

Louise Harrison - Adult Nursing student-Sheffield Hallam University.

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I have now been introduced to the Indian health care system, health promotion and government initiatives through my exposure in community nursing. I witnessed how culture, religion and tradition can play such roles in the lives of people. Jay Raj was our guide to community health care; never did he tire of my endless questions. He shared his knowledge with such persistence as I gained an understanding of India's public health. We travelled with Jay Raj and the student nurses into the rural villages, visiting people's homes, schools, immunisation and antenatal clinics, primary care centres and the Trust's two Day Care Centres for Severely Disabled Children. Jay Raj explained government initiatives - I witnessed what the government provide and where there were gaps in what they provide for their people.

Ramana Maharishi Rangammal Hospital

To begin the day at the hospital I was invited to participate in yoga with the local villagers. My time at the hospital focussed on the medical and surgical wards with the charge nurse of each ward explaining each patient's health care condition and plan of treatment. I spent an afternoon on the dialysis unit and the diabetic clinic. I was shown around the theatre, Intensive care, pharmacy and the pathology lab. Each member of staff took the time to explain and teach us about all aspects the care they were delivering. The Deputy Director Mr N. Vijayan made us comfortable in his office (with tea) and explained to us the past and present Indian health care issues.

Florence Nightingale School of Nursing

Living the daily lives of the student nurses for two weeks was inspiring. The girls at the school were a blessing to have met; they were so welcoming and friendly. Such beautiful, gracious girls who are dedicated and hardworking in their studies. Attending lessons for all three years and teaching the student nurses was a privilege I shall always remember. I have already been in touch with one student via email and aim to maintain contact with the nursing students.

Leisure

We watched the boys play cricket every evening at 6 o'clock, played badminton with the school girls, learned to sign and observed the teachers making a remarkable difference to the lives of the children. I felt blessed to be there. The caring housekeepers at the nursing school, our days in neighbouring states and singing with the student nurses on route back from Vellore and visiting Pondicherry were all memorable. Touring the temples, the Golden Temple, learning to speak Tamil language with the student nurses, dancing all evening all

watching Tamil movies on a Sunday and so much more provided an unforgettable experience that I feel privileged to have gained.