

The doctor

I did the first week of work experience with the Royal College of Surgeons Ireland. It was an arranged mini-med week for students around Dublin. There were about 150 students there in total. The work experience was based in the College of Surgeons, Stephens Green on Monday and Friday and in Beaumont Hospital on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

On the days we were in the College of Surgeons we had lectures in the morning on topics like health and safety, cystic fibrosis and head injuries. In the afternoons we had practical work in the labs learning about pharmacy and research that is done in the labs.

When we were in Beaumont we had lectures on topics like surgery, tropical diseases (malaria), pathology, kidney transplants and psychiatry. The doctors arranged for patients who suffered from some of the problems to come in and talk to us about living with that disease or illness.

We were also taught about clinical skills, like taking blood, measuring blood pressure, inserting a tube into someone's stomach, giving stitches using special instruments, administering CPR and analysing x-rays.

The highlight of the week was getting to see to live surgeries. The surgeries were being done by laparoscopic (keyhole) surgery and camera the surgeon was using was hooked up to the screen in the lecturer theatre that we were in.

Through this the surgeon was able to talk to us while he was operating and answer any questions we had. Before one of the operations the patient, who was having her gall bladder removed came in to talk to us and again after she had the operation. The operations were fascinating and surprisingly not bloody or gory. It was a great week that I would recommend to everyone to do. After doing this week I would definitely consider studying medicine.