



Report clinical internship IFMSA

Catalonia September 2015

During the month September I have been in Barcelona, Catalonia, for my internship. Before hand I did not know what to expect exactly. I read the outgoing manual so I was aware of what I was allowed to do and what not. The goals I set were to learn as much as possible about how doctors handle difficult situations with for example patients and about the cultural differences between Catalonia and the Netherlands.

The department of the hospital where I did my internship was radiotherapeutic oncology. This was my second choice. The hospital was the Sant Pau hospital in Barcelona, Catalonia. I really enjoyed the department and the hospital. All the doctors, residents and other interns were very kind to me and helped me wherever they could. They even translated the consults when the patients were there.

Every day started with a general meeting where a few new patients were reviewed. All the doctors were sitting at a table and I, as an intern, was also allowed to sit at the same table. They translated a lot of details and explained everything as soon as I did not understand anything. After this meeting I went to the hospitalized patients to see how they were doing. Once we finished this, I got to sit with the doctors during consults and they taught me a lot about radiotherapy and about the patients.

The other incomings and I were living in a city nearby Barcelona. It was called Castelldefels. It was a lot of fun to live with them, but it was quite far from city centre. It took me about an hour every morning to get to the hospital.

The social program did not really exist. There was a facebook page where some people posted activities but they weren't really set through. We went to dinner one time with the incomings living at my residence and the NEO's from Barcelona. This was very nice. The incomings living at my residence were very nice, so we did a lot of activities with this group. We went for tours, to the beach and for dinner and drinks together. My contact person was a nice guy; he helped me to get to the hospital and showed me the way from Barcelona city to the residence.

When I compare Barcelona to the Netherlands, what comes to mind first is the difference in hygienic rules. The doctors and nurses were all wearing watches, other jewelry and their hair wasn't tied back. The relationship between the doctors and patients was very good. The patients were all very ill but they had a lot of faith in the doctors and looked sort of satisfied.

After having done this internship I realize how important a doctor and patient relationship is. I learned a lot about interactions with patients and know better how to handle very ill patients. It was very valuable for my future and me.



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