

Experience Report

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Endocrinology and Diabetes

This experience was truly unforgettable. I am immensely glad to have come to Nagoya, such a livable city, at the end of my undergraduate studies and before officially starting my residency as a postgraduate student, leaving behind such a unique and different memory at Nagoya University Hospital.

On my very first day here, I followed my supervisor to the endocrinology laboratory. To my surprise, the professor who received us conducts research remarkably closely aligned with my current focus. The cohort he has established truly amazed me – such perseverance is something I must strive to emulate in my future research.

Within Nagoya University Hospital, we had the opportunity to experience XR (Extended Reality). Learning that they have a 24-hour open facility for students to practice medical skills truly surprised me. This is extremely helpful for students dedicated to becoming surgeons.

Beyond that, the doctor-patient communication regarding a newborn with intraventricular hemorrhage left a deep impression on me. Although I had undergone relevant training during my undergraduate studies, communicating in English about it was a first. This made me acutely aware of the importance of practicing language skills. Furthermore, while listening to the teachers communicate, I understood for the first time the crucial role of nurses. They bridge the gap between doctors and patients, filling the communication voids that arise because doctors are often too busy.

Gifu was, in my opinion, the most brilliant part of this Japan exchange trip. There, I witnessed the most incredible home visits by community doctors. It was beyond what I could have imagined before coming to Japan and accompanying them: community doctors carrying professional equipment and performing medical procedures like tracheostomy tube changes right in the patients' homes. I still remember the teacher saying we should be like detectives, observing the small details in a patient's home to understand their recent living conditions. This allows us to design personalized assessment scales to enhance their connection with society.

Wearing yukata, the boat trip, and the onsen (hot spring) were fresh and novel parts of this journey for me. Although walking outside in nearly 40-degree heat while wearing a yukata felt a bit like risking heatstroke, seeing everyone in colorful yukatas walking together through traditional-style rural streets made me feel like I was in a movie by a famous director. The "Come Come Swallow" initiative gave me a deep appreciation for Japanese local humanistic care. We have all encountered patients with dysphagia (swallowing difficulties) to some extent. More often than not, our solution is to insert feeding tubes or provide them with liquid nutritional supplements to reduce their risk of choking. We rarely consider things from the patient's perspective – how even the simple act of enjoying a delicious meal can become a luxury in such situations.

Discussing healthcare system structures under different national frameworks together at the rural hospital made us realize that different medical models each have their own distinct advantages and disadvantages. We need to learn from each other to achieve a better tomorrow.

I am deeply grateful for this opportunity to exchange at Nagoya University in Japan. Ten days

flashed by in an instant. Just as I was beginning to get accustomed to the convenience store operations, waste sorting methods, and complex urban rail systems, it was already time to leave. I sincerely look forward to more exchange opportunities in the future, where we can continue to research and discuss together.

