

Report from Clinical Placement Abroad

1. Introduction

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Clinical placement: Tartu Ülikooli Kliinikum, Tartu, Estonia

Study period: 3.3.-31.5.2014

2. Description of clinical placement

First six weeks, altogether 180 hours I spent in operation theatre and there in anesthesia nursing. I had a mentor with whom I was almost every day. There we surgeries and my mentor took care of the anesthesia during the surgeries together with anesthesiologist, and I was there learning it. The operating ward where I was included 14 operating theaters and it depended on the day in which of those we were.

Last six weeks I spent in intensive care unit, altogether 180 hours spending them in three different wards: general intensive, neurological intensive and lung intensive care wards. All the wards were really interesting and the staff was really friendly.

3. Description of and reflection on learning situations

In anesthesia nursing I was able to practice many skills like cannulation, diluting of intravenous medications, giving intravenous fluids, monitoring the patient's vital signs and making some conclusions what should be done (for example if the blood pressure went too low), and also assisting in intubation and extubation. I learned a lot about the medication used in the surgery and anesthesia, I learned about differences in the use of medication between Jyväskylä and Tartu hospitals and saw in practice how medication worked. Some anesthesiologists also explained things in English if I wanted to know something.

In intensive care units I learned really much about the given care. I was able to give and dilute more intravenous medications and fluids, put naso-gastral tube, monitor vital signs and neurological state with Glasgow Coma Scale, aspirate airways, take blood samples, change lines like arterial or central venous catheter line. There were many situations to practice these skills. I was also able to see many procedures like putting the tracheostomy, arterial line, central venous line, etc. With my mentor we

had 1-2 patients every day and we took care of all the needed things during the shift.

4. Evaluation of clinical placement period

• Information prior to departure

Our departure to the exchange was really quick with my friend so everything happened quickly. We did our application too late but luckily we still were able to go. Some weeks before the departure we got the information that we have been accepted by Tartu Health Care College.

• Reception

Reception was good. On our first week we met the international coordinator of Tartu Health Care College and other important people from the school. We were also shown the school and the hospital and told where we are supposed to go on our first day of practice. After one week our practice started and the head nurse was there taking us to the ward and giving us our mentors. She was also really friendly and every time came to ask how everything is going if she saw us on the ward.

• Study environment

Environment in the hospital was nice, nurses and doctors were nice and some spoke also in English at first. Later, when I spoke only in Estonian in intensive care they were patient and explained things many times if needed. I felt like it was easy to ask questions if something was unclear. There was also possible to practice many skills and do things.

• Self evaluation

I think I learned a lot in the hospital by practicing things. At first I was worried about learning things in different language because it was my deepening practice, but that fear wasn't right, I learned a lot and maybe even more than I would have learned in Finland because I learned about other things too. I learned something about Estonian language, about living abroad, about Estonians. I did not know many things about Estonians before this experiences, I just knew they are our neighbours, many Finnish people travel there and the language is similar, but that's all. The experience of living there for three months taught me to know that country a lot better than before.

• Housing conditions

We had got a room in the apartment of Tartu University's Student Village in a peaceful building and reasonable price. There were altogether three rooms, in one room there was one Estonian girl, in other two Estonian girls and we were in the third room with my friend. The apartment was good, but when the girl living alone in the room moved away after some weeks, the house lady told us that they want to renovate our apartment and we had to move. Luckily we got a room from other

building of Tartu University Student Village on the other side of the town. There we had 4 roommates sharing kitchen, toilet and shower. They were also nice: one Estonian couple and one Indian couple.

- **Economy**

The rent was much cheaper; food was a bit cheaper; eating outside was cheaper and public transportation was cheaper too. Basically almost everything was even a bit cheaper than in Finland.

- **Culture**

There was not that much differences between Estonian culture and Finnish culture, we are quite similar kinds of people. Student organization there arranged some things where I went and learned more about Estonian culture like the dances and the traditional wedding. Those differed a bit from Finnish traditions.

- **Communication/transport**

Transport was really cheap for me, under 10 euros per month for the student. Buses also went often to many places. Every morning I went to the hospital by bus. Sometimes, I also used buses when going to Crossfit on the other side of the town.

- **Teacher/tutor nurse feedback**

My mentor in anesthesia was really nice and let me do many things. She also explained me things in English. In intensive care I had not special mentor because I was altogether in three different wards and had different nurses mentoring. They all were really nice and taught things if I had questions or did not know how to do something. They took me there really friendly and I felt welcomed even though at first I was not supposed to do practice in intensive care. That's what makes me really happy.

- **Language**

I think Estonian language is not that difficult for Finns than it is for other nationalities, because there are many same words, some same kind of Grammatik and in both languages you conjugate the words. Still, it wasn't so easy at first, I understood only some words and they sometimes did not even mean what I thought they do. In my first practice I spoke mostly in English with my mentor but with some other nurses I tried in Estonian because they did not know English. I used Estonian also in free time in shops, crossfit and our first roommate liked to teach us Estonian. In the second practice in intensive care unit I spoke only in Estonian. It was so nice to notice after some weeks that I understood basically everything that was said in the hospital. Speaking was not so easy but at least they understood me. Nurses and other students I met in the intensive care helped me a lot with the language and wanted to speak it to me as they knew I wanted to learn it. Still, I don't know the correct ways to conjugate the words.

- **Student host organisation (if applicable)**



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This guideline was originally published in Norwegian by University of Agder (former Agder University College), Faculty of Health and Sport.

5. Good advice/suggestions for improvement

I don't have any suggestion ideas in my mind. It was a great experience!