

Emerald Storey.

Medical Elective, Sydney, Australia. March 2017.

After five years of studying Medicine at Cardiff University, it was my time to venture to the other side of the world and experience healthcare down under! During March 2017, I was fortunate enough to spend a month with the obstetrics and gynaecology team at Royal North Shore Hospital, Sydney.

Electives are an exciting opportunity to travel anywhere in the world and experience any aspect of medicine that you choose. Although, that can be a daunting choice, I chose to apply to Australia and thought "Where better to experience Australia than the iconic city of Sydney itself?". So I applied with the hope of gaining a place at Royal North Shore. Royal North Shore is a 700 bed, tertiary teaching hospital which is part of the University of Sydney. Patients come from the northern parts of Sydney as well as Aboriginal people and Pacific Islanders.



*Royal North Shore Hospital*

I have always been interested in surgery. It seems a clear divide in medicine whether you prefer surgery to medicine. I have always leaned on the surgical side, which isn't quite the dark side as physicians like to tease. Obstetrics and gynaecology is a varied surgical specialty with aspects of emergency care as well as elective surgery, treating women of all ages and playing a part at vital times of family life like child birth. I have always been intrigued by the specialty and wanted to add to my placement in South Wales.

From my elective, I wanted to experience a different healthcare system, gain a broader knowledge of obstetrics and gynaecology and to take note of research innovation, technology and perhaps improvements from New South Wales to old South Wales.



I rotated throughout all sub-specialties in the obstetrics and gynaecology (O&G) department but I spent most of my time in gynaecology oncology. I found this area of medicine fascinating. Effective management relies hugely on the developments in technology because the clinical signs and symptoms are vague. I followed many patients through the initial consultation through to their treatment. The treatment was mostly surgical but could be radiation and chemotherapy treatments as well.

The patient would initially have ultrasound scans, followed usually by MRI scans and in some cases PET scans. Surgery would then go ahead if

*Early mornings before theatre*

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indicated and pathology would give the definitive tissue diagnosis. Weekly meetings took place to discuss imaging, pathology, surgery and oncological treatment. I found these meetings very interesting. To see many experts in their field, not just doctors but physicists, pharmacists and nurses, come together to tackle difficult cases and work together for the patient was inspiring.

My time in Sydney has made me appreciate even more how rich medicine is as a subject. I am fired up and enthusiastic to continue to travel the world and experience differences in medicine and the delivery of healthcare. I have taken on board different approaches and developments which will change my future practise and will continue to pursue my interest in obstetrics and gynaecology.

I would like to thank The Ogden Trust for this generous award which allowed me to come to Sydney and contribute to the cost of my placement. The Ogden Trust has supported me continuously throughout my education and I am very grateful for the impact it has had on me personally and professionally.

