

**Military & Hospitaller of St Lazarus of Jerusalem
Grand Priory of England & Wales
Commandery of Wales**



Student Bursary: Elective Report 2020

Week 2

This week I changed departments to Paediatrics. I will be shadowing this department for the next two weeks and the team seem incredibly friendly and approachable. There are different divisions of the department including Neurology, which incorporates pathologies such as epilepsy; metabolic, which includes muscular disorders and digestive which are diseases of the gut and allergies. I begin most days with a ward round which involves a few doctors and myself going between each of the patients and their parents. I have been told that in paediatrics you have to have brilliant communication skills as not only do you have to speak at an appropriate age level for the child but often parents are incredibly anxious and need reassuring too! There are a few patients who have been born with congenital abnormalities such as Trisomy 18 also known as Edward's syndrome, which is where babies are born with a whole or partial extra chromosome number 18. Many parts of the body are affected. The baby we saw had been born with a small head, small jaw, clenched fists and overlapping fingers. It was too early to tell whether they would have intellectual disabilities. The doctor told me that only between 5-10% of babies with Trisomy 18, make it to one year old. It was very sad to hear this.

Due to the increase in the numbers of coronavirus, we have been told that if we have symptoms of a cough or fever to not attend placement. The children in the paediatrics ward have very weak immune systems so it is important to protect them and ourselves! I helped one of the doctors whilst he was taking blood from a 2 year old boy who had a fractured forearm. It looks very tricky to take blood when little children have so much baby fat around their arms and legs. I had to hold down the baby and try and distract him which felt cruel when he was squealing but I knew this was necessary to find out if he had any infection markers in his blood. Taking blood from younger patients is a skill I definitely want to develop and hopefully I will get a job in Paediatrics in my foundation rotations.

This week I was in charge of giving vaccinations to some of the new born children on the ward. Some of these included Japanese encephalitis, diphtheria, tetanus, polio and MMR. I have been keeping up to date with the news in the UK and have read that there have been a record number of mumps cases in England - four times as many in 2019 as 2018. Many of these cases are due to outbreaks in universities and colleges and also in young adults who haven't had their

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MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) vaccination. It was very rewarding to be given so much responsibility because I am new to the department. The uptake for vaccinations is higher in Japan than the UK. I believe this is partly due to the stricter approach to social regulations which people abide by.

Monday was a national holiday as it was the Emperor's birthday. I decided to go to a place called Kamakura which is renowned for having one of the largest statues of a Buddha in Japan. It was made out of bronze and had been reinforced to be able to withstand the frequent earthquakes and less frequent tsunamis which have effected Tokyo. I also went to see Mount Fuji on the weekend which was breathtaking. It took 2 hours on the bus, but was definitely worth the journey. The weather was beautiful, if a little breezy as the altitude is higher than in Tokyo. You can only climb Mount Fuji between July and October and it can be covered almost completely by snow in the winter. I also went to an Onsen which is a bath where the water is supposed to be thermally heated by the dormant volcanic rock below Fuji. It was incredibly relaxing!

Below is a photo of Mount Fuji and Kamakura. Wishing you a happy Lenten journey.

