>Would you recommend this to someone else? (explain if necessary)</b></p>	<p>I would absolutely recommend this experience to others. Whatever specialty you are interested in, the opportunity to experience medical practice in a different sociocultural environment can expand your understanding of medical and surgical service provision. Furthermore, it is an unparalleled opportunity to immerse yourself in clinical practice and learn in detail about the technical aspects of patient management.</p>
<p><b>Are you more likely to choose a career in plastic surgery as a result of this experience?</b></p>	<p>This experience has consolidated my decision to pursue a career in plastic surgery. It demonstrated the huge benefits this discipline can deliver to patients with regard to function and aesthetic outcome, and gave me insight into the challenging, but extremely rewarding techniques which it utilises.</p>