

American Women Hospital Service – Overseas Assistance Grant
Katharine Grace Norris
University of Rochester School of Medicine & Dentistry

Summary Report

For four weeks, I had the incredible educational opportunity to complete an infectious disease (ID) elective with the University of Cape Town. I rotated the University Hospital, Groote Schuur, which is both an academic center and a public hospital. I also had the opportunity to rotate at D.P. Marais, a Tuberculosis (TB) community hospital, once a week. Each day I learned so much from the physicians on the team and the patients we worked with. During this elective, I was exposed to new ways to approach patients and critically think about ID in the greater context of patients' health. I really appreciated how much the landscape of disease, especially in the specialty of ID, influences and impacts clinical care. The prevalence of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and tuberculosis (TB) in Groote Schuur's patient population is significantly larger than the prevalence I have been exposed to during my education at the University of Rochester. As such, I had the opportunity to learn from world experts on the complications of HIV/AIDs and TB, subtle physical exam findings that influence differential, and the social factors that influence patient outcomes. I had the opportunity to see cases of bacterial and viral infections that we rarely see in the US, their disease process and treatment. As one of the world leaders in antibiotic stewardship, I also had the opportunity to engage in many discussions pertaining to complex ID cases, microbial resistance, and strategies of treatment. I learned a lot about how the model of healthcare in a resource-limited setting varies from our system in the US. During this elective, I had the opportunity to work with and learn from leaders in the field of infectious disease, and I am excited to apply this knowledge to my future career in internal medicine.

