

Student Elective Report

Name	Henry de Berker
Medical School	University of Oxford
Email (optional)	Henrydeberker@googlemail.com

Country visited	Ethiopia
City or town	Addis Ababa
Hospital/unit/clinic	Yekatit-12
Dates visited	6/2/17 - 3/3/17
Supervising doctor	Mekonen Eshete
Contact details of your host:	mekonene@yahoo.com

Please give an overview of what you saw / did (200 words max)	<p>I journeyed to Addis Ababa Ethiopia with the intention of assessing the quality of neurosurgical care available to patients with neural tube defects (namely encephalocoele) in the capital. I conducted this research alongside a placement in plastics and reconstructive surgery at Yekatit-12 Hospital, working under Dr Mekonen Eshete. Referrals currently depend on the complex myriad of personal and professional relationships that between consultants and trainees; these were a challenge to navigate, but I believe that my report will be useful to visiting charities, and the plastics department at Yekatit-12.</p> <p>At Yekatit-12, I spent the majority of time in theatre, observing a broad range of paediatric and adult operations. The main presentations were cleft palate, burns, and trauma.</p>
What were the best things about the visit? (120 words max)	<p>Yekatit-12 is the only comprehensive cleft care centre in Ethiopia, and so I gained an appreciation for the difficulties that the patients and their families experience, and the surgical management of cleft lips and palates. The trainees were extremely welcoming, which made living in Addis much more enjoyable. Ethiopia is a fascinating country, with a unique culture, and I really enjoyed exploring the history, food and music.</p>
What problems did you encounter? (120 words max)	<p>It was difficult to speak to patients, as the majority do not speak English. There were no theatres in the afternoons, which was a shame in some respects, but also meant I had time to do my project. Addis is quite a challenging city to be in; I was pick-pocketed, and there are lots of people who would like to take advantage of you.</p>
What accommodation was	None, I stayed at a hostel.

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provided?	
Would you recommend this to someone else? (explain if necessary)	Yes. Ethiopia is a brilliant country to visit for a prolonged period of time. However, it might be useful to go with someone else, or have some experience of travelling alone, as Addis isn't always the most friendly place.
Are you more likely to choose a career in plastic surgery as a result of this experience?	Yes.