

## **Medical Student Report – Swansea NHS Trust – April 2005**

### **1. Introduction**

This report was produced from e-mails received from medical students who have been on placement at the Swansea NHS Trust during the current academic year.

At the meeting in March 2004 an oral student report was given. The minutes note reported problems with the accommodation and with transport for students within the trust. The accommodation was also recorded as “variable” in the minutes of the May 2003 meeting.

### **2. Morriston Hospital**

#### **2.1 Academic**

*General* – Students reported that they received plenty of teaching - if it was cancelled the students were told in advance. Some students found that it could be difficult to find time to review patients or use the well-equipped clinical skills lab due to the amount of teaching. Students found ward staff to be friendly and they were welcomed by their teams on first day.

*CVR* – Students reported that they received a great deal of teaching, as both structured sessions and informal bedside teaching. Students enjoyed the consultant and registrar led bedside teaching and felt that the style of teaching was of great benefit. All the doctors were friendly and willing to teach, students were made to feel part of the team. Seminar sessions in which students presented a topic to the rest of the group were also praised. Students found that the teaching covered majority of syllabus, where sessions were cancelled they were quickly rearranged. Students said that they learnt a lot and enjoyed every minute of the placement. Students found the placement to be a positive learning experience.

*SRP* – Students received lots of teaching and the radiology teaching was reported as superb. The pathology sessions were useful, as was the time spent in A&E. The students found the mock exam at end of block and the ALERT course to be useful and the addition of these to the placement was appreciated.

#### **2.2 Facilities**

*Computers* – Students were able to access computers both at Morriston and via Swansea University. One student reported minor problems of compatibility of USB storage devices for the preparation of PowerPoint presentations.

*Common Room* – Students found the facilities to be good, they appreciated the pool table and TV for when they had a time free. Students were able to leave their bags in the room, as the swipe card access made the room secure.

*Library* – Students said that the library was small, but it had all of the main books including heart sound CDs. Students were able to get books on interlibrary loan, however they found electronic journal access to be limited. The staff were praised, students said that they were very friendly and helpful.

*Transport* – Students found parking on site was fine if they were on call or at in at weekends. The minibus between Singleton and Morriston hospitals was praised. However the timings were not

suitable for students on some blocks, meaning that they had to organise their own transport between sites.

## **2.3 Overall**

Students really enjoyed their placements at Morriston. The teaching was praised highly in all feedback received. Students found the undergraduate and clinical staff to be accessible as well as student-friendly. They found the hospital to be a pleasant working environment; many said that they would apply for jobs there in the future.

## **3. Singleton Hospital**

### **3.1 Academic**

*General* – Students found the placements to be well organised, with plenty of teaching. Students found that staff were willing to teach. All students were given a teaching timetable, when sessions had to be cancelled the students were contacted in advance. All comments received about the teaching at Singleton were positive.

*Paediatrics* – Students found this placement to be well organised and well structured with a week in each area of the speciality. There was a formal teaching session every day, which was usually delivered by a consultant. Students felt that they had been taught all that was expected of them, extra sessions were arranged on areas that students were less confident on. Sometimes the timing of the teaching meant that by the time the session was finished, most of the children were in the play room or asleep. One student commented that a week in SCBU was a bit too long for their level of knowledge. Students reported that the Consultant in charge of the placement was very friendly, and frequently checked that the students were happy.

*MOSS* – Students said that this block was hard work, but enjoyable. One afternoon a week was allocated for consultant teaching, this was appreciated by students. There was a good mix of clinical and theory, which enabled students to develop clinical skills in different areas. Staff advised students on appropriate reading, which helped students to cover large volume of work.

*Obstetrics and Gynaecology* – Students enjoyed the teaching sessions, in some they had to give a short presentation on tutorial topic. Unfortunately some of these topics were repetition of topics covered in the lecture week; as such they were not as beneficial to the students. Lunchtime teaching sessions were good as they didn't tend to clash with consultant led sessions. Students found the midwives to be really friendly and gained valuable knowledge from their teaching sessions. Midwives also helped to ensure that all students were able to watch births.

*GP* – Students appreciated the group teaching session that was held once a week, this stopped students from getting lonely on their individual placements. This session was really appreciated by students, one of whom found that he enjoyed the placement far more than he thought he would.

*SRP* – Students reported that the teaching was good, it included surgery, radiology, orthopaedics and trauma and anaesthetics. The quality of teaching was high - staff were well motivated to teach students. Students suggested that when a teaching session has to be cancelled as a consultant was not available perhaps a SHO could take the session instead.

### **3.2 Facilities**

*Library* – Students commented that the library was well stocked and the staff were very helpful. The library was available to the students out of hours, which was appreciated. Students also benefited from the space for group work and to watch videos. Some students found the journal collection a little limited for MOSS.

*Computers* – Students were happy with IT provision, although the internet access via the library tended to be a little slow. Some students had difficulties in getting a password to use the computers, but the effort was worth it.

*Common room* – The common room at the Clinical School was highly rated by those students that got time to use it. Students commented that it was luxurious, clean and modern and they appreciated the availability of vending machines and magazines.

*Transport* – Students parked their cars in a number of places, so a number of different comments were received. Some students who parked in the hospital staff car park had a concern over night time security, there were also a couple of concerns as it was some distance from the accommodation. Students had slight problems with parking at the University site, as cars had to be off the campus early.

*Clinical school staff* – Many students commented on how helpful the undergraduate staff were. Students found them to be organised and very helpful they always knew what was going on and where students were supposed to be. One student commented that the staff were one of the best parts of the placement.

### **3.3 Overall**

Students really enjoyed their placements at Singleton, with many saying that they would consider jobs there in the future. There was a friendly atmosphere at the hospital, with staff that were always willing to teach, as well as friendly staff in the Undergraduate Office. Students said that they didn't feel in the way and were valued. One student said that their placement was "probably one of the best attachments I've had" while another commented "I think that students would be missing out if they didn't get at least one placement here".

## **4. Cefn Coed - Psychiatry**

Only a small amount of feedback was received about this block. Students said that the teaching was excellent, the block was well organised and included some exam preparation. Students found the overall standard was very high. Although the library was small, it was adequate for students on block.

## **5. Living in Swansea**

*Food* – Students appreciated that breakfast and lunch was provided for them. Many commented that the breakfast was excellent and was appreciated. However the £1.65 lunch vouchers left the students with very limited choice unless they wanted the set meal. A few students commented that they would prefer an evening meal voucher for halls and take sandwiches to the hospital.

*Accommodation* – almost every report featured negative feedback about the accommodation available. The complaints focussed on two main areas, the first being noise, the second being

kitchens. As mentioned above, accommodation has been raised as an area of concern at the previous two teaching reviews. This is the one area that lets down otherwise first rate clinical placements.

*Noise* – Almost every student commented that they had to get out of bed for a fire alarm at least once during their time at Swansea. Students that were in Swansea early in the academic year complained that there were at least two alarms a week. In addition some students claimed that they were able to sing along to the music in the Students' Union bar, due to the proximity of the hall. One unfortunate student claimed that he did not get an uninterrupted night's sleep during his entire placement. Students found it frustrating that in their fourth or greater year at university they were being thrown back into halls with first years, with the obvious differences in maturity and behaviour.

*Kitchens* – although students appreciated that they were provided with breakfast and lunch free of charge, almost all of them complained about the lack of cooking facilities in the halls. The most common complaint was the lack of an oven. Students in their fourth year or greater at university are used to their own routine, which generally includes catering for themselves. Although medical students are renowned for not turning down free food, the lack of facilities to produce a decent meal for themselves was frustrating.

Students also reported problems with lifts in some blocks - a walk to the 9<sup>th</sup> floor was not helpful, especially when they were trying to move in. Some students reported problems with the cleaners, who sometimes entered rooms whilst students were sleeping having been on call, or just getting changed. A couple of students reported problems with the cleanliness of the rooms on arrival. Students with shared bathroom facilities found that they were left dirty and at times were very unpleasant.

Students that were placed in a new accommodation block found that it was very pleasant, with ensuite rooms and adequate communal space to cook. Many students also commented on the University gym and pool; they enjoyed its availability and proximity to the placement.

The cumulative effect of these concerns raised by students significantly detracts from the excellent student experience at Swansea NHS Trust, and students hope that these concerns will be addressed as a matter of priority.

## **5. Overall**

With the exception of the accommodation problems, and sometimes in spite of those problems, students enjoyed their placements at this trust. Students were made to feel welcome in the hospitals, they were given high quality teaching by enthusiastic and willing staff, and they all gained from this experience. A number of students said that they will now apply for jobs within this trust.

This is now the third consecutive year where concerns about the accommodation for students on placement at the Trust have been highlighted. Action is needed now to address this issue.

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**Cardiff University Students' Union**

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