

Student Elective Report

Name	Nagarjun Konda
Medical School	University of Birmingham
Email (optional)	

Country visited	Brazil
City or town	Rio de Janeiro
Hospital/unit/clinic	Hospital Federal dos Servidores do Estado, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Dates visited	06/05/19 – 31/05/19
Supervising doctor	Dr. Chang Yung Chia – Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeon
Contact details of your host:	

<p>Please give an overview of what you saw / did (200 words max)</p>	<p>During my time in Rio de Janeiro, I was exposed to a large variety of sub-specialties within the field of plastic surgery. My supervisor, Dr Chia was a plastic and reconstructive surgeon with a special interest in microsurgery and performed some very intricate operations including nerve grafting. I observed some interesting operations such as sural nerve transfer to correct a facial nerve palsy using intraoperative facial nerve mapping as well as complex mandibular reconstruction using the fibula following head and neck cancer. These operations used a two-team approach to concurrently operate on different areas of the body simultaneously.</p> <p>I was able to visit the different hospitals that my supervisor worked in. This included government hospitals where plastics input was required for complex trauma originating from road traffic collisions, to visiting a private hospital where I observed cosmetic surgery ranging from abdominoplasty to rhinoplasty and breast augmentation.</p> <p>Throughout my elective placement, I was constantly exposed to the sheer variety that exists in plastic surgery and a specialty that I had no exposure to previously in medical school.</p>
<p>What were the best things about the visit? (120 words max)</p>	<p>My highlights of the visit included observing some very intricate procedures such as microsurgery performed mainly under a telescope. The whole medical team were very friendly, and most of the doctors spoke English to a good standard.</p> <p>The whole experience was a fantastic opportunity to explore plastic surgery as a future career whilst also observing novel techniques such as mandibular reconstruction with a free fibula flap and dynamic reanimation of the facial nerve after parotid gland tumour resection</p>

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	<p>using intraoperative nerve mapping.</p> <p>Finally, Brazil had a lot to offer in terms of awe-inspiring culture and outstanding scenery. The elective gave me an opportunity to practise my photography, a hobby which I am passionate about.</p>
<p>What problems did you encounter? (120 words max)</p>	<p>Originally, we found it very difficult to contact many of the hospitals in South America due to the language barrier. However, once we were in contact with Dr Chia, the whole process of setting up the elective was very smooth.</p> <p>The language barrier was again troublesome when interacting with the patients as many of them only spoke Portuguese. However, as most of my time was spent in theatre, this was not a huge issue.</p>
<p>What accommodation was provided?</p>	<p>Although accommodation wasn't directly provided through the hospital, we were able to find a large variety of high-quality accommodation on Airbnb in convenient locations.</p> <p>There was no payment made to the hospital and this was a big bonus considering that a lot of elective placements can be quite expensive.</p>
<p>Would you recommend this to someone else? (explain if necessary)</p>	<p>I would very much recommend this placement for future medical students with an interest in plastic surgery. The ability to see such a wide variety of surgery within different hospitals is a very rewarding and intellectually stimulating experience. Furthermore, my supervisor made me feel very welcome in a new country that is drastically different to the UK.</p>
<p>Are you more likely to choose a career in plastic surgery as a result of this experience?</p>	<p>Carrying out a plastics-themed elective has opened my eyes to a specialty that has such a wide scope of practice. I look forward to getting involved with the plastics department at my local hospital to further explore plastic surgery as a career.</p>
<p>Which University are you studying at?</p>	<p>University of Birmingham</p>