

Please contact the IT Officer at [it@insight.org.au](mailto:it@insight.org.au) to be put in touch with this placement participant for further information.

## Placement

Essex, UK, Retrieval Medicine

## Dates of Placement

04 June 2018

## The Application Process

Email Essex and Herts Air Ambulance, submit resume about 8 months in advance minimum.

## Placement Structure / Typical Day

I completed a placement with the Essex and Herts Air Ambulance in the UK. An average day was based out of one of two flight bases. An average week involved 2 flight days, 2 base days, 1 death and disability meeting day and 2 days off. Flight days involved being on call at the base and attending any call outs in the helicopter.

Base days involved undertaking a research audit on an aspect of duties carried out at the base. Death and disability meetings involved all crew (except the duty crews for that day) and were a whole day of reviewing recent interesting cases, undertaking simulation training and updating any skills or policies that had changed at the base recently.

## Level of Flexibility on the Placement

Minimal flexibility with flights shifts and D+D meeting days. These days are set in stone - although there are 4 students on placement at a time so some ability to swap base days between students if everyone is happy to.

Maximum flexibility for base days and days off - you can choose when you come in and what you do so long as the project is done before you leave.

## Expectations and Assessment

Shifts on the helicopter were observational and there was no expectation to do anything you didn't opt to do. Assessment involved a presentation of your audit data at a D+D meeting to staff, who were very friendly and interested.

## Skills Gained

Good exposure to major trauma, category one, stabbings and other cases that are quite rare in Adelaide. Good exposure to retrieval and emergency medicine, anaesthetics and trauma surgery. Some opportunity to learn practical skills through simulation and training and discuss recent trends and research with senior doctors. Adult and paediatric medicine exposure.

## Placement Highlights

My highlight was exposure to cases I would never see at home, such as stabbings, horse injuries, MVAs and major medical emergencies. The team was also amazing to work with and working in an airbase environment with the helicopter was incredibly cool. Working with a charitable organisation also provided a really interesting insight into the interaction of the NGO with the public health care system.

## Challenging Aspects of the Placement

There were some very challenging cases involving domestic violence, suicide and traumatic injuries to children. While danger was managed as much as possible there was unavoidable exposure to dangerous environments and people. Students are also liable to be left behind in the helicopter if the weight limit is exceeded and although this never happened to me, one student was left behind on 2 occasions in unfamiliar neighbourhoods.

**Other Activities**

During work hours I completed an audit and attended registrar trainings. We also assisted with some of the charities activities on the weekend including teaching CPR in schools and attending a world record attempt for most cardiac arrest survivors in one place, although these experiences were optional.

In my extra curricular time there was plenty of time to catch the train into London and visit Oxford, Chelmsford and Cambridge. There was heaps of pubs around which I hung out at a fair bit with the other students.

**Would you recommend this placement to someone interested in global health?**

Not really - very much tertiary care environments, although I did gain some good trauma skills that could be used in a global health in the future.