

Amy Rosario, Kagoorlie, Rural Clinical School of Western Australia



In mid July I landed in beautiful Queenstown for a two-week exchange. As I landed, snow was falling – the second time I have ever seen snow fall in my whole life!

The picturesque town made a huge change from my current placement in the mining town of Kalgoorlie in Western Australia. The whole time I was there I could not get over the beautiful setting of Lake Wakatipu within the mountains.

I was greeted at the airport by one of the RMIP students placed in Queenstown, Stefan. He showed me around the town and took me to my accommodation at the hospital cottage which had a spectacular view. There I was staying with two University of Otago students Pete and Cassandra who were both on their rural GP terms. It was great to meet these two and I learnt a lot about the differences between our systems of training (especially rural training) in Australia to that of New Zealand from them.

I was placed at Lakes District Hospital, which is about eight kilometres from Queenstown itself. My first Monday morning began with OSCE practice with the RMIP students, Stefan, Laura and Huw. It was great to touch base with them and hear about the experience of being a rural student through RMIP. It also made the world of medicine seem very small given the familiarity of the scenarios. I then participated in their Monday morning tutorial before starting my exchange rotation through the Accident and Emergency Department.



That week started a huge learning curve around the location of Queenstown (especially in relation to other larger health care campuses) and the health care system in New Zealand. I had exposure not only to the A & E but also to the different clinics available at the hospital. I was able to observe the Paediatrics clinic and major and minor fracture clinics. I was really impressed at the access that people living in Queenstown had to various clinics and specialty services.

I was lucky to have exposure to amazing teaching especially in the disciplines of orthopaedics and emergency. During my two weeks in Queenstown I saw more fractures than I have ever seen in my life. It became a crash course in radiograph reading especially for the multiple ankle and wrist fractures sustained by enthusiastic holiday goers trying skiing and snow boarding.



This was not the best advertisement for the ski season but nonetheless at the insistence of the doctors at the hospital I did give skiing a try. I was blown away by the views from The Remarkables and Coronet Peak, as well as my own ability to make it down green slopes by the end of two days instruction.

Overall I would like to thank all the students and staff I met through my exchange for their overwhelming hospitality. Exchange is a fantastic way to get a feel for a town and a foreign medical system. I carry fond memories of this experience and hope to return to Queenstown soon!

Amy