



SPLIT ELECTIVE

Kenyatta National Hospital – Nairobi
Royal Brompton Hospital – London

Matko Marlais



Why do a split elective?

- Personal reasons
- Financial reasons
- Work commitments
- Partner in UK



What is the point of an elective?

- To experience areas of medicine not yet seen during your time at medical school
- To do extra research
- To gain clinical experience
- To help guide future career choices

Royal Brompton Hospital



Paediatric Respiratory Medicine

- Clinics, ward rounds, laboratory diagnostic work, academic meetings.
- Also managed to do some paediatric cardiology and see some interventional cardiology.



What I gained from RBH...

- It provided me with a contrast to Kenya.
- A useful insight into what my future career as an academic paediatrician may hold.
- Many general paediatric trainees may not get the chance to work in a tertiary paediatric respiratory unit.

The Contrast!



NAIROBI, KENYA



Kenyatta National Hospital



Paediatric Emergency Department

- Worked in Paediatric ED 8am–6pm, Mon-Fri.
- Paediatric ED staffed by 1 SpR (most of the time) and 4-6 nurses.
- SpR only sees the sickest children.
- 1 resuscitation room for seriously ill children, 2-6 families in the room at any one time.

The Paeds Resuscitation Room



What can you learn at KNH?

- **Clinical experience** – the ability to recognise a sick child.
- **Confidence** – children come in moribund, need to start resuscitation and initiate treatment if doctor isn't present.
- **CPR** – I had to perform CPR on 6 children (4 survived).
- **Exposure to practical procedures**
 - cannulated >50 children aged from 3 days to 12 years.
 - Performed >10 lumbar punctures.



Not just practical things...

- You learn to deal with children dying on a personal level.
- You would be expected to break bad news to parents/relatives.
- You get to experience first hand the importance of communication skills.
- You are made aware of the ethical dilemmas when working in resource-poor environments.

My advice

- I believe you can gain a lot from a split elective.
- 4 weeks in a developing country will still give you a lot of exposure, especially if you don't spend all of your time travelling!
- Download the BMA “ethics and medical electives toolkit”.

At the weekend...

