

Virtual Work Experience: Acute Receiving Unit

Due to the pandemic, gaining work experience in a medical setting is not possible. As an alternative these videos have been made to allow you to gain some insight into what working as a doctor can be like. Alongside watching these videos, we think it would be a valuable exercise to work through this companion document as a guide.

While watching the video, **pause** when you reach a **BOLD BLUE TIMESTAMP**. These are prompts for you to **reflect on** what you're watching as well as your own experience. There are some links to websites, (which you can refer to once you've finished watching the video) to help you think about some of the questions. You might find it useful to make a note of some of your ideas for future reference- such as to be able to talk about in a personal statement or interview.

If you have any questions about what you've seen or read, please do get in touch with us at advice@youcanbeadoctor.co.uk.

Dr Nat Quail and Dr Thalia Massa are **Foundation Year** (FY) doctors working in the **Acute Receiving Unit (ARU)**. An FY doctor is a newly qualified doctor 1 or 2 years out of medical school. They take care of day-to-day jobs such as performing blood tests, taking notes and prescribing drugs or fluids. Most of the bigger decisions they make (such as deciding on a management plan for a patient) are checked over by a more senior doctor.

0:32

Nat and Thalia are working for 7 days in a row, working 12 hour shifts for 5 out of these days.

- How do you think it feels to do such **long hours**?
- How do you think you could maintain good physical and mental wellbeing when working such long shifts? How do you stay alert and happy during a long day at school or work?

1:38

Thalia mentions here that she is on the “**arrest team**”. They look after people who become seriously ill whilst in the hospital. She says the main job of the FY1 is to put a **cannula** into the veins to deliver medicines or fluids.

- Watch this video to find out more about how a cannula is inserted:
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vE99rZ7JT3Q>

6:44

Nat shows us the “**clerk-in**” sheet used in this hospital. This is filled out whenever a new patient comes in.

- Why do you think it is important that everything is carefully documented during somebody’s stay in hospital?
- Can you think of some communication tips which can help doctors get a good **history** from a patient? Watch this video about taking a patient history for ideas: <https://youtu.be/4wfjSfoHwI4>

7:13

Nat says that he supervised Thalia carrying out a **lumbar puncture**.

- One of the roles of a doctor is a **teacher** to others (eg, medical students, junior colleagues). What qualities do you think make somebody a good teacher?
- Can you think of a time you had to take on a teaching role? Which parts were you good at? What didn’t go so well?

8:40

Nat says that Thalia “**gained consent**” from the patient before she did the lumbar puncture.

- What kind of things do you think it would be important for patients to know about a procedure before they decide whether to have it?
- Watch this video by the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g_LEAp7_isU
- Compare the two examples of a doctor gaining consent from a patient for surgery. What made the second example better?
- Why is it important that patients are **informed** about their medical treatment?

10:18

Nat says that a patient was given “**oral**” medication, which means it was taken by mouth, usually as a tablet or a liquid.

- Can you think of any other ways of taking medicines?