

# CFHI – IE3 internship

Darell K  
University of Washington

# Introduction to Traditional Medicine, India

- Summer 2007 (10 weeks)
- Location: Northern India.  
State - Uttarakhand.



# Preparation for international experience in India

- IE3 orientation – teleconference with regional directors
- Alumni – past experiences
- CFHI on-line orientation
- Other: Immunizations
- Personal: grew up in Fiji, speak Hindi
- On-site orientation in host country

# The internship

- Provides the opportunity to learn about the traditional and indigenous medical practices in India – Ayurveda, Naturopathy, Homeopathy, and Reiki.
- Observe healthcare services from a primary care clinic in a rural village to the tertiary care hospital run by the state government (allopathic medicine).
- Variety of rotations between the four sites: Than Gaon, Rishikesh, and Dehra Dun.

# Than Gaon

- Rural village outside Dehra Dun
- Shadow Dr. Paul, hike and set up health camps in surrounding villages, medicinal plant identification ( 5 to 6 hours of clinic a day)
- Patients from Than Gaon and surrounding villages – there are 25 villages, but only one clinic
- At the end of the week, children have a weekly health and hygiene check-up
- In addition, daily yoga and relaxation exercises





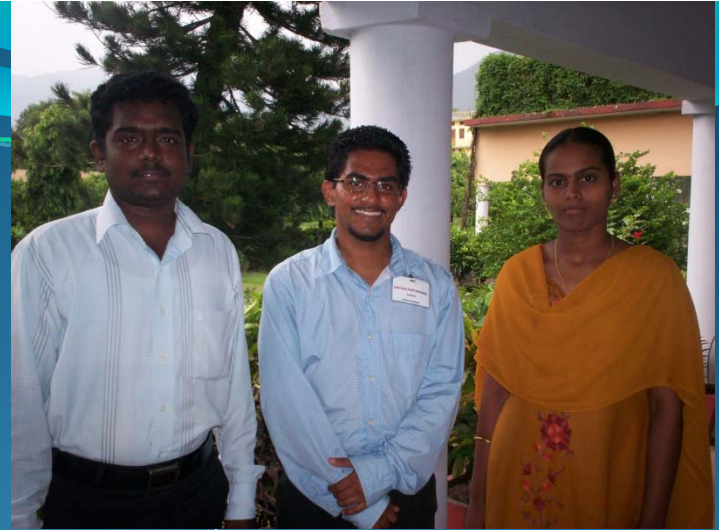
Than Gaon



Than Gaon

# Rishikesh

- a popular Hindu pilgrimage town next to the Ganga (Ganges River)
- Learn naturopathy: lectures with Dr. Prakash  
- also observe in-clinic treatments and discuss patient history
- Lectures on Yoga
- Daily yoga and relaxation exercises





# Relaxation session



# Dehra Dun

- Capital of Uttarakhand
- Shadow physicians at various clinics:
  - Dr. Gandhi (emergency medicine – City Heart and Medical Centre)
  - Dr. Goshi (cardiologist – Doon Hospital)
  - Dr. Vaish (pediatrician – Vaish Nursing Home)
  - Dr. Gera (OB/GYN – Gera Nursing Home)
  - Dr. Nanda (Homeopathic Physician)
  - Dr. Nath (Ayurvedic Physician)



# Dehra Dun

- 4 to 6 hours of clinic per day
- Observe various types of patients and the different types of treatment
- Lectures with Dr. Nath (Ayurveda and Reiki), Dr. Nanda (Homeopathy)
- Clinical ward rounds (Dr. Vaish, Dr. Gera, Dr. Gandhi, Dr. Goshi)
- Observe surgery and ultrasounds (Dr. Gera, Dr. Vaish)



# Dehra Dun

- Learn some clinical skills – blood pressure reading, chest examination (appreciate whizzing and cracklings), recognizing abnormalities in chest X-rays and EKGs, signs of anemia (pale colored nails and lining inside the eye)



# Internship vs Study Abroad

Study abroad: in-class setting (on a campus), large number of students, majority of time spent on lectures and reading text, taking exams : )

Internship: work setting (in clinic), job-shadowing experience (physician), learn practical skills (eg. reading bp), encounter real-life situations (eg. emergency medical cases)

# In retrospect

- Learn and see the different traditional medical practices, as well as the different allopathic specialties
- Compare access to healthcare in a rural vs urban setting in India
- Exposure to the type of payment for medical services: out-of-pocket, health insurance (?)
- Exposure to the types of diseases in Uttaranchal, India

# Accommodation

- Than Gaon : simple cottages, shared bathrooms & latrines
- Rishikesh: guestrooms
- Dehra Dun: home-stay families
- Diet: Indian vegetarian cuisine



Personally: I found the home-stay families were terrific.  
The food was great, not forgetting the chai : )

# Cross-cultural experience & culture shock

- Less walk-in grocery stores like Safeway
- Mode of transportation: vikrams and rickshaws
- Driving: right-hand rule, and a bit chaotic!
- Mode of dressing: modern and traditional (kurta-pyjama, sari, salwar suite)





# Cross-cultural experience & culture shock

- Kumar's restaurant take-away story !
- Buying a train ticket – don't always expect queues
- You can bargain for lower prices
- The honking in traffic
- See cows more often, even in Dehra Dun.
- Having someone ask me what 'caste' I belong to.

# Challenges

- Being mistaken as a medical student
- Being mistaken to be a 'tour guide'
- Became sick – developed a cough with mild fever (lasted for more than 2 weeks)
- Complaining students

# A few tips for future interns

- Learn as much foreign language as you can before entering your host country (Hindi for India)
- Think more of the 'positives' than the 'negatives'
- Remember that your accommodations may not be the same as your home country. For example: using a bucket of water and bowl for bathing, or using a pit toilet

# A few tips for future interns

- Accustom yourself to the diet of your host country
- Engage in dialogue with your fellow alumni, coordinators, host family members, and doctors. Voice your concerns/needs, if you have any
- Travelling before or after the internship: have a guidebook handy (Lonely Planet)

# India – a great experience

