

Erasmus+ report:

Andreas Albrecht July 2022 – April 2023 (Germany):

For the Erasmus+ internship, I went from Budapest to several hospitals in Germany with a medical internship. The whole traineeship lasted several months, during which I lived and worked in Germany. My first stay was in Bruchsal. I worked at the Fürst Stirum hospital.

Fürst Stirum Klinik (Bruchsal, Germany):

General:

Bruchsal is a small town in southern Germany with a population of around 44,000. I lived in a dorm for nurses and other hospital staff. I had my own room with a shared kitchen and bathroom. Sometimes we had communal evenings with other hospital staff where we cooked together and generally had a nice evening, but Bruchsal also offered some other evening entertainment with a small bar district and a cinema. I met some nice people who I'm still in touch with after my Erasmus.

Department of general and visceral surgery, department of traumatology, hand- and orthopaedic surgery, department of vascular surgery:

My first placement was in the Surgical Department, where I assisted the various surgical specialties with ward and operations. The staff and chiefs were all very nice and helpful and after a short period of learning the ropes of being a surgeon, I was allowed to be the first or second assistant in the different operations in Trauma, General or Vascular Surgery. One of the biggest operations I was involved in was a hemicolectomy, which lasted several hours and left me quite exhausted, but still glad to have been able to assist and learn.

Department of gastroenterology, haematology, pneumology, general medicine, infectious disease and intensive care medicine:

My second stop was at the Department of Internal Medicine, which was also the career I wanted to pursue after graduating from Semmelweis University. I knew the routine from a previous internship, so we immediately started working together to keep the patients healthy and happy. Although there was a lot of work to do and I often stayed late on the ward to observe interesting procedures or to help the resident doctors, I wouldn't miss the time there. During my stay in the internal medicine department I was also allowed to work in the emergency ambulance for 2 weeks, where I learnt a lot about treating patients in critical situations.

Department of anaesthesiology, intensive therapy, emergency medicine and pain therapy:

After my time in internal medicine, I moved to the Department of Anaesthesia, Intensive Care and Emergency Medicine. It was my elective because I wanted to learn more about treating patients in critical situations. After 2 weeks in Anaesthesia, where I learnt how to treat patients before, during and after their operations, I went to the Intensive Care Unit. There I was under the supervision of a very enthusiastic doctor who wanted me to learn as much as possible during my 4 weeks there. He showed me a lot and taught me even more, which I'm very grateful for.

Summary:

The Fürst Stirum Hospital gave me a lot of opportunities to learn and experience what it's like to work as a doctor. I also met a lot of very nice people who I am still in contact with after the Erasmus placement. I can recommend the hospital to others who want to do a traineeship in the future.

Klinikum Bremerhaven Reinkenheide gGmbH (Bremerhaven, Germany):

In general:

My second stay was at the largest hospital in Bremerhaven. A town with about 113,000 inhabitants and much more to see than the smaller Bruchsal. I lived in the hospital dormitory with other trainees my age from German universities.

Department of paediatrics:

I started in paediatrics just after New Year's Eve and my internship was filled with working with children of all ages. My first stop was the neonatal intensive care unit, where I learned how to treat newborn babies who were either very sick or just premature. Although there wasn't much to do for me, I learnt a lot. After that, I stayed in the ambulance for several weeks, working with some young doctors on the initial care of young children who needed medical attention. It was mostly looking after their parents, as most of the children we received were quite healthy and didn't need us. 😊

Department of gynecology and obstetrics:

Immediately after learning how to treat children, I was put in the delivery room to work with the doctors and midwives. They were all very keen to teach me and I was able to assist in several natural and surgical births, which were very happy occasions for everyone involved. For the next 3 weeks I have been assisting the doctors with gynaecological surgeries.

Department of psychiatry, psychotherapy and psychosomatics:

The psychiatric placement was much less stressful than I had imagined. I had already had some experience with patients on a psychiatric ward during my training a few years earlier and I was a bit worried about this placement. But I was made to feel welcome and there was always someone from the doctors or nurses on hand to help if there was ever a problem. I met some of the nicest people there and although they were sometimes a bit grumpy, I had a very enjoyable placement. I was tempted to become a psychiatrist after that, but in the end I stayed true to internal medicine.

Department of neurology:

Neurology was my last and one of my shorter placements. I only stayed for 2 weeks and the doctors really tried to show me as much as possible. So I changed wards every 2 days. I learnt a lot about the hospital and the patients there and although everyone was very busy, the atmosphere was quite cheerful.

Summary:

My stay in Bremerhaven was shorter than in Bruchsal, but no less eventful. I had heard rumours that the northern Germans were prudish and generally not very happy. But I met some of the warmest people of my life there. Although the winter climate wasn't for me, I'm thinking of visiting some of the friends I made there in the summer.