

EDUCATION AND TRAINING **Emergency medicine as a foundation trainee: what I wish I'd known at the start**

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KEYWORDS: junior doctor, emergency medicine

DOI: 10.7861/fhj.2020-0185

Introduction

Emergency medicine is a common rotation for foundation doctors to undertake. It affords a genuine opportunity for clinicians to develop, but can nonetheless be tough and demanding. As a foundation trainee, I spent 8 months working in the emergency department after the suspension of foundation training rotations due to COVID-19. Despite the challenges, I thoroughly enjoyed my time and feel that the things I learnt will make me both a better doctor and colleague in my future clinical practice. With this in mind, here are ten tips I would have loved to know before starting emergency medicine to maximise the opportunities, stay safe and avoid burnout.

Escalate

If you have any concerns about a patient, *always* escalate to a senior colleague.

Don't be afraid of resuscitation areas

It can be daunting, but try to be actively involved; there are always senior colleagues for support.

Be annual leave savvy

Book annual leave early to maximise your chance of getting the time off when you want (and need) it.

Get enough sleep

Switching between day and night shifts can be exhausting. Try to find a routine that suits you and stick to it.

Don't dodge patients

Don't skip patients presenting with a symptom you are underconfident with (temptation will be rife). It is an opportunity to learn and expand your skillset.

Seek out the guidelines

They exist for just about everything – use them, they are your friend.

Remember to eat and drink

Make sure you eat and stay hydrated. Take a full bottle of water and sip regularly throughout the day.

Ask, ask, ask

When discussing patients with senior colleagues, don't be afraid to ask why they want to know things you hadn't thought of. It will help you to learn a little from every patient.

Expand your practical skillset

Use the time to practise skills and acquire new ones – there will be numerous opportunities.

Tailor the opportunity to you

If you already have a career path in mind, you can tailor your experience towards this using your ePortfolio, undertaking relevant quality improvement projects and finding interesting case reports. ■

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