

Exploring Infectious Diseases in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

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Introduction

- INI treats patients from all across Brazil for a specific set of infectious diseases
- INI functions under Fiocruz, which is funded by the Ministry of Health of Brazil

Objective of Internship

My goal during this summer was to explore medicine beyond my interest in psychiatry while gaining first-hand experience in patient-doctor interactions.

Work profile

- Rotated between different outpatient clinics daily.
- Assisted in patient diagnosis and treatments.
- Learned to screen patients for clinical studies relating to disease prevention and treatment.

Reflection

- My most important takeaway from this experience is how the quality of healthcare increases exponentially when there is a strong relationship between patient and doctor.
- I really appreciated the emphasis on learning that INI has as it allowed me to collaborate with both resident students and doctors to learn more about the diseases.



One of our coordinators, Vinicius, took us on a hike at Sugarloaf Mountain!

- I learned that while Brazil's healthcare differs greatly from the American healthcare system, there are pros and cons to both.
- I really enjoyed rotating between different outpatient clinics and observing the different ways in which each doctor provides treatments to their patients.



Fiocruz coordinators took us on a tour of the castle!

- I appreciated that the doctors I worked with took the time to explain the diagnoses and treatments to me in addition to translating the patient-doctor interactions.
- The doctors I worked often asked me for my opinions on the diagnosis by asking me prompting questions and building on my previous knowledge of the disease.



Weekly market at Fiocruz!

Looking ahead

- With medical school on the horizon, I am definitely leaving this summer with a more open mind on different careers in medicine. Unlike before, I am not so attached to psychiatry.

Questions

- How can we combine different healthcare systems (ex. Public vs private) to create a more effective and affordable system for ALL individuals?

Conclusion

- Working in a foreign country, especially one where I do not speak the language, encouraged me to challenge myself as both a student and an individual!

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