

Report from Clinical Placement Abroad

In addition to study requirements students on clinical placement abroad are to submit a report, which is to contain the following items:

1. Introduction

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Clinical placement: Palokan hospital and Central hospital in Jyväskylä FI

Study period: 27/01 – 17/04/2015

2. Description of clinical placement

Central Finland Health Care District is the largest non-university hospital district in Finland, with services in nearly all-medical specialties.

09/02/15 – 27/02/15	Palokan sairaala os 2/ Palokan hospital ward 2
02/03/15 – 06/03/15	Keskus-Suomen sairaanhoitopiiri – Korva- nenä- ja kurkkutautien pkl Central hospital - ear, nose and throat outpatients' clinic.
09/03/15 - 3/03/15	Keskus-suomen sairaanhoitopiiri – Central hospital – surgical outpatients' clinic

Most of my clinical practice took place at Palokan hospital ward 2. The patients were mainly elderly who were transferred from the central hospital, where they had received treatment, but still needed nursing and medical care before they could return home. Therefore there were a lot of different health issues at the ward such as: Cancer, broken bones, urine infection, chest pain, high blood pressure etc. The hospital counted approximately 22 beds with 2-3 patients in each room.

3. Description of and reflection on learning situations

In my opinion the clinical practices is very substantial and essential part of the nurse education program. The clinical practice gives me the opportunity to utilise theory and participate in caring for patients with different needs and diagnoses. The mean value of nursing is the same in Denmark and Finland due to my experience, but there is a remarkable difference in the ways of working and documenting. The fact that the few of the patient and nurses speak English just made the learning situations much more challenging and called for a great deal of creativity. This exchange period has been a great opportunity to widen my nursing vocabulary in English, and I'll defiantly be able to use that later on.

4. Evaluation of clinical placement period

• Information prior to departure

Our journey prior to departure was a bit different then the normal procedure prior to departure. We got information about the Nordplus program from our international coordinators of nursing at our home institution, and they helped with the application forms. They were also our contact with the different university here in Finland prior to departure, and they took care of all the paper work back and forth. The rest of the information for international student prior to departure was provided by the JAMK university homepage.

• Reception

The reception upon our arrival to Jyväskylä was pleasant: The school had assigned us with a tutor contact prior to our departure, that picked us up at the airport and drew us to our accommodation. He welcomed us, and provided us with an information folder from the JAMK University and showed us around town the day after our arrival. He also arranged for our student ID's and passwords for the computer at campus etc. This was extremely helpful since we were going to start a clinical practice soon after our arrival.

• **Study environment**

The study environment was changing between different wards at the hospital and a health clinic at Palokan hospital. At Polakka few of the nurse speak English so during lunch and coffee breaks I had a lot of time to evaluate and think about the approach of care.

At the central hospital things happened a bit faster and I was challenge to keep up and consume all the information there was given to me by the doctors, surgeons, nurses and other staff. That was another learning environment because is wards we visited was day clinics, so the patient only spent a few minutes with the doctors and nurses. So all the explaining and evolution had to be done in-between the patient appointment.

• **Self-evaluation**

I have learned a lot during this exchange period, but it was not what I was expecting to learn. I learned a lot about working entirely with your body languages as the only communication tool. Secondly I learned how to handle different cultural environment, language barrier, and different cultural needs while practicing nursing. This experience will give me advantages in my subsequent clinical practices and work situation.

By seeing how things are done in another countries us as Finland, I have learned to value the high standards and work ethic at my education/work in my home country but also questions the things that can be improved. I think that this is a very important capacity to have as a nurse.

• **Housing conditions**

Do to the time pressure prior to departure we decided to look for housing on multiple sides, both private and threw Koas (which is shared student apartments). We found a student from one of the others university who leased two rooms in his apartment. He seemed friendly and had previous had several exchange students living with him in his apartment. We contacted him by email and decided on a lease period and the price. It has been nice living with someone who knows the city well, the university and the study environment.

• **Economy**

We were both lucky to get a scholarship from the Nordman Network of 530 €. This covered flight tickets from Kastrup to Jyväskylä and back and paid for the bus card during our stay. The prices in Jyväskylä is mainly the same as in Denmark, and with a student card you can get a hot meal in the student cafeteria and at the hospital for an affordable price. Many of the city museum, cinemas and stores offers a student discount.

We had decided to travel a lot during a stay so we spend a little extra money on visiting Tallinn in Estonia and St. Petersburg in Russia, and I also visit the Finmark in Norway. We also visit Helsinki several times.

• **Culture**

The Finnish culture is a little bit different from the Danish culture. It's hard to explain the differences, because in the bigger picture Denmark and Finland is very similar, but when you have lived in both countries you start to see the small differences. An example of these differences is that Finnish people seem to be much more comfortable with silence between people, then Danes how find it awkward and would desperately try to fill the silence with small talk. I was also surprised to find that the Finnish people are very environmentally conscious and they really make an effort to teach their children to protect the environment.

I enjoyed my time in Finland and I'm glad for the opportunity to study abroad.

• **Communication/transport**

Our accommodation had Internet access included in the rent, so we were able to contact friends and family, and use the university email and student forum. We decided to buy a monthly bus card so that we could get around town easily and get to the different hospitals. If we had been here during the summer it would have been easy to get around the town by bike.

• **Teacher/tutor nurse feedback**

I got good feedback from the nurse Mirva with whom I practiced the most during my time at Palokan hospital. She took the time to discuss all the patients' diagnoses and what their treatment plans. She also took interest in how we do things in Denmark and we had several discussions about pros and cons when we found some differences. She also asked about my individual goals and did what ever she could to meet my wishes about seeing our participating in different learning situations.

• Language

In Finland they have to official languages of course Finnish (suomi) but also Swedish. Finnish is a difficult language, so we communicated mainly in English, but because only a few of the patients at the hospital spook English we learned a few Finnish sentences. I'm under the impression that most Finnish people understand and speak English good but they are to shy to try.

5. Good advice/suggestions for improvement

As earlier mention our situation prior to departure was different from the normal exchange of student, because we found our placement so close to departure.

I think the practice place should have more knowledge about the student they are receiving and what they are there to learn and how fare along they are.

I also suggest that the meeting with clinical supervisor during the clinical practice should be a bit more organized, so the students have time to prepare some topics that they would like to address and discuss.

Scope of report: Typed max. 2500 words

Date of submission: One week after arrival back home

To be submitted to: Network Coordinator Marjo Palovaara: marjo.palovaara@jamk.fi