



British Association
of Dermatologists

healthy skin for all

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The University of Manchester

Elective Prize / Project Grant - Winter 2018

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For my final year elective, I spent time at Tameside Hospital in Manchester. Though perhaps not as glamorous a destination as many that others have reported from during their electives, I was somewhat restricted in my elective choices as I was 8 months pregnant at the time! Nonetheless, my experience in Tameside allowed me to achieve my overall objective which was to gain a broader understanding of the career of a dermatologist in the United Kingdom.

In terms of my objectives for the placement, I wished to improve upon my history taking and was able to do this by consulting with patients and then presenting my findings to my consultant tutor. I spent time discussing a variety of common dermatological conditions with patients and with my supervisor. Common conditions such as psoriasis and eczema of course presented frequently and allowed me to further my knowledge of their management in a secondary care setting. For example, Methotrexate and other DMARDs were prescribed frequently by the dermatologists and required regular monitoring and the education of patients on their use. Whilst in clinics I was able to use the dermatoscope and other tools of the trade to investigate lesions more closely and appreciate some of the subtle differences between them and to then describe the lesions to the consultant.

In addition to time spent in clinic, I was able to attend theatre and assist in surgery. This allowed me to appreciate this aspect of the role of a dermatologist and improve my competence in suturing, something which I wanted to build on ahead of working as an F1. I was also able to assist in taking skin biopsies, another common procedure in theatre. I was impressed by the great psychological impact that some dermatological interventions can have

on patients. For example, one young school-aged patient with alopecia areata had received local steroid injections to the scalp to encourage hair growth which had worked so well in one area that they returned for further treatment. The patient had resigned themselves to wearing a cap in school so was very happy to see a good result from the treatment.



SPENDING TIME IN THEATRE AT TAMESIDE GENERAL HOSPITAL

Although it was a relatively short placement, my experience at Tameside has enhanced my interest in the specialty and I am now keen to pursue a career in dermatology or as a GP with a special interest. I am thoroughly grateful to the team of doctors and nurses at Tameside Hospital for allowing me to spend time in their clinics and theatres. I am particularly grateful to Dr Elizabeth Gilmour with whom I arranged the elective and who gave her time to teach me in her clinics. The elective allowed me to broaden my experience of dermatology which had been so far limited to one week during medical school. I would furthermore like to thank the British Association of Dermatologists for their invaluable contribution to my elective which allowed me to spend time in a specialty I am considering pursuing a career in. I hope to continue to build upon my knowledge of Dermatology and to seek further opportunities to pursue a career in dermatology during my time as a foundation years one doctor.