Paeds in Prague!

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As a final year medical student I chose to complete my elective in Paediatric Endocrinology at the Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle, United Kingdom. I was very welcomed by the enthusiastic team there and was invited to join them at the annual European Society of Paediatric Endocrinology conference, held in Prague. With the help of the medical faculty, this was made possible.

The conference ran for 3 days in the centre of Prague. I was grateful to have the opportunity to broaden my knowledge, while also seeing the amazing Czech city and sample Prague’s hearty goulashes. I was even lucky enough to be able to meet with two other medical students from Monash in Prague at the same time.

The conference sessions ranged from didactic tutorials to interactive sessions. I particularly enjoyed attending the “Meet the Expert Sessions” which were an open format discussion about topics lead by an expert in the field.

The elective combined with the conference helped me to broaden my knowledge in the interesting area of Paediatric Endocrinology. While in Newcastle, I appreciated being able to see patients with conditions I had only ever read about in small print in text books in Australia, such as children with Prader Willi Syndrome and those infants born with ambiguous genitalia. The paediatric hospital I was attached to was extremely specialized with many patients with extremely rare conditions. Having spent time on the wards and at out-patients before attending the conference meant that the tutorials and educational sessions I attended at the conference had a lot more meaning to me. I was able to relate the real life cases I had seen to the new information and research being discussed in Prague.

On my return to Newcastle, I presented an overview of HONK (hyperosmolar-non-ketotic-coma) the Paediatric Grand Round using information I had gathered from the conference. This was an important experience for me, as it helped me develop presentation skills and confidence when presenting to a large group overseas.

The conference attendance and elective in Newcastle has confirmed my passion in Paediatrics. I am extremely interested in furthering my knowledge in this area, and am excited about the possibility of being involved in some research in the area of Paediatric Endocrinology in the next few years.

All in all it was a fantastic student elective, made even more valuable and enjoyable with the addition of my educational trip to Prague!