Global Health Elective

ChengDu Site

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Program Schedule

- 4 week program
  - Week 1: Observership based on personal preference
  - Week 2-4: Summer Program designed by West China Hospital
  - Week 4: Observership based on personal preference
West China Hospital

- Large tertiary care centre located in Central China, affiliated with Sichuan University
- Consistently ranked 2nd among Chinese hospitals
- Located in ChengDu, China (the Chinese ‘Food Capital’)
- Founded in 1914 by Christian missionary
- Approximately 4300 inpatient beds available
Reflections - Tommy

- My experience at West China Hospital has broadened my perspective in how medicine is done in a different cultural background. The experience is fun and exciting, I met many new friends and mentors while I was there.

- Prepare yourself for the unexpected, anything can happen on a trip. Remember to immerse yourself in the new culture and customs instead of passing judgments based on personal bias.
Reflections - Andrew

- West China Hospital has been a really interesting experience for me.

- What helped me the most was keeping an open mind, Chengdu has some really amazing people and food culture, but it does take time to get used to, and having a support group (i.e. other Schulich students) really helped.

- Even if you traveled to China in the past to large coastal metropolises like Beijing and Shanghai, Chengdu is located quite inland and the has a much more preserved culture. Things will be very different and I encourage you all to travel during your spare time, as this is the closest to the ‘real’ China as you can get 😊
Reflections - Alex

“Bù chī là” (不吃辣) … “Do not eat spicy” is the most important thing I learned to survive in Chengdu. Chengdu has the spiciest food I have ever tasted and the tastiest by far!

At times it was quite a challenge being a foreigner in China. Not only did I get a lot of attention for looking different, but communicating in restaurants, stores, and in the hospital was difficult for a non-Mandarin speaker.

My Schulich and HuaXi medical colleagues helped me to manage the language barrier and made my time in China the most interesting and exciting opportunity to learn about medicine and culture in China.
Reflections - Ahmed (Peking Duck) Mahdi

- The double culture shock - One of the many lessons that I learned while on this experience is the fact that our commonalities far outnumber our differences, this I found to be true inside and outside our medical experiences.

- The hospitality - The students, physicians, and university staff were incredibly friendly, accommodating and welcoming.

- Learning from each other - the more we cooperate, share, and learn from each other the better of we will be. We learned a great deal about the health care system in China and also had the opportunity to give a lecture about life and the health care system in Canada. I think we made some connections and friendships that will last for years to come.
What have we learned:

- The massive volume of patients in China
- Differences in how informed consent is obtained
- The disparity of the doctor-patient relationship
- The operations that go on in the hospital and how financial issues are handled
- China’s cultural difference and its food culture
Tips for your Trip

- Have someone that speaks Mandarin in your group, while not required, is a huge asset for life outside the hospital.
- Choose surgical observerships, the mentors are usually better in English in surgical departments, and you get free food daily.
- Get a phone with internet connection at the airport (things can get a bit messy if you don’t!)
- Be open and immerse yourself in the culture.
The Many Faces of Chengdu
The Many Faces of Chengdu (Cont’d)