

The Alan & Cyril Body Trust

Registered Charity No 1133557



Mulago Report

August-September 2011

First of all I must apologise for taking so long to write this report. I have been extremely busy since I arrived! I'm just starting to settle in and adjust to how things are done here. My first 6 weeks have been eye opening and a real emotional roller-coaster. Initially I found it hard sitting in the morning meeting waiting to hear how many maternal deaths and still births there had been during the previous day. I'm slowly accepting that this is part of life at Mulago, but it gives me an incentive to work hard and push for improvements. The midwives and doctors have been very welcoming and really helped me adjust to my new environment. Dr Sarah and Mark have been great mentors. They have been really supportive and available whenever I have needed them.

I spent my few weeks orientating myself to the various wards in the department, whilst waiting for my medical registration to arrive. Over the past two weeks I have spent most of my time on the labour ward, HDU and obstetric theatres. I am gaining vast experience in diseases that I have only had minimal exposure to in the UK such as malaria, sickle cell disease, eclampsia, obstructed labour, ruptured uterus and complications of HIV. When I return after my visit to Kabubbu this week I will start on the SHO rota, with the majority of my time on the labour ward and HDU.

Before I came to Mulago I had set out a list of expectations/goals to work towards. Below is a brief update on how I'm getting along with some of them:

1) HDU

I have been impressed by the HDU, which seems to be well staffed with well-trained midwives and one ICU nurse. There is an allocated intern, SHO and Specialist on call for the HDU who also go and see any referrals or outliers. Apart from a few technical issues with the monitors there seems to be very few problems with the HDU at present. Together with Karen Onions (from the LMP) and Susan I am working on the HDU benchmarking report which will give a more detailed overview of the HDU. The report should be finished within the next few days.

2) AMEWS pilot study

I have been working on this pilot with Sarah since day one. To be honest it has been the most frustrating task I have had to deal with since arriving at Mulago. The study is always being delayed. I was frustrated to find that not one set of observations had been recorded on the first three patients that I recruited last week despite repeatedly stressing the importance of taking observations and giving a presentation on AMEWS to the midwives and doctors in the morning meeting. We have just employed a midwife to assist in the recruitment of patients and recording of their observations, this should be a real step towards getting the pilot underway!

3) Undergraduate teaching

I am really impressed with the standard of the medical students who all work extremely hard. Their undergraduate programme is very impressive and I have really enjoyed being involved with their teaching both

at the bedside and in tutorials. So far I have given tutorials on new-born resuscitation, forceps delivery, sickle cell anaemia and menstrual disorders.

4) Midwifery teaching/training

Unfortunately this has gotten off to a slow start. The teaching is planned to take place every Thursday afternoon, which will be repeated for the midwives on ward 14 in upper Mulago. With the input of the midwives I have finalised a teaching programme that is both theoretical and practical. I hope to start the first session when I return from Kabubbu.

5) Guideline/protocol writing

There are many guidelines still to be written at Mulago. The first guideline that I have been involved in writing is the management of obstructed labour, which after presenting to the department is now in its final stages. I completely underestimated how much time it was going to take to write and implement a guideline, but I am looking forward to starting the next!

And finally, I am really enjoying Kampala. I am very fortunate to be living with a group of great people and I have really settled in. I spent an amazing weekend rafting in Jinja, and I have a trip to Murchison falls to look forward to in a couple of weeks!