

MY CLINICAL CLERKSHIP *Diary*

June—has it arrived? I could not wait! I was overly enthusiastic, and the clinical rotation would be fun! It was when you were finally able to apply the clinical knowledge you had learned in the classroom. It was the time I had looked forward to since my junior year, and of course, I am most excited about this! I would say the clinical clerkship is the perfect start for an insight into the job scope as a clinical pharmacist prior to leaving the university and stepping into the life of housemanship. As for UiTM, the clerkship will cover three different modules for the fourth-year students to complete. This includes tele-pharmacy, hospital, and Clinical Pharmacy Simulation (CLIPS) modules.

My rotation began with the tele-pharmacy module, which was the most relaxing one. I remembered the day I was all ready to leave early for the first day of my clinical! Tele-pharmacy basically means we will learn and apply the delivery of pharmaceutical care to patients that is done virtually. I had the opportunity to clerk the patient online providing her with counselling on her inhaler techniques as well as answering any inquiries she had put forth. These activities were conducted under the supervision of my preceptor to ensure the information shared was scientifically based and accurate. The following day, my teammates and I presented the pharmaceutical care issues that patients might have to our preceptor. I believed the ability to provide justifications for each medication taken by the patient was of paramount importance for the pharmacist.

A new rotation, which was hospital, and CLIPS started the new week. The difference between these two modules was in the mode of learning. Instead of interacting with a real patient, CLIPS used a simulated man. This mode of learning is available within our very own faculty, which is considered an advanced facility. I remembered the time when it was my first time reviewing the patient's progress notes, and I needed extra time to digest everything. It was true that hospital settings were fast-paced. The ability to relate medications taken to a patient's clinical conditions should be at their fingertips. I had the opportunity to go inside the ward to take the patients' histories and learn how to present the medical case in the most professional way. Besides that, one other thing I loved about hospital rotation was that the hospital had their best hot tea, which I enjoyed sipping every day!



Unlike hospital rotation, during attachment for the CLIPS module, I had the chance to directly intervene with the treatment of the patient and had the experience of saving a life. It was all done through teamwork. We had patients present at the emergency department in an unstable condition, either with asthma or seizures. It was during those moments that I realised that it was critical to suggest the correct medications that would suit the patients' condition. I remembered working with my friends to decide what was best for this patient to be stabilised while keeping an eye on the screen to monitor his vital signs. Although chaotic, the experience was compelling.

Three solid weeks for the clinical rotation are not enough, but I am grateful to have experienced everything. A pharmacist does have a wider role in an actual hospital setting, but you would get to experience something meaningful if you dared to step outside your comfort zone. Otherwise, you would just work routinely. I see the privilege of being a clinical pharmacist as getting to follow the patient in their medication journey together because it is not focusing solely on the pharmaceutical care but rather a more comprehensive picture of the diseases. The medication and device counselling are both things you should already have mastered by then because these are just tiny parts of them.

During my clinical clerkship, I have learned a lot in terms of clinical knowledge, professional communication skills, and the importance of teamwork. There are still, however, gaps that I must work on to improve and equip myself with good clinical knowledge and a variety of personal skills in order to maintain my competitiveness out there. I believe that juniors or anyone who wants to succeed must portray a positive learning attitude and be open to every golden opportunity. You must not expect to be perfect but rather be ready to take on all the challenges. After all, we are all pharmacists in training. Finally, my experiences were excellent and priceless, and I enjoyed every minute of them!



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