

Exit Questionnaire

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Home Institution: University of Eastern Finland
Dept. of Acceptance: Emergency medicine and critical care center
Training Period: 2016/01/11 – 2016/02/05

1 . Please describe the actual training you have received here.

I have observed doctors and nurses take care of emergency patients and patients in need of intensive or critical care, and participated in duties when possible. I've also observed minor operations such as tracheostomy, insertion of CVC and catheter operations. I have presented patient cases in conferences and written a patient report. I participated in journal clubs (presentations of scientific papers) and case conferences where I also had my own presentation about Finnish health care system and doctor education. I was also able to participate in simulation training about anafylaksia and shock with Japanese 4-grade students.

My usual day at the hospital has started approximately 7:35 with familiarizing myself with the latest information about the patient assigned as "my patient" (vital signs, laboratory tests, imaging, treatment changes). After that I would present the case in team round starting 7:45 and ultimately in morning conference starting 8:15 and hear other doctors discuss the patient cases and share knowledge and opinions about the best diagnostic and treatment options. After that I have participated in ward rounds to actually see the patients and get some hands-on information about their state. After ward rounds I usually observed out-patient care (new emergency patients), observed various operations, discussed some cases with the doctors or for example practiced cardiac echo.

2 . Was that what you expected? If not, in what way was it different from your expectation?

I expected to see quite advanced and high-tech emergency care center and regarding that I got what I expected. Actually I got more than I expected because I didn't expect the intensive care unit to be in the same department as the ER so that was definitely a bonus.

good/better points

Very interesting center with severely ill patients, intensive care and advanced medical technology used. There's a wide variety of things to see and learn. The center works according to the latest international guidelines and there's a clear protocol for managing the severely ill patients even in most stressful situations so observing that efficient and well-coordinated team work is a very good learning experience. The staff was friendly and helpful and usually there was somebody who would translate discussion in Japanese to me and answer my questions. They also invited me to their

parties and past-time events which made me feel welcome and more like part of the team.

dissatisfying points

Sometimes I felt lost and didn't know what to do because at the beginning of my training nobody really explained how things actually work in this department and what the students are expected to do. I had to gradually discover the best way of participating and doing things by myself. Sometimes I would also receive information about some things they'd like me to do (for example preparing a presentation for case conference or writing a patient report) on quite short notice. It would be better if the role and tasks of the student and expectations for them were made clear at the very beginning of the training and if there was a tutor doctor clearly assigned for the student for a certain period of time (one day, one week or so). It would also be great if this person would be able and willing to speak English and translate the discussions and case presentations if needed.

3 . Please comment on the items below:

	good points	dissatisfying points
Housing	Very good in general, homestay at the Arais was wonderful. They served me all meals except for lunch and worked as my "tutors" regarding the Japanese culture and Matsumoto city. The Arais were very welcoming and accommodating people and they made my stay really special.	None.
Other facility visit	Interesting visit, it was nice to see a smaller hospital and also get a glimpse of nursing care of elderly people in Japan. Friendly staff who welcomed me well, very thorough tour around the hospital and interesting discussions about the current challenges faced in Japan when it comes to nursing care and costs of health care. Great food!	Maybe the presentation of the hospital could have been more structured (power point or something like that about the services provided in the hospital and its role in the health care system and in its area). Now these may not have come up if I didn't ask about them myself. It would have also been nice to observe patient care in the ER for a while to see how it would differ from the advanced emergency center I've observed in Shinshu Univ. Hospital.

Research Seminars	NA	NA
Weekend Excursions	Snowboarding was nice, thanks for students who took me there. Ikebana International New Year Party was just wonderful! Great honor to be invited!	There really were no weekend excursions pre-planned or organized. I had to ask other students take me with them somewhere or organize myself.
Livelihood in general	Matsumoto is a nice city with nice people. It's compact so almost all places can be reached by bicycle or on foot. However, there's also a good bus system. There's a lot to see and do in Matsumoto and Nagano-ken in general. Possibility to use computer and access internet on campus and at the hospital was very useful.	I was assigned a tutor student but after being very helpful on my first day she kind of disappeared. Luckily, I was able to meet other students who would help me and hang out with me. Otherwise I would have been very lonely due to lack of social program.

4 . List as many things you think you have gained from this experience of living and studying in Shinshu.

Training in advanced emergency and critical care unit was very useful experience for especially regarding the management of ICU patients. I've learned a lot about human body physiology and pathophysiological mechanisms as well as the influence of various treatments to them. My ability to think logically as a doctor, and ponder the effectiveness of different treatments based on their influence to different physiological and pathophysiological mechanisms, has improved. Of course, I've also gained more detailed medical knowledge, but it's the better understanding and the clearer way of thinking that I find the most useful lesson learned during this experience.

Personally, I have learned that I'm capable of surviving and finding my way in a totally new environment even when there's no immediate internet access and the language barriers are high. It's amazing how much you can communicate only by using very insufficient amount of words you happen to know and a lot of body language! And it always pays off to ask somebody if you feel lost. Sometimes you also have to be innovative and creative in order to manage.

I've also observed how culture of surrounding society influences the working life. According to my experience, Japanese people are fond of very clear protocols refined to even the smallest detail, which is generally a good thing when it comes to emergency medicine and intensive care. However, sometimes the flexibility of the system and its

capability to react to surprising factors can be impaired due to sticking too much to the protocol that has suddenly become insufficient. Maybe this has also something to do with the more hierarchic social system Japan seems to have compared to Finland. Sometimes working seemed more inefficient than in Finland because everything had to be confirmed by a senior - and sometimes even by the senior's senior - or because the doctors had to check every detail even though it seemed evident that such a thorough check wouldn't be needed in that situation.

On the other hand, I found the care given at my department very high standard and probably this meticulous attention to detail ultimately served the patients. And of course discussing everything with a senior is a wonderful way for junior doctors to learn more and keep improving. I'm also aware that my training period has been very short and some of my thoughts may still be based on stereotypes. However, I have learned how important it is to try to look behind the stereotype and see the actual person – a unique individual who at the same time is essentially the same kind of human being as you.

I really respect the fact that Japanese people are proud of their unique culture and want to preserve it. Somehow this experience has also taught me to respect my own country and culture more. I've realized that Finnish medical system for example has many very good qualities – as do Finns as people and our culture, too. However, our self-esteem as a nation is quite low and we are not good at presenting ourselves. In my opinion, this makes it hard for us to move forward in globalizing world and renders our ability to improve, as new ideas and people from other cultures pointing out our weaknesses are seen as a huge threat because we are not aware of our many strengths.

5 . How are you going to utilize what you have learned here?

I hope that the medical knowledge and improved way of thinking I've gained in Shinshu will ultimately make me a better doctor. Maybe, if I'll have a chance to participate in further developing the Finnish health care system in the future, I'll be able to utilize my vision of the strengths and weaknesses of Japanese health care and EM system and some present ideas of some individual good practices I've seen in Shinshu.

6 . Please make any suggestion for the program improvement.

- Discussion about the student's role and tasks at the chosen department, as well as expectations they have for an exchange student, at the very beginning of the training.
- Written schedule containing the deadlines of different reports and presentations you are due to do given on the first day of training.
- Introducing named tutor doctors for a clear period (one day, one week or so) per time.

7 . Would you recommend Shinshu University School of Medicine to other students?

I would definitely recommend it. There's a lot to learn and the people I've met have been wonderful. You might have to be ready to be active and organize past-time activities by yourself, though.

Date: 2016/02/04

Signature: Hanna Eskelinen