LEVOLOSI HEALTH CENTRE
ARUSHA, TANZANIA

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Class of 2018
INTERNING AT LEVOLOSI

• As an intern in the outpatient clinic at Levolosi some of my main responsibilities included:
  • Working as medical scribe: consisted of keeping patient records in log books that the clinic sent to the national Ministry of Health
  • Checking patient vitals such as blood pressure and auscultating patients
  • Helping out with simple errands such as looking for certain forms or taking things to other doctors in the clinic
INTERNING AT LEVOLOSI

• I also had the opportunity to observe doctors perform procedures in various departments outside the outpatient clinic such as:
  • Natural deliveries
  • C-section delivery
  • Circumcisions
  • Tubal ligation
MOST REWARDING ASPECTS OF MY EXPERIENCE

• The ability to observe firsthand the differences in healthcare between the U.S. and a developing country

• The ability to obtain a more data-based perspective of the healthcare system by keeping data/records in the log books

• The ability to observe and come to better understand the role that a doctor can play in a patient’s life — not only as a provider of medical services, but as an adviser and comforter to patients faced with difficult diagnoses (e.g. the doctors I observed consoling patients who had just been diagnosed with HIV)
THE IMPACT OF MY WORK ON THE CLINIC

Although I was able to observe and learn a lot from my time at the clinic, I was also able to give back to the organization in some way. I was mostly able to do this through my work as a medical scribe. In keeping records for the doctors I was observing, I was able to help them save time during their visits with patients in an already understaffed environment. I was also able to help the doctors perform their work more efficiently, since they didn’t have to balance administering patient care with record keeping as they usually did.
THE IMPACT OF THIS EXPERIENCE ON ME

This experience revealed to me that I would like to go on to pursue a career as a physician. My interest in such a different healthcare setting and in the larger problems faced by such a setting also sparked in me a desire to work not only in clinical care, but also in public health in some capacity.
LESSONS LEARNED

One of the biggest lessons I learned was that of persistence. My first few weeks in the clinic were a big adjustment because I didn’t exactly have a good idea of where I fit in. But as I was able to get more used to the setting and find ways in which I could be helpful, I felt like I was doing much more meaningful work. I learned how to persist through situations, even though they may not be clear at the beginning.
TIPS FOR FUTURE INTERNS

• Try to find a couple doctors whom you consistently observe, so as to always be working with a doctor who is familiar with you when one of them is not in/off for the day

• Get to know other international volunteers in the clinic — those who have been there for longer than you will be able to give you some tips and pointers for how to get used to the clinic and may also become good buddies!

• Bring medical supplies with you if you can — the clinic is continually underresourced, so if you could bring gloves, gauze, and such things not only to use yourself when you’re helping out but to donate to the clinic it will be greatly appreciated
ENJOY YOUR TIME AND WORK IN TANZANIA!