

SBNS Undergraduate Elective Report

Lewis O'Brien

University of Glasgow

Institute of Neurological Sciences



I had the opportunity to spend five weeks undertaking an SSC in Neurosurgery at the Institute of Neurological Sciences (INS) in Glasgow.

During my time at the INS, I was not only able to gain exposure to neurosurgery, but I was also able to experience a wide variety of other neurological subspecialties including interventional neuroradiology and clinical neurophysiology. This helped me better appreciate and understand the roles of these adjacent specialties in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the nervous system.

My typical week:

- I participated in the daily ward round with my supervising consultants who kindly took the time to show me some unique and interesting signs to look out for.
- I joined multiple all-day theatre lists per week which gave me exposure to a wide range of neurosurgical procedures including microvascular decompression, image-guided biopsy, tumour debulking, spinal decompression etc.
- I was able to watch a few interventional neuroradiology procedures during my visit including aneurysm coiling, stenting, and thrombectomy.
- I reached out to one of the clinical neurophysiologists in the adjacent neurology building and was able to participate in clinics for carpal tunnel syndrome and ulnar neuropathy – and received teaching in EEG and seizures.
- I was given dedicated weekly research time and started a project to investigate risk factors for the recurrence of chronic subdural haematoma.

This placement was my favourite part of medical school so far. I'm keen to seek out more opportunities in neurosurgery for my upcoming elective blocks. The SBNS undergraduate elective bursary has alleviated some of the financial pressures associated with that.