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Failure. PC 6 was the height of my excitement as I got to experience the Clinical aspect of Medicine, going on ward rounds with my consultants, clerking patients and examining them, observing and performing some medical procedures like paracentesis, nasogastric intubation and so forth, attending seminars and sitting for viva and Clinical Skills Exams, where we had standardized patients (trained patients) to clerk and examine, writing the patient notes, making differential diagnosis and possible laboratory workups within a given time, again in the USMLE Step 2 CS style. The knowledge I had gathered over the past semesters gave me the confidence to interact with the other medical personnel and colleagues and perform the tasks assigned to me efficiently. I felt like a real doctor and it was a morale boosting experience that has heightened all the more my passion for Medicine, and moreover my confidence in facing the Clinical Rotations anywhere in the world. I really look forward to having a great time in the Hospital with my consultants and patients in my coming rotations. Well, I guess for everyone in the medical field at whatever level, the studying never ends!

Chidi Dimkpa Jr., Completed his Preclinical studies

MY CLINICAL ROTATIONS EXPERIENCE IN VICTORIA HOSPITAL

There are those times when you just throw yourself back on your squeaky chair, hopeless hands towards the sky with your spasmic neck muscles surprised by this sudden change in posture after long hours of anatomy, biochemistry, physiology or pathology. Pondering on why you read so much, you recall the goofies, hot shots, geniuses and grumpies in Scrubs, Grey's Anatomy or Dr. House and if they went through the same martyr. Well, all that I can say is that Medicine is a spiral of learning whereby what you read are the basic concepts that will one day make you save the lives of many.

The Core Rotations of 52 weeks at USAIM were nothing less than the wonderful Art of Practicing Medicine. Like a soldier going to war, as a laborer cultivating his fields, she/he, armed with the white coat of dual protection, stethoscope in the left pocket, pen torch and pen in the top one, note book ready to record some nice action, the medical student, walks into the sunny and hot corridors of Victoria hospital for another day of clinical exposure. It was quite an enjoyable experience whereby you continuously interact with the consultants, the hospital staff and the patients.

For many, language barrier is a problem but every Seychellois is most helpful to entertain a fruitful conversation with you whereby you will come out with a good history taking and physical examination coupled with some helpful words of the Creole dialect of the country. When the consultants are around, you will feel an increase in your blood pressure as you are aware that you are in the open and that they can at anytime shoot a question at you, no matter where you hide! This continual assessment by the consultant always keep you in a balance between stress and confidence because if you are aware of the cases in the wards and if you read about the disease and morbid condition they have, you have got your safety net which is obviously absent should you lack the courage and motivation to step up to the front lines and clerk patients. The whole concept of clinical exposure is not for you to hover around the folder trolley whereby you "know" the patient according to what other doctors have written but, instead, acting like an integrated health care practitioner and developing your skills of communication and bedside manners whereby, one day, when you will be an intern, you will be worth of upholding this title that was given to you. As a medical student, the essence of history taking and physical examination is greatly enough to diagnose at least 70% of cases in any setting and that is why the consultant imposes on your adequacy to perform these tasks. In a clinical setting, your textbook is your patient. There is no such thing as lack of exposure and Victoria Hospital, though catering for around 80,000 people, have had graced me a multitude of unbelievable clinical presentations varying from ectopic pregnancy in a 15 year old to Boerhaave's Syndrome. Together with the intrapersonal skills, one should foster interpersonal skills, and not only treat the patient as a book but as a human being in the holistic approach to health care. Though it depends a lot on personality, being empathetic to sick individuals always helps them to share their burden and feel better spiritually. Also, one must be a team player and act in a multi-disciplinary care setting by showing respect not only to the consultants and doctors but also to the nursing and other staff in the hospital. I hope that you do not need resuscitation after the lectures but I am sure that you will enjoy your clinical rotation in Victoria Hospital. O revwar!

Gavish Awotar, Clinical student in Victoria Hospital

Cultural Activities



Group getting ready for scintillating Creole act...



A student receiving 'Honors' for Pre-Clinical subject.



USAIM NEWSLETTER

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Interview with Mr. Henry Telemaque, M.B.Ch.B., F.R.C.S. Honorary Consultant : General Surgery

What is your job as a USAIM consultant in the Department of Surgery?

I am the Consultant –In-charge for General surgery for the Health Services Agency of the Ministry of Health. My routine clinical activities will include daily morning meetings; Outpatient Consultations; Operating theatre sessions; Endoscopy sessions and Ward Rounds, in addition to other administrative duties. When I have USAIM students attached to the department, they will join me in all the above mentioned clinical activities where they will have continuous informal teaching sessions mostly on a one to one basis. They will also spend time with the rest of the team on ward rounds and shadowing the on call doctor when there is emergency referral or consultations. The students will be expected to also clerk in the patients then they will present their cases in the morning meetings or on the ward round to the whole team. I also take part in conducting their examinations at the end of their rotations.

What has been your experience working with USAIM students?

I've had a very interesting experience working with the USAIM students. They are a real cosmopolitan group who on the whole have found their own way to adapt with our way of small Island way of life. I've come across some very knowledgeable, gifted and hard working students but there's been a handful who were just not interested. They were not just learning from me but I found myself learning loads from them especially from their various clinical presentation and literature reviews.

What kind of experience students get when rotating in the Surgery wards in the Victoria hospital? Can you please elaborate on the 'Hands on experience' students get during their tenure in the Surgery department?

The experience gained by the students in our department during their Core Rotation in General surgery is "second to none", to use their own words. Evidence of that have been the increasing number of their colleagues, on rotation elsewhere, who will come over for electives, also leave with the same opinion. During their rotations like mentioned before they will be shadowing the junior staff where they will get first hand exposure to both electives and emergency admissions. The part they found more fascinating though is during the operating sessions where they get many chances to take active part in the wide range of surgical procedures i.e. scrubbing, assisting and the keener ones will polish up their suturing skills.



Interview with Dr. Fred Arissol, M.B.B.C.H. Teaching Faculty: Preventive Medicine, Epidemiology and Biostatistics

As a coordinator for health camps for students what activities were undertaken and how has been the experience like?

The experience obtained from health camps has been at a satisfactory level so far. A lot of work needs to be done. So far we have been very successful with the Anse Royale Health Center with which USAIM liaises for participating in health camps. The Dialysis unit has also organized health camps in four districts, where USAIM was represented. Because these camps take place during weekends it is difficult to get the students participation. Still their eagerness can be seen when weekly activities are organized.

As a faculty of Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Preventive Medicine what is your experience with USAIM students and your expert views on these subjects and their central role in Medicine?

The Preventive Medicine, Biostatistics and Epidemiology has so far been welcomed by the students from various countries. Those subjects when taught alongside vivid examples in everyday life, be it current events or historical events fascinate the students and they are all eager, I try to understand where they would in the future, after graduation, want to situate themselves whenever an event of epidemiological importance arises or how best they could put the Preventive Medicine information given to them to good use. I am sure that this faculty has a lot of scope in the university as being with a variety of students, writing of their projects would shed a lot of light and experience as to which areas would need more strengthening to have better results in the future.



USAIM students in the health camp

Graduates say



Once you step onto USAIM campus you get a feeling of belonging. As an international student, that was one element I strongly desired. The professors have a genuine interest in the success of their students; the faculty was encouraging and helpful. Students of different races interact with each other on a daily basis culminating in campus that is continuously rich and vibrant. Every day in USAIM, I gained valuable experiences that will help me in my career, and my life. I was long way from my friends and family, but the USAIM community has really made me feel welcomed and comfortable. I got the opportunity from USAIM to join Clinical Rotations in my home town, Mumbai, India and I am glad I did, because I had the chance to rotate with wonderful physicians in Rajawadi hospital. I have learned a lot from them. Being in this program has taught me the clinical and practical aspects of medicine. It was not only the medical knowledge that I have attained but also I was perfectly trained to apply it. At the hospital, we interacted with patients and developed communication skills relevant to the history of the patient. I had the honor to join doctors on rounds learning different approaches to diagnose the patient. Each doctor has his or her own approach to a patient, which is very important to understand, meaning you should be flexible in the way you think. The knowledge and experiences that I attained from USAIM helped me to create good impression of myself and our University in prestigious hospitals (**St. Bernard Hospital and Health Care Center and St. Mary and Elizabeth Medical Center**) in Chicago, U.S.A, during my Elective Clinical Rotations. Overall, I thank USAIM for providing me this wonderful opportunity. I feel USAIM has given me many opportunities and prepared me for life not only as a doctor but also as a better person.

Dr. Varun Rajkumar Singh, USAIM Graduate 2009



Studying Medicine and becoming a doctor was always a life long dream of mine and I was able to achieve that dream at USAIM. The education system of the university gave me the opportunity to study my basic sciences on the beautiful island of Mahe, Seychelles under the guidance and encouragement of the exceptional faculty. The teaching system, student-teacher discussions and examinations helped me to prepare for and answer competitive examinations like the USMLE and MCI. Further, I chose to do my Clinical Rotations in Bombay which allowed me to gain a lot of practical experience which greatly helped me during the USMLE Step II CS. I also had the opportunity of gaining some US clinical experience by choosing to go to the States for my Clinical Electives. I am very happy that I chose to study medicine at the University of Seychelles American Institute of Medicine and I wish all the current and future students of USAIM the very best.

Dr. Riddhi Patel, Cleared USMLE step I and II CS first attempt

USAIM NEWS

- USAIM Started premedical studies
- USAIM is fully accredited by the American Academy of Continuing Medical Education
- USAIM first batch of graduated students are permanently registered with Medical Council of India
- USAIM students are scoring 99 in United States Medical Licensing Examination part I and II
- Number of Seychellois students in USAIM past and present is six.
- Two scholarships available for Seychellois students every semester
- Dr. Smita Avhad is appointed as Assistant Clinical Coordinator of USAIM
- Mrs. Shella Mohideen is appointed as a Premedical Coordinator of USAIM
- The proposed new name of USAIM: University of Sciences American Institute of Medicine

Events to look forward to in the January - April 2010 semester

- ABC of Safer sex
- Visit to USAIM by secondary school career teachers
- Participation in the medical conference.

Current students say



Chidi Dimkpa Jr.

MY PRECLINICAL EXPERIENCE IN USAIM

Thinking about my preclinical experiences, one cannot but marvel at how the school management and Faculty came up with such a thorough and organized curriculum. Well, thinking about the motto now (Knowledge, Dedication and Excellence), I just might have answered my own question. The training seemed too hard to be achievable, but in the end I can boldly say we never lost any knowledge we required, thanks to the relentless efforts of the faculty. The curriculum is designed not just to give students the basic knowledge of Medicine, but to prepare us for the United States Medical Licensing Examinations (USMLE) as well as other Medical Board Exams in various countries. Very intensive curriculum I must say, but which gave us just enough time to play and much more time glued to our seats to study.

The first thing I noticed when I got here was the warm welcome I received from my lecturers! I almost thought I was mistaken to be a new lecturer, and it didn't end there. Our staff has been the friendliest, caring and helpful people I have yet to see in any other organization. I was amazed to see our lecturers take the pain to know us individually, our weak points and strengths, such that they could tell when we did not understand a topic or when a particular topic was boring us to death. Ironically, it seemed our boredom sparked up their creativity, as they would use whatever means-illustrations, visual aids, even theatrical performances, just so we could understand better. A number of times, we were made to observe autopsies in the hospital, which enhanced our understanding of Pathology and Anatomy. Of course that also gave us a motivation to study, seeing that our lecturers could go to any length to make us understand the concepts, another virtue which I quite appreciate. Being in another Medical school prior to this, I realized that our lecturers in USAIM emphasized on the concepts, not the volume of knowledge as the custom of some is. We were made to depend on understanding a concept and building on it, not just cramming gigabytes of stuff into our brains.

We had MCQ Quizzes once every week, which served as a kind of reinforcement to keep us on our toes concerning our studies, then Midterm exams, twice every semester in which we had viva (oral exams), and finally the End of Semester Exams. After each quiz, we had a quiz discussion, where we could analyze our mistakes and understand why which answer was right. With all of these, we had no choice but to excel. To help us with our studies, our lecturers always availed themselves on Saturdays for a review with any student who had some problems understanding certain aspects of a topic. I personally have found this very useful in such courses as Microbiology and Immunology which initially was my Achilles' heel.

Another unique attribute of this university is the Medical Board Review of PC 5 class, in which we had to review all the basic science courses, but in a system-wise fashion. This helped us consolidate the knowledge acquired over the past four Preclinical semesters. Having clinically oriented USMLE-type examinations on each system every week, we had a review from the Anatomy up till the Diagnosis of a disease in that system which adequately prepares us for the Boards. USMLE for instance, asserts that the best preparation for Step 1 resides in "broadly-based learning that establishes a strong general foundation on understanding the concepts and principles of Basic Medical Sciences" and this has been the aim of the Medical Board Review. We also got introduced into Clinical Medicine as well as History Taking and Physical Exams. This helped prepare us for the clinical rotations, which we briefly got introduced to in PC 6.

And how can I forget about our student seminars! It was a wonderful opportunity for us students to present seminars and answer questions on certain areas we had researched on. Personally, this helped boost my confidence and speaking skills, as well as my knowledge concerning the topic I and my colleagues presented on - Pathophysiology, Investigations and Treatment of Acute Renal

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MY EXPERIENCES IN USAIM
It has been such a wonderful experience so far. My name is Ninakachi Obuzor. I am a student of USAIM. I am in preclinical one.

It has always been my dream to become a medical doctor by profession. I have so much imagination of how medical school would look like, and now, I am in medical school. It has been fun with the learning procedure, having to learn four different medical courses in four months. So far, I just had one month of experience, and I've learnt so much in that period of time.

My lecturers are very encouraging, understanding and friendly. They make learning easier with their different ways of teaching and explanation of medical terms. At first, the teachers where too fast, then I realized I have to be on the same pace with them for better understanding. The fact that students are fewer and the class room is not crowded gives an advantage for easy learning; the classroom is more like a discussion class among students and lecturers.

The environment is quiet and safe. In this, the level of distraction is less, so far I have enjoyed my experience, and I know that as I move on I would have more challenging experiences that would build my future and dream as a medical doctor.

Ninakachi Obuzor, PC 1 student

Food for Thought

"Sometimes God pushes us to our limits. HE tests us beyond our endurance; because He has greater faith in us, than we have of ourselves."

"Start by doing what is necessary. Then start doing what is possible. Suddenly you will be doing the impossible."

"Two thoughts that decide your attitude in life - one, what you think of yourself when you do not have everything and two, what you think of others when you have everything."

"Words are under your control until you speak them; but you come under their control once you have spoken them."