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Montes Claros, Brazil
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Pre-travel

We had 2 times of pre-departure training which was held by IFMSA member in Olomouc. We shared opinion what is important when we face different culture and medical condition. I required submitting my Vaccination Card, Student record, insurance, CV and 4 motivation letters to my respective departments of choice. I contacted with my contact person who was organizing my training plan in Brazil by WhatsApp. We also have Facebook group and we could share common question or make weekend plan with another incoming people. I also contacted with my supervisor for training before starting of my training.

Arrival

I shared about my flight information with my contact person so we can meet at airport. After meeting, she took me to accommodation.

Accommodation

For first 4 days, I stayed at apartment which is one of medical student's. I had one bed room and bathroom, and we shared kitchen and living room with another medical students who are studying in Montes Claros. Then I moved to host family's house. There are 3 people; medical student, her child and her grandmother. I have own bed room and bathroom. It locates near to downtown so it's easy to go clinic and hospital where I did practical training.

City

Montes Claros is not small but not too large city. National park is located beside city.

In downtown, I found many clinics and laboratories for blood test, radiological one and so on. Patient who lives surrounding town/village come to Montes Claros to see doctor.

Also, there are many Asai shops where we can have Asai ice cream.

On the street, especially beside clinics or hospital, some people sale coconut water and soup for patients who are waiting to see doctor.

Local people recommend me that I shouldn't go outside during night. It's safe city compared with huge city such as Sao Paulo, but still not completely safe.

Food/Meals

In Brazil, normally they have small meal at morning and night. They have large meal at noon with family, so I always went back to home for taking lunch.

As it's South America, there are many tropical fruits. In my host family's house, they drink fresh fruit juice. At restraint, juice always means "fresh juice", not artificial one which is like I take in Olomouc.

For cerebation, there are chicken pies, barbecue, and brigadeiro. Brigadeiro is a traditional Brazilian dessert. It is made of condensed milk, cocoa powder, butter, and chocolate sprinkles covering the outside layer.

Internship

I worked at neurosurgery department for 3 weeks and radiology department for 1 week. For neurosurgery, my internship was in 2 polyclinics and hospital. My supervisor was Dr. Marcelo who is a neurologist/neurosurgeon. He is doing neurosurgery especially spinal cord and peripheral parts of body. At polyclinic, I was sitting next to him and seeing out coming patient. In Montes Claros, only few people can speak English therefore their conversation is Portuguese. He always translated for me about what they were talking. At hospital, I saw patient who will have or had surgery and observe surgery. His English is middle level so sometime we had trouble to communicate especially when I ask some complicated question.

For radiology, I observed ultrasound, procedure under control of US, mammography, X-ray, salpingography and pyeloureterography.

At hospital and radiology laboratory, I worked with student from local medical university. Some of them can speak English, so we shared some cultural differences.

Weekend

There were social program called "Beach project". Contents of this program is visiting another city with local people and another exchange student. However, I didn't join in it. Instead of it, I normally spent time with my host family. For example. I went to school event of host brother, watching traditional dance and listening traditional music. I also went to park, and 50th years of weeding cerebrating party of host family's relatives.

Summary

I'm really satisfied with my training even though I couldn't do any procedure by myself. It's because I saw patient with disease which is not familiar with Czech Republic and Japan. Also, I had opportunity to know some medical condition and some cultural differences so I can compare with them to Czech and Japanese one. During my staying in Brazil, I had trouble; skimming. If someone who wants to go safety country, I can't recommend training in Brazil.

My supervisor and host family were great and I had very good time with them.