

Student Elective Report

Name	Somy Charuvila
Medical School	Barts and The London SMD
Email (optional)	

Country visited	Vietnam
City or town	Hanoi
Hospital/unit/clinic	Viet Duc Hospital
Dates visited	09/04/18 to 17/05/18
Supervising doctor	Dr Nguyen Hong Ha
Contact details of your host:	

Please give an overview of what you saw / did (200 words max)	<p>I saw many patients with rare conditions such as Madelung syndrome, AV malformations and Neurofibromatosis type 1.</p> <p>I also saw patients who presented with advanced stages of cancers as they lived in rural villages and did not have the means to access healthcare for many years.</p> <p>There is a high incidence of congenital facial deformity in Vietnam, which many believe may be due to the lasting effects of chemicals used during the Vietnam War. Every Thursday a grand consultation took place where patients with complex pathology came from all over the country and management decisions were made with the collaboration of several senior doctors.</p> <p>I also assisted in theatres which increased my confidence in practical skills. Shadowing the emergency team enabled me to gain more experience in the clinical examination of acute traumatic injuries and be familiar with their surgical management. I was able to follow the pathway of care following major trauma. Witnessing how patients were stabilized before theatre helped me to recap my understanding of A to E assessment. I learnt a lot more about basic airway management (also in patients with oropharyngeal pathology/trauma), fluid resuscitation and pain management.</p>
What were the best things about the visit? (120 words max)	<p>During my elective, a UK based charity was involved in providing free surgical procedures to several patients with complex conditions such as Apert syndrome. I had the opportunity to witness how complex procedures are planned and undertaken with the input of a multi surgical</p>

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	<p>speciality team. During these assessments, I was able to recognize the importance of early treatment for children with deformities such as craniosynostosis and how it can impact their development. I was also able to attend several teaching sessions put on for the local teams which was very useful.</p> <p>I also had the opportunity to learn basic concepts of microsurgery and practice microsurgical skills in a wet lab in the department with the trainee doctors.</p>
<p>What problems did you encounter? (120 words max)</p>	<p>Due to the language barrier, sometimes it was difficult to fully understanding what was going on during consultations. However, as most doctors spoke English, I got a basic overview of what was going on.</p>
<p>What accommodation was provided?</p>	<p>None, however there are a lot of hostels and hotels within walking distance. Most hostels in the area have private rooms for reasonable prices and help with arranging trips if you want to take some time to travel.</p>
<p>Would you recommend this to someone else? (explain if necessary)</p>	<p>Most people I came across were very friendly and helpful. I had lots of opportunities to scrub in and assist for a variety of procedures. Moreover, Vietnam is a very beautiful country and there are lots of places to visit. I went on weekend trips to many places in the North of Vietnam. Hanoi is also a great city with lots of things to do and see.</p>
<p>Are you more likely to choose a career in plastic surgery as a result of this experience?</p>	<p>Yes, my interest in plastics as a speciality has increased and I would like to potentially work abroad for some time after my foundation years.</p>