

6th year report

20th August 2020 happens to be a memorable moment in my journey in the medical school. The day a chapter was closed and another opened. My final year wasn't like the usual, we had just reported from exchange program with new experiences and high expectations from us.

Final year is basically three areas, internal medicine, surgery and community medicine, including thesis, mostly practical sessions. I started with surgery in the first 12 weeks, passed the end of rotation exams in surgery at the end, as shared in my previous report.

Early January, I continued with 12 weeks of internal medicine. This was supposed to be an easy one and same as was done with surgery but rather came with strict schedules and sessions, including night shifts, it was here I realised I'm almost a doctor. I couldn't take any moment with a patient for granted as far us a human life and my grades were concerned. I had to always prepare to contribute to ward rounds cases discussion since we were then regarded as senior members and all others look up to us. I had some embarrassing moment in such times mostly because I wasn't prepared enough, and a lot of good times in some instance where I was applauded for being literally the life saver for some patients in the emergency unit. I did spare sometimes to still practice in surgery.

I was assigned to 2 or more patients planned for surgeries every week. On a lucky day, I get the opportunity to assist some of the surgeries as my mates. It was always a fun moment assisting in a surgery though the experience was completely different from what I learnt from my exchange program at Denmark. Surgeons in Denmark do minimally invasive closed surgeries (laparoscopy) whiles in Ghana we do open surgery, which requires a lot of confidence, skills and techniques. Sometimes I think, I would specialise in surgery from my experiences in this rotation.

Everything was going on well until Corona. This was right before the commencement of community medicine and data collection for my thesis. Even though it wasn't good news, it was actually a huge relief for me, looking at how stressful the semester was going at the time. Besides, it gave me the opportunity to spend quality time with the children at Hardthaven home, something I've been longing for long but never had the chance due to how short our vacations often were. I had the opportunity to teach the high school students in maths, science, inspire them on how they can also make it to their dreams as we are doing. I love every bit of the lockdown period.

Going back to school after the lockdown was quite a short notice but expected, even though there were huge concerns about student's safety especially for medical students who had to work on people with high risk of getting infected. Fortunately, it was the period of community medicine, a lot of class lectures, few fields work, the challenge here was with data collection for the thesis which involved going out to take the data from target group which was pharmacist in my case. The topic of my thesis was 'The diagnostic landscape of malaria in the Ho municipality among formal private drug retail shops', basically determining the level of adherence of the pharmacies to the 'test-treat-track' policy of WHO.

My thesis supervisor advised that I use phone interview instead to collect my data instead of the face to face, in order to reduce my risk of contraction or spreading COVID infection. That

was quite expensive since I had to call using airtime but was faster and well-coordinated. My supervisor is an expert in malaria research so she was very resourceful and supportive, never gave me hard time as some of my colleagues experienced. At the end she recommended we publish my thesis after getting approval from the ethics committee. I'm glad she saw my work as worth it.

Finally, the end of everything came, the period of accountability, final exams. A lot of preparations went into it, we are the pioneering group so no seniors to guide you in times like this as has always been. We've also been told of instances where some good numbers of final year medical students failed in their exams in other sister medical schools and had to resist for the professional exams in 6 months after. Something I wasn't ready to go through, besides that would be a lot of dishonour to my sponsors and the family who most look up to us, Silas and I to pave the way for others to follow. The exams were in two folds theory and clinical exams on the 3 areas, internal medicine, surgery and community medicine. The theories went really well, but I was a bit nervous for the clinical aspect since the examiners were external ones from the Ghana medical and dental council and some from other medical schools, so the expectation was quite high. It all came to an end on 20th August, 2020 and the results declared.

Well, the sleepless nights and sacrifices were not in vain. I passed in all three major subjects including my thesis approval. This wasn't only for me but for my entire class. There was a 100% pass rate. It's official, Dr. Loglo Victor. This is one of my proudest achievements in my lifetime. A billion thanks to Hardthaven, United Projects and all my sponsors inside and outside Ghana for this opportunity given me. I'm happy it didn't go waste. There are more to come.

The next thing is housemanship (internship) in the next 2 years, a year or more of service as medical officer then specialisation. I will be glad to keep you updated/

God richly bless you all.

I'm forever grateful.

Dr. Loglo Victor



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