

My time in Mount Isa:

I would just like to thank the Rotary Club at Toowong for making this placement possible for me. It was a humbling experience that I have learned a lot from professionally and personally.

During my time in Mount Isa, I was allocated a surgical placement on the surgical ward. I was upfront about me having applied for my New Graduate year within Northwest Health with clinical preference of Emergency Care. The hospital were able to facilitate two weeks of the six week placement in Emergency. The surgical and emergency team were incredible. Everyone at the hospital were super accommodating to having students and want us to succeed. I was encouraged to come back to work in Mount Isa and hopefully one day will get another opportunity.

Six weeks is a long way from home, I find myself a bit of an introvert so it gave me a chance to challenge my social side. Between the other students and the staff at the hospital, the six weeks didn't feel like a long time. In the fourth week, I was informed of an unexpected family death in the US and it turned in to an even more challenging time. There were students who helped me through this but the hospital were able to provide me support that I did not expect.

In the first four weeks, I was on the surgical ward. I was able to take a patient load almost straight away and everyone was happy to give me opportunities to learn. I attended in-services ranging from scope of practice, wound care, ward improvement meetings and nursing care standards. There were a range of different conditions from diabetic amputations, domestic violence and other assaults, surgical debridement's, patients awaiting nursing home placements, ectopic pregnancies and vehicle accidents. I was able to witness great teamwork and a sense of community. I was able to concrete my medication knowledge and increase confidence in the use of different medication pumps and programs.

In my final two weeks, I was in the emergency department, I feel I wasn't the best student I could have been given the death. But I persevered and set goals with my preceptors, I didn't tell people about the family death when I arrived because I thought I was okay but from self-reflection I was able to realise I needed to reach out and work with my team to build strength and make the most out of my placement. I was able to reach multiple goals and receive great feedback by the end of the two weeks. In ED, I saw a range of chronic health issues, mental illness, assaults, elderly falls, rheumatic heart disease repercussions and resuscitation. I felt that I learned so much in a short period. I am very thankful that they could fit me in and have let them know how much I appreciate it.

I have told many people about the opportunity I have had in visiting Mount Isa, making sure to mention who has sponsored me. I believe that in this short while, I have, and will continue, to encourage other students and fellow nurses that there are opportunities outside of metropolitan areas. I have come out of my last placement feeling motivated and prepared for my nursing future, I actually hope to visit Mount Isa again to work one day!

If there is anything else I can help with or if I can encourage other students next year, I would be honoured.

Thanks!

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