



## Gynaecologie/ obstetrie; Casablanca; Marokko; 2015.

Last summer I had the opportunity to go abroad with IFMSA for a clinical clerkship. The internship took place in the department of Gynaecology in Casablanca. My main goal was to see the difference in health care system and culture in medicine. I decided to set no goals for skills, because I'm not allowed to do invasive procedures and in this department almost everything is invasive, except ultrasound.

On Sunday the 30<sup>th</sup> of August I arrived at the airport of Casablanca. I took the train and my host (3rd year medical student) awaited me at the final train stop. The following month we'll stay together in her apartment in the centre of the city. It's just a ten minutes' walk to the hospital every morning.

The next morning my host showed me the way to the hospital, and at the entrance I met the Moroccan SCOPE members and the other incomings. The Moroccan IFMSA helped us with the papers, insurance and I was introduced to the head of the gynaecology department. He told me to go to the clinic where I would find a doctor or nurse. I found this doctor and he told me to stay with him, he would show and tell me everything. In the hospital were no students because they have a conflict with the government, and nowadays they're still in strike! To protest a bill that would institute mandatory two-year civil service for graduates. The bill stipulates that after they finish their studies and before they can enter the job market, graduates undertake two years of public service in places dictated by the ministry, which means the countryside. In order to solve the shortage of doctors in that side of the country.

Every day started with a ward round at 8:30 with all the residents, followed by the ultrasounds tests. And for the last two hour we had 'hôpital du jour'. At 12.30 I left the hospital, because we followed the studentprogram and the students normally have lectures in the afternoon. For me this internship was mostly observing. Communication between doctor and woman was in Arabic, after the consult the doctor translated to French for me. Because of this language barrier it was sometimes hard to assist or to do examination by myself.



In Morocco the doctors test every pregnant woman with or without medical complaints for proteinuria with a dipstick. This is the easiest way, because pre-eclampsia is the most common disease.

The nightshift, which is not mandatory, was the best medical experience I had in Morocco. During the whole night women came to the hospital to give birth, I saw many deliveries, in the natural way and caesarean sections. Though going to operation room was again a



shocking experience for me. All the hygiene rules that I'm used to back home were ignored here. During the operation the doors of the operation rooms were open and people just walked in and out, even like cats and many cockroaches!!!! They didn't use always gloves, mouth and hair mask. And the sink was one level upstairs.

The biggest difference for me is the way of communication between doctor and patient. The doctor doesn't really communicate, it's one way communicating. He's talking to the patient about the diagnosis, never asking how the patient is and he's never talking about the treatment and prognosis. And when the doctor's mood is bad, he's yelling to the patient. They never heard about empathy, feedback or cooperate in the woman's sorrows. Differences I will not forget and which made impact on me. Overall I consider it's a time problem. Actually there are 24 beds in this gynaecology department, but in reality the daily limit is 40 women. So two women have to share one bed together, and the nurses have to put three or four babies in one incubator. Although I expected this



whole month of experience to be different, at the end it was much worse than I expected. But well, it is all part of the experience I was looking for, and it made me realize how happy we should be with the Dutch health care system.



The social program of Morocco is very well organized and busy in a positive way (which means every day). In every weekend we went on weekend trips for 3 or 4 days; we visited Marrakech, Mohammedia, Rabat, chefchaouen, we had a sleep-over in the desert with camelride. IFMSA members joined us during the weekendtrips, and they were our guides and arranged the hotel, train or bus. During the week the incomings and IFMSA members met at 1 pm to have lunch together and spent the afternoon. Like always, they arranged a program; horse riding, hiking, surfing, mosque, markets, beachday, skybar, lunches and more. They loved

to show us around and they are proud of their city. The contact person isn't very important in Casablanca, because I could ask my host or the other IFMSA member, I say them every day. We didn't go out at night, because we had a late dinner with the hostfamily and it



isn't safe outside when it's dark.

Another special event was the sacrifice of the sheep, which is very important in the Islam and take three days. My host invited me to her parents and rest of the family. So I discovered the real Moroccan traditions. The food and their hospitable is so adorable! Definitely one of the best days during this month.

I'm sure that my professional point of view after my experiences in Morocco is changed. I'll be more aware of another way of living and culture and I'll be more receptive toward other cultures. And I want to be more open minded and understand their thoughts. But the contrast is more than only this; the epidemiology is totally different even their medical management. Be aware about it during your examination and treatment. You may think in the wrong way.

What I can tell is that I am glad that I have got this opportunity, deal with other diseases, make new friends and carry with me a life time experience. I definitely want to do it once again!

