
2016 EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Siriraj Hospital, Mahidol University

Bangkok, Thailand

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I. Introduction

From April 4th to 29th, I did my clinical clerkship at Siriraj Hospital, Mahidol University in Bangkok, Thailand. This is the first and largest teaching medical center in Thailand which has more than 2000 beds. Prince Mahidol of Songkla (father of the current King) made a great contribution to the development of the hospital and there is still a deep relationship with the Royal family. I spent the first 2 weeks in Trauma Surgery Department and the next 2 weeks in Gynecology & Obstetrics Department.

II. Trauma Surgery Department

This department is the place not only treat trauma but it also works as the emergency room. I mostly spent time at outpatient department (OPD). I observed the doctors treating patients and practiced finding fracture in the X-ray. There were patients who got injured by traffic accidents, animal bites, machine accidents and who had amputation because of diabetic gangrene etc. Young doctors called residents were taking care of them. When there was a difficult case, the residents all gathered and discussed about that enthusiastically.

At the conference, I was surprised to hear the doctors discussing if the patient who was suspected bleeding need to take CT or not. Taking CT is a kind of routine in Japan, but in Thailand, CT and MRI are only at limited hospitals, so the doctors judge if the patients really need the examination. I thought it's marvelous that most hospitals in Japan have CT and MRI even in the rural area. But on the other hand, we should remember the attitude that we think carefully about the necessity of the examination.

I felt sorry that usually there was a workshop to practice suturing or the other surgical skills, but it wasn't held during my practice term because we had long holidays called Songkran in the second week. And I couldn't see any students there as they had summer vacation until the holidays.

III. Gynecology and Obstetrics Department

In this department, I observed some OPD and practiced at labor room. The OPD I saw were STD, family planning, gynecology, antenatal and postpartum clinic. I've never seen STD patients in Japan and only had knowledge learned from textbooks, so it was such a good experience that I could hear the symptoms from patients, look at the color and property of the flow and identify the bacterial body using microscope. The place I most interested in was the labor room. There were always about 20 pregnant women waiting for delivery. The residents there allowed me to try putting tocomonitor, per-vaginal test and helping delivery. Especially per-vaginal test was

much hard for me, but the residents taught me persistently and allowed me to try again and again. I was very excited when I could touch fetal head inside the uterus. I met medical students at labor room and I could see them doing practice. They were not only practicing the procedures like I did but also taking patients' history and filling in the case record. The students I met at the labor room were in the 5th year, but they had a lot of knowledge and skills. I got much stimulated by them. They told me that they started skill training from 4th year, and at 6th year they have enough knowledge and skills to assist the residents, because they should work at small hospitals in rural area as soon as they graduate.



IV daily life

As I mentioned, I had Songkran holidays during my practice term. During this period, there was a festival to celebrate Thai New Year that people splash water with each others. I got dripping wet but it was so much fun.

Around Siriraj hospital, there is a big market called Wanglang Market. I could get food, clothes and everything that I needed there. Also, the hospital is near the grand palace and convenient for sightseeing. There are also many facilities in the hospital area. Cafeterias (which are cheap and good!), library, swimming pool, Gym and etc. The dormitory I stayed was really clean and comfortable, so I had no stress in daily life.

I got to know each other with some local doctors, medical students and Japanese medical students from other universities. I often went to eat dinner with them and had a pleasant time.

V. Conclusion

I heard that there are about 300 medical students in one grade at the medical school and half of them are ladies. Certainly, I saw many lady doctors at the hospital. The doctors were divided into day shift and night shift, and the finishing time was decided beforehand. I thought that makes the lady doctors work more easily.

I appreciate the doctors and students helping me with my practice. As I couldn't understand the Thai at all and also I didn't know many English medical terms, I often had difficulty in understanding. But they tried to translate everything into English for me and explained the English term that I didn't know. Thanks to them, my practice became much meaningful.

My life in Thailand was filled with new findings, new experiences, and a lot of joy. I would like to express my gratitude to all who were concerned in my exchange program. Thank you so much.

