



I was posted for 4 weeks clinical internship in Nepal TU teaching hospital in Kathmandu at the Emergency Department. The study goals for me during this internship were getting a lot of clinical practice, to notice the patient-doctor relationship, hygienic and cultural differences. And apart from that I want to do and learn as much as possible of the Nepalese culture. My expectation of the Emergency Department was it to be really crowded, busy and without much medical staff. Also I expected because of me being a foreign student, they would expect me to do a lot of invasive procedures. Resulting in situations, were saying 'no' to perform invasive treatment, would be hard.

The day at the department started at 9.00 with a round to hand-over the patients from night to morning duty. The day ended around 16.30 after the shift change. Holiday was on Saturdays. The emergency department was divided into three categories: red, yellow and green. Red for people with urgent treatment within 1 minute, yellow for the walking patient who needs treatment within 15 minutes and green for the patient who needs treatment within 30 minutes. There were a lot of doctors and medical students walking, and running, around. However, there were even more patients than I expected. Especially the yellow area, where the beds sometimes were occupied up to three patients. They take as many patients as they can handle. Also the department was more chaotic than I expected. This was also due to all the family accompanied with the patient, sometimes up to 6 family members who accompany the patient. The family takes care of all the 'nursery' things, like food, privacy during a procedure and helping to go to the toilet etc. The most striking difference between the Netherlands and Nepal concerning the health care system, is the health insurance. In Nepal no health care insurance exist. If something is wrong, people go to a hospital and have to buy everything their selves, like medicines, injection needles, catheters, IV lines, sterile gloves and so on. In critical situations, this can be a big problem. Also when the patient party doesn't have enough money for treatment, there isn't any fund to support them. However all medical staff always tries to help the patients as much as possible, although sometimes lack of money, space and materials play parts. The patients really worship the doctors, however in this critical care situations the patients and the family can be really stressed and emotional. This causes the chaotic atmosphere at the department. Another striking difference is the hygiene and privacy. There was no air conditioning, so it was constantly 28 degrees Celsius inside the emergency. The sheets of the beds weren't changed after a new patient arrives. There doesn't exist a hand washing protocol for the doctors and nurses. Even when a patient has a contagious disease, they don't have the opportunity and space to take them in isolation. They often don't use any curtains. Only if a patient is brought dead or when an invasive procedure is going on, however most of the time it is the family that takes care of that.

Also because of the big distance people have to travel and the patients have less knowledge of disease, there are more critically ill patients. Moreover, patients often present with end



stage of chronic diseases, often due to alcohol abuse and smoking, making treatment difficult. The patients really worship the doctors, what the doctor asks for they will do.

During the internship I could practice a lot of physical examination. And I saw a lot of rare diseases and end stage chronic diseases. These things are less often seen in the Netherlands, so it was a good practice. They also often talk about medical situations in the periphery, if there isn't anything of medical supply available, this was really interesting and good to learn. In the second week of the internship I gave a presentation about lung ultrasound. They were really excited about the presentation. Also the doctors did a lot of bedside teaching during the morning rounds.

During the internship I stayed at a host family. They were living with 6 people of 3 generations in a house half an hour walking from the hospital. They were really friendly and helpful, like most of Nepalese people. They cooked every evening for me when I came back from the hospital, like dahl bat and momo's. Due to them I learned more about the Nepali culture. Kathmandu is a really crowded city, with really busy traffic. However the people are so sweet, friendly and always willing to help. The NEO of Nepal arranged everything for me. He came to get me at the Airport and had a good contact with the host family. If there was something wrong or I had questions, I could always call him. During the internship there wasn't a real organized social program, but I meet so many people that there was always something to do. There were more elective students at the Emergency Department, so there was always somebody to hang out with.

Due to this internship, I will not take for granted that we have such a good functioning health care system, with good hygiene, privacy and high quality care. It has been a great experience I would never forget!

