

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



Student Bursary: Elective Report 2020

Week 1

I arrived in Tokyo on Sunday 15th February after safe and comfortable flights. I have spent the past week settling into my new surroundings, trying to overcome my jet lag and attempting to navigate the hectic Tokyo Metro between my accommodation and Tokyo Women's Medical Institute Hospital. I have already noticed some contrasts with the culture in the UK. Japanese people often speak in hushed tones and are never loud or flamboyant. They are incredibly polite and helpful - one elderly gentleman almost missed his train trying to help me navigate the map! I have been embracing their customs of taking off my shoes when entering a household and putting slippers on and not eating whilst walking or in the streets. The language barrier has been difficult as despite learning phrases in Japanese before I came here, most Japanese people don't speak any English. I am very lucky however, that my department supervisors have a very good knowledge of English and are translating and teaching me throughout. The food has been completely different to British food and often I have no idea what I am eating! I am very happy to embrace new experiences though and am looking forward to trying lots of fish and sushi.

I was worried that I would not be allowed to attend my placement in Tokyo due to the recent outbreak of coronavirus. Today, there are 56 cases in Japan, mainly in Tokyo. Fortunately, the TWMI hospital is not taking any admissions of patients with coronavirus sounding symptoms or any respiratory symptoms. These patients are being taken to another single, central hospital in Tokyo. We have been advised to wear face masks throughout our hospital placement and also when in crowded areas in our free time. Maintaining hand hygiene is most important and trying not to raise our hands to our faces. The virus mainly affects people with a weakened immune system and the elderly. I am going to be sensible and use safe practice during my time here.

We met our placement coordinator at 11am on the first day for an induction to the hospital including showing me my first department which is Cardiology. I met my supervisor who is called Dr Kataoka who took me to the Electrophysiology rooms. Here, I watched patients who have episodes of a fall in blood pressure, also known as syncope, have an Implantable Cardiac Monitor inserted into their chest. This detects if their heart is going too fast or too slow and the data is sent straight to the hospital. Sometimes patients with heart rates that are too slow or

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bradycardic, have a pacemaker inserted which I observed this in theatre. I also visited the echocardiogram rooms where an ultrasound probe and sound waves are used to produce 2D and 3D images of the heart in real time. My supervisor showed me how to place the probe at different angles to change the view of chamber and valves in the heart. He even allowed me to image a few of my own patients!

I did an 8 week placement in Cardiology in West Wales in the Winter of 2019 and I am surprised about how many similarities there are between the Japanese and British systems. I expected the Japanese to be more technologically advanced in their techniques, however, many of the procedures I have witnessed this week have been very similar to the ones I saw on placement in Wales. It is good to see global similarities in healthcare systems. I have noticed that on the Japanese ward rounds, all the patient notes are written on an iPad or another electronic form. This is something which I believe the Welsh NHS is aiming to move towards at the moment.

I have seen Tokyo Skytree which is a 634m tall tower which is the tallest broadcasting tower in the world! I have also participated in an Udon noodle cookery lesson which was incredibly enjoyable! On Saturday I went to a traditional tea ceremony and dressed up in a silk kimono - a truly memorable experience! I will report back with some exciting stories and more photos of my adventures in Tokyo!