

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

Placement

University Hospitals Geneva, Switzerland - Gastroenterology

Dates of Placement

08 October 2018

The Application Process

I emailed a consultant I was interested in working with and they put me through to HR services at the hospital. From there, I had to fill out some pretty standard paperwork and HR actually put me through to the local med student society who helped me get a work permit and accommodation.

Placement Structure / Typical Day

On this rotation, the time was divided between being on the wards, observing endoscopies and colonoscopies and doing consults. While we were on the wards, we helped write notes and do the usual ward jobs. For one week each, the students were expected to hold the gastro non-emergency consult phone. This involved taking several calls each day, assessing the patient, writing up a note and then discussing the case at the end of the day with the consultants to make a plan. Students in Geneva generally have more responsibility than they do in Adelaide so this took some getting used to. We were expected to stay full days from 8am until at least 6pm.

Level of Flexibility on the Placement

There was some degree of flexibility when we weren't holding the consult phone as we could move between the wards and the scope list. However, during the week I was holding the consult phone, I was quite busy attending to calls for most of the day so there wasn't a lot of time to do anything else.

Expectations and Assessment

Expectations as above - help out on the wards and do gastro consults. There was no assessment as such.

Skills Gained

The unit had a colonoscopy simulator which I was able to try once. We were also taught how to perform ascitic taps, which we did a number of times both assisted and independently. The main patient groups we saw were patients with deranged LFTs, IBD flares and decompensated liver cirrhosis.

Placement Highlights

For me, the highlight was trying to do medicine in French. Learning all the medical terminology, acronyms and abbreviations in French was quite a challenge but a great experience. I also really enjoyed the independence we got in assessing patients on the wards.

Challenging Aspects of the Placement

The two main challenges were conducting everything in French and effectively prioritising and attending to all the gastro consults.

Other Activities

Weekend trips to other places in Switzerland, France and Germany.

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

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