

End of Grant Monitoring Report:

As a result of the very generous grant awarded by The Mason Trust, I was able to meet the cost of the course fees for the medical elective programmes at the Colombo South Teaching Hospital in Sri Lanka and the Department of Community Medicine at Chiang Mai University Hospital in Thailand. I am incredibly grateful that the Trustee's award allowed me this once in a lifetime opportunity to put into practice everything I had learnt during the past seven years at medical school in two very different hospital environments. I had an absolutely brilliant experience over the six weeks I spent on placement in Sri Lanka and Thailand and it really did prove to be the highlight of my time at medical school. I cannot thank the Mason Trust enough for their pivotal role in helping me to take part in this incredible educational experience.

Paediatrics Ward, Colombo South Teaching Hospital, Sri Lanka:

During my three-week placement on the paediatrics ward at Colombo South Teaching Hospital I had the opportunity to observe the identification and treatment of paediatric disease at a public hospital serving some of the city's poorest residents. Paediatrics has been one of my favourite specialties throughout medical school and it was so exciting to have the opportunity to experience the similarities and differences between children's medicine in the UK and Sri Lanka. It was really eye-opening to see the open-air conditions on the ward and the number of patient beds crammed into one room. Most patients arrived via Tuk-Tuk vehicles with several family members and many had queued outside the ward to be seen for many hours. It was so interesting to spend time with the Sri Lankan medical students who were preparing for their upcoming paediatrics clinical exam and contrast their medical school experience with my own. These students routinely take part in ward rounds in which over 30 students are gathered around a patient's bedside and I was surprised to learn that all their teaching takes place in English, with only the history-taking from the patient being in the local language of Sinhalese. It was shocking to see the vast number of Dengue Fever cases present on the ward and very interesting to learn about the identification and management of this common presentation in Sri Lanka. I also had the opportunity to take part in multi-disciplinary team meetings including a developmental delay clinic, in which it was fascinating to learn how children with special needs and developmental difficulties are cared for in Sri Lanka. It was also extremely useful to attend the Neonatal Resuscitation training with the Sri Lankan medical students and contrast their resus protocols to those we use in the UK. Whilst on placement in Colombo, I also received the wonderful news that I had passed all of my medical final exams and so would be qualifying as a doctor in June 2019 which made the placement even more memorable.

Department of Community Medicine, Chiang Mai University, Thailand:

Having completed my placement in Sri Lanka, I then spent a brilliant three weeks working with the Department of Community Medicine at Chiang Mai University in Thailand. Although I was attached to Chiang Mai University, I spent most of my time outside of Chiang Mai, travelling to remote clinics in the surrounding area. This gave me an amazing opportunity to fully immerse myself in the local communities and really understand what life was like for the patients living in these isolated areas and for the staff providing their medical care. It was particularly useful to learn about the three main options for financing healthcare for Thai patients, namely NHSO Universal Coverage (UC), the Social Security Scheme, and the Civil Servants Medical Benefits Scheme, in addition to the option of paying privately for those with the financial means. I was interested to learn that since the introduction of UC in 2003, currently only 4% of Thai patients pay more than they can afford for healthcare,

compared to 12% before this system was introduced. These figures are very encouraging, but also raise the question of what happens to those patients who are still unable to meet the costs of their healthcare, and additionally to those 1% with no health insurance, for example refugees from Myanmar with no identity cards.

- **Center of Thai Traditional and Complementary Medicine**

At the Thai Traditional and Complementary Centre, it was very interesting to learn about the difference between complementary and alternative medicine, and in particular how Thai traditional medicine is practiced alongside Western medicine, as this is not something I had experienced in the UK. It was very refreshing to see how these two healthcare systems worked in partnership and I believe this approach of offering both Western and Traditional Thai Medical treatments to patients may be really beneficial in providing a holistic healthcare experience and in reassuring those patients who may be anxious about Western medicine. I enjoyed learning about the Suandok Massage Style, which combines Chinese acupressure and Thai traditional massage, developed by the centre and the training courses and textbooks produced by the centre. I also learned about the benefits of herbal medicines and remedies from one of the Thai traditional medics through an interesting tour of the on-site herbal garden. I was particularly interested to learn about the role of soy isoflavones in reducing the vasomotor symptoms following surgical menopause. I also had the opportunity to speak to a doctor of Chinese medicine, who explained the benefits of acupuncture in the treatment of dysmenorrhoea and osteoarthritis of the knee. The TTCM centre also uses the technique of cupping as part of the Thai traditional medicine treatment and I was very impressed to learn that each patient that arrives at the centre has a full health screening from a nurse who advises whether the patient is safe to undergo treatment, as I was surprised to learn that patients' blood pressures rise significantly during massage treatments and so their blood pressure is taken routinely beforehand to ensure they are safe to undergo treatment.

- **Pa Sang Health Promoting Hospital, Lamphun**

I thoroughly enjoyed the three days spent at Pa Sang Health Promoting Hospital near Lamphun. It was really interesting to learn about the services provided by the clinic to the local community such as childhood vaccinations – which I was able to observe and contrast to our own vaccination schedule in the UK, wound dressing and provision of both Western medication and Thai traditional medicine. The centre also plays a vital role in health education for the local population, through sessions in local schools and evening classes. It was also interesting to learn about the prominent health concerns in the local population, with the 5 main health issues being: hypertension, diabetes mellitus, cancers, dengue haemorrhagic fever and gastrointestinal disease. Other than the prominence of dengue fever, these health concerns did not differ drastically from those seen in general practice clinics in the UK. I enjoyed the opportunity to learn further about Thai traditional medicine by assisting with the packaging of medication and having the opportunity to learn and practice Thai traditional massage using herbal compresses. I was also grateful for the opportunity to be involved with providing wound care to patients, as this is not something that medical students in the UK are often given the opportunity to practice, therefore having the chance to learn from the nurses how to appropriately clean and dress common wounds was invaluable. I also enjoyed the opportunity to assist in checking and dispensing Western medicines and to learn from the nursing staff about the process of medication prescription and dispensing in Thailand.

- **Nong Han Sub-District Community Health Center**

I very much enjoyed the opportunity to visit patients in their homes as part of the healthcare team at the Nong Han Sub-District Community Health Center. This provided a valuable insight into the backgrounds of the patient population and really helped to place their medical concerns within the context of the person as a whole. It was very encouraging to learn about the health center's mission to provide holistic health care as this is something I am very passionate about myself, and in particular I was very impressed by the efforts the staff at the center had made to study and learn from the local community about their health concerns, as well as other important local issues, to really ensure that the healthcare service provided was truly patient-driven and directed towards meeting their needs. This enabled the staff and the patient population to foster a shared understanding of the problems facing the local community and allowed them to work towards the shared goal of tackling these issues together. It was also very interesting to learn about the partnership between the health center and the local Buddhist monks, who work closely together in order to deliver health promotion activities and messages throughout the community. I believe this to be a very effective initiative given the strong religious beliefs of the local population and an excellent way of communicating important healthcare messages through respected channels and encouraging patients to take ownership of their health.

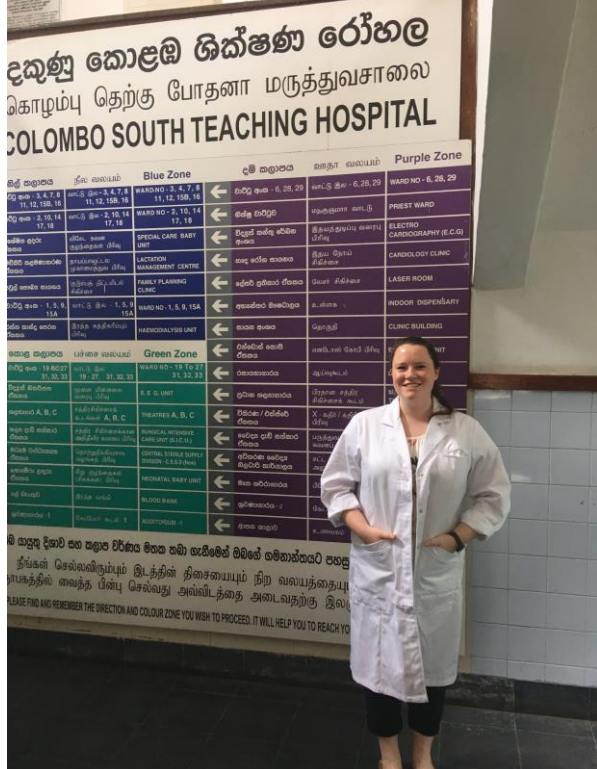
- **McKean Rehabilitation Centre**

The visit to the McKean Rehabilitation Centre provided a very important insight into the historical treatment of patients with leprosy and their isolation from their local communities due to the stigma attached to their condition. It was a real privilege to have the opportunity to meet patients with leprosy who still lived at the centre and to learn about their adaptations to their condition, such as specially designed eating utensils, and to see the beautiful handicrafts produced by these residents. It was also very interesting to learn about the Assisted Living facilities at Dok Kaew Gardens and the different levels of care the staff are able to provide. This was of particular interest due to the ageing population in the UK and it was very encouraging to see the multi-tiered age care model being used by the centre, which allows patients to progress from independent living to high care packages whilst remaining in the same place. I believe this model could be very beneficial in tackling much of the loss of independence that is associated with ageing in the UK.

- **Chiang Dao Hospital**

I very much enjoyed my three-day visit to Chiang Dao hospital and in particular the opportunity to visit an isolated mountain tribe with the healthcare team proved a real highlight. It was so interesting to observe a completely different way of life and to learn how these patients' often complex healthcare needs are met in such a remote environment. It was really encouraging to see one patient being registered for a disability card which would enable him to receive much-needed financial support of 800THB per month. However, it was also difficult to hear from one young woman who was the main carer for her brother after he developed a subdural haematoma during a motorcycle accident that his upcoming appointment with a specialist in Chiang Mai would cost her 4000THB in transport alone. Spending time in the Emergency Department in Chiang Dao was extremely interesting as I was able to observe the treatment of many severe motorcycle injuries that I would not have the opportunity to see at home, and it was very interesting to see how these were dealt with by the multi-skilled staff in the Emergency Department, in contrast to these cases being transferred straight to the surgeons in the UK. I also had the opportunity to learn further about the role of acupuncture from a doctor of family medicine and was even given an acupuncture treatment myself, which was a very new experience!

I hope you have enjoyed hearing about my wonderful six weeks of placement in Sri Lanka and Thailand. It was such a valuable educational experience and I know the memories of what I saw in both Colombo and Thailand will stay with me throughout my medical career. In particular, the placement in community medicine in Chiang Mai further solidified my desire to become a GP in the future and demonstrated how having healthcare professionals who have a real drive to understand the whole person and not just their illness can make a real difference to patients, wherever they are in the world. Thank you once again for your incredibly generous donation which allowed me to make this amazing experience a reality.

Photo	Description
	<p>On placement at the busy inner city Colombo South Teaching Hospital in Sri Lanka</p>



On the paediatrics ward at Colombo South Teaching Hospital in Sri Lanka



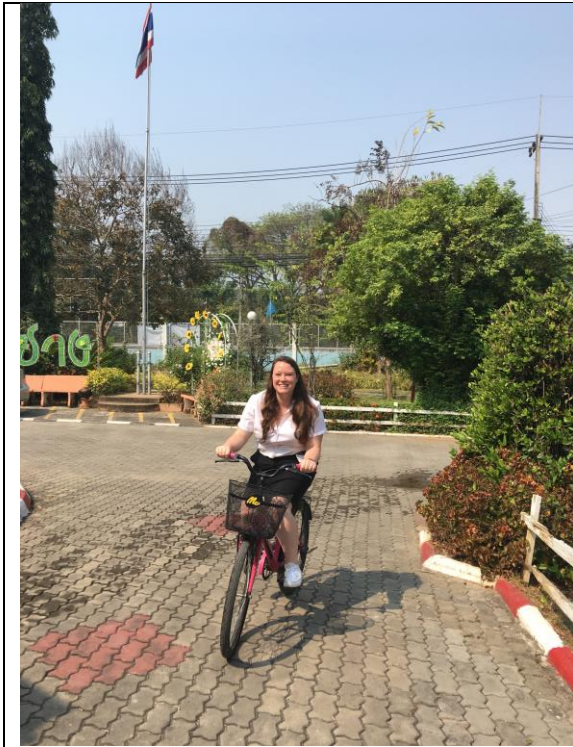
Signs directing patients in the corridors of Chiang Mai University Hospital, Thailand



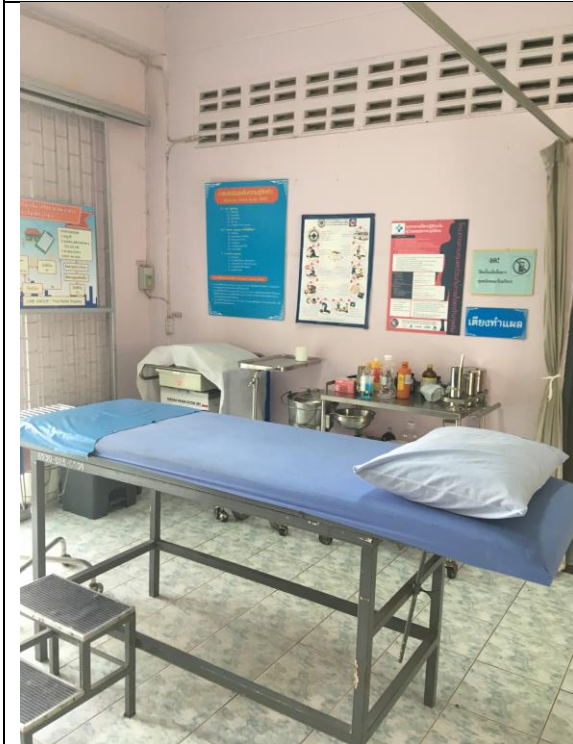
Wearing the local medical students uniform at the Department of Community Medicine, Chiang Mai University Hospital, Thailand



A homemade dosette box created for a patient with dementia at the Pa Sang Health Promoting Clinic, Lamphun, Thailand



Riding the bicycle used by the staff at the remote clinic to get around, Pa Sang, Thailand



The patient treatment room at the Pa Sang Health Promoting Clinic, Lamphun, Thailand



Learning Thai traditional massage techniques using a herbal compress at the Pa Sang Health Promoting Clinic, Lamphun, Thailand



With the medical staff at the Pa Sang Health Promoting Centre, Lamphun, Thailand



Being shown around the local Buddhist temple by a member of the medical team from the clinic, Lamphun, Thailand



Treating a patient's wound at the Pa Sang Health Promoting Clinic, Lamphun, Thailand
Photo taken with patient's permission



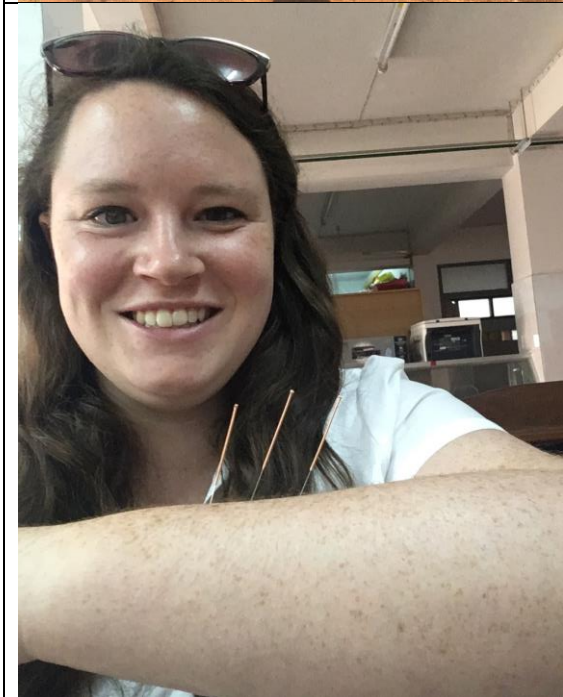
Visiting patients in a remote hilltop village near the border with Myanmar as part of the medical team, Chiang Dao District, Thailand



Visiting patients in a remote hilltop village near the border with Myanmar as part of the medical team, Chiang Dao District, Thailand. These patients live over 2 hour's drive from the nearest hospital, and 4 hours from the nearest city.



At the mountain clinic serving the isolated hill tribe population 4 hour's drive from the nearest city, Chiang Dao District, Thailand



Hands-on acupuncture teaching at the Chiang Dao District Hospital, Thailand



Having successfully completed my 3 week placement at the Department of Community Medicine, Chiang Mai University Hospital, Thailand