

# Ecuador: A Travel through Health Care

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## Background

- Capital- Quito
- Population estimate in 2011- 15,223,680
- GDP (PPP) 2011 estimate- \$127.426 billion
- Health Expenditure of GDP (2010)- 8.1%
- Language- Spanish
- Life expectancy m/f- 73/78
- Child Mortality (per 1000)- 23



RWJMS students visited La Mitad del Mundo on June 14, 2012 located a few miles from Quito, Ecuador.

## Andean Global Studies

- Offers Spanish tutoring for a variety of levels, different times of the day, the choice of private or group sessions and many instructors.
- Clinical rotations are offered in the mornings at the private military hospital in different fields like pediatrics, neonatology, cardiology, radiology and many more.
- Offers tours of different sites in the city and surrounding areas.

## Goals, Plans and Reasons for Traveling

- Two main goals for this trip, one for my future career and another for my personal life.
- Wanted to improve my Spanish language speaking, reading, and writing abilities while continuing to learn grammar.
- In my professional career, I want to work with a variety of patients and know I have the capacity to communicate effectively with them.
- My personal reason for this trip was to reconnect with my family. My parents were both born and raised in Ecuador.
- Wanted to visit family that I had not seen in years, inspire the young ones to continue their education and remember why I wanted to become a physician.
- My overall goal of this trip was to improve my Spanish language skills and revisit my roots.

## Travel Stories

- The best part of this trip was the ability to travel with my close friends.
- Wanted see the country and the way it runs from their perspective in addition to my own.
- We took many trips around the city and to other cities like Baños and Ambato.
- Traveling to the coast was a trip planned entirely on our own.
- Each location has its own adventure activities and food varieties.
- I had previously visited Ecuador but, the experience with my classmates gave me a new perspective.



Enjoying a break during a day of classes at the Andean Global Studies building.

## Hospital Experience

- The hospital rotations were for two weeks and started two weeks after the start of tutoring.
- Even with an advanced understanding of the Spanish language, it was difficult to follow the conversation between the physicians and those with patients.
- Mornings started with the physicians as they discussed every patient on the pediatric floor.
- Then I followed the team as they visited every patient, performed a quick physical exam and wrote new orders for tests and medications.
- After grand rounds I would go to the emergency department (ED) and shadow the pediatric physician.
- The ED arranged patients as either immediate emergencies who would be taken straight for treatment or non emergencies.
- If they were non emergencies, the patient would be taken to an appropriate department and wait to see a physician.
- The pediatric physician would see the patient after a nurse took a history and vitals.
- A resident would help by giving the patient a physical exam while the attending physician discussed the history with the parent(s).
- Parents left the office with scripts for tests, medications or other instructions for care.
- Overall, this method of seeing patients was efficient considering the number of patients that had to be seen and the limited time available.

## Tuberculosis (TB) Case

- During grand rounds we discussed a case of a patient with a positive test for TB.
- The TB diagnosed patient was sharing a room with another patient and had visitors present without any barrier protection during the grand rounds visit.
- The physicians and other team members entered the room without any barrier protection either and continued with grand rounds as usual.

## Summary of Hospital Rotations

- Even though I only shadowed the pediatric department I learned a lot about how the medical team worked together.
- I was able to shadow a different attending physician and resident in the ED each day.
- From the medical school students I learned about the education system.

## Future Plans

- Investigating the option of a rotation abroad, specifically in Ecuador.
- Continuing to develop my Spanish language skills with the Medical Spanish program at RWJMS.
- Hoping to return to Ecuador, if not for a rotation then to at least visit family again.
- Ecuador will always be a part of my past, present, and future.

## Contact information for AGS:

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