

## Elective Report



I opted to undertake my clinical internship in Africa. I went to the registrar's office at my university to obtain information on available opportunities and I came across a poster of the organization Odyssey Africa. I then began the placement process with the organization and opting to take my elective at Kenyatta National Hospital in Nairobi, Kenya. I made contact with the organization via email and found them to be very responsive and informative. The formalities were straightforward and the organization gave me a very nice host family. I was assigned a student liaison (program coordinator) who organized my placement within the different hospital departments at the hospital in my desired specialties. When I arrived in Kenya, I was warmly welcomed and spent the first night in a hostel. The next day I was met by my supervisor and taken to my host family. He took the time to meet me over the first few days and to offer me orientation in Nairobi. Specifically, I found the orientation with use of public transport to be very helpful. He assisted me with the student registration procedures at the hospital and provided useful information including a student kit with useful maps, a guide book and Swahili phrase books. During my entire stay, the service was very good. I was provided a cell phone and some information brochures about the country. My supervisor always looked after me and helped me with the organization of weekend trips. I lived with a young couple nearby hospital. The accommodation was very satisfactory; the house was in a safe residential area and I had my own room. I was made to feel like part of the family and upon my departure, it felt strange to be leaving! The first two weeks in hospital I spent within the hospital's department of internal medicine. There I attended every morning with the Kenyan students at the teaching rounds. The visits were

very instructive for me and the doctors took the time with the students, the clinical picture of each individual patient to go through. At Station I was able to take blood samples, physically examine patients and perform as well as observe some basic clinical procedures. I also spent two weeks in the emergency room. My time in Casualty was initially very shocking largely because of the low standards of care provided. Constantly, victims of traffic accidents would be brought in with serious injuries and children with burns. Again, I would be involved in simple procedures like insertion of urinary catheter and stitching of wounds. My last two weeks I spent in the delivery room. This station was for me the most instructive. I was able to observe and perform gynecological examinations and assist in births by caesarean section. Ordinarily, as a student under instruction at a hospital in Germany, I would never be allowed to participate as actively as I did in these procedures and it gave me a lot of confidence to be able to learn by practice. My clerkship in Kenyatta brought me a lot of experience and given me the opportunity to get an impression of the work of a doctor in a third world country. I was able to observe a lot of diseases that were very advanced; much of which I would never have had the opportunity to see otherwise or would simply have read about in books. Much of what I was able to observe in Kenya I would not have seen at all in Germany. My stay in Kenya has done much to me and I would definitely do it again at any time.

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