

Name: **Joseph Jolayemi**

Specialization, class: General Medicine

Academic year: 6th year

Country and city of destination: Dublin, Ireland

Receiving institution: **Royal College of Surgeons, Ireland**

I first heard about the Erasmus+ Programme from a friend who had previously applied, an employee and the administrative office of my receiving institution later mentioned it to me and I eventually received detailed information during a presentation held by the Erasmus office in my university.

As I had already applied myself for the placements abroad, my expectations from Erasmus were quite simple: to be part of a large network of students in the EU who have also participated in an Erasmus mobility programme. Finally, to gain the grant to students in order to help with my accommodation and transportation fees.

The first difficulty I faced was finding sufficient information about the programme and how I could get involved. The second difficulty was the insurance required during the mobility period. Apart from insurance provided by the university in my 1st year, I had never opted into any health insurance premium so this was quite new to me. Especially applying to a country I was not currently living in. I looked up different health insurance providers online and asked family about it also. Regarding the Erasmus+ itself, I asked friends in the university for information and the student office informed me about the whereabouts of our local Erasmus office. My last notable difficulty was that one of the hospitals under my receiving institution was quite far from my accommodation in the city. Thankfully, google came to the rescue yet again and I was able to find a simple bus route directly to the location. Although, bus times in the morning did not correspond with my starting time in the hospital, the team I was with were understanding and did not mind me missing some of the morning ward rounds. This was the only difficulty I had when it came to travelling. The transportation system in Dublin is very good. Although it seemed like the bus timetable was only there for the fun of it, the bus would still show up and it would get you where you need to go. Trains and "Luas" /tram were much more reliable and slightly more expensive but tram destinations were limited to mostly in and around the city centre. Transportation was not cheap. Using the bus alone 5 times a week would cost upwards of 30 euro, slightly less for students and also reduced a bit if you have a travel/ "Leap" card which can be topped up online or by a phone app is usable on all public transportation other than taxis. The city was very cycle friendly as I would see cyclists on almost all roads or their own designated cycle paths. I began to cycle myself on some days as there were roofed bike racks at every hospital.

I stayed in the suburbs in a residential house with some other people living there. I have some friends who stay in the city centre or rent an apartment with other students so I decided my option would be the most cost effective. The area I was living was nice, clean, quiet and had a lot of transportation links. There was a shopping mall very close by. A single room in a house around the area I lived is usually rented out for 600- 800 euros. The house was 30- 60 minutes away from Dublin City centre by bus depending on the traffic and 2 hours- 10 minutes away from the hospitals which I completed my mobility. There was a lot to do in the area along with the city in general like public parks with football/basketball fields and skateparks, dog parks, beaches, outdoor work-out

facilities, gyms, cinemas, shopping centres, pubs/bars, night clubs and restaurants. There were a lot of familiar fast-food chains and some new ones. In a normal restaurant 20-30 euros would be enough for a good meal and drink. I found the city very beautiful. A lot of green and nice, friendly people. Maybe the heavy and plentiful amount rainfall is the reason for this. The cost of living in my opinion was quite high. I would get shocked by the price of some basic necessities, like a loaf of bread for 3 / 4 euro in some places. In a lot of shops you could easily find one for as low as a euro. There were a lot of low budget food stores around like Lidl for grocery shopping.

Erasmus life in my receiving institution was non-existent. I was the only student from my university and I only met one other student who was from Canada participating in an Erasmus mobility programme. My receiving institution was Royal College of Surgeons, Ireland. It is one of the 3 institutions that provide a General Medicine course in Dublin. They are linked to a lot of hospitals around the country. During my time there, I would join the medical and surgical teams on wards rounds, out-patient clinics, multi-disciplinary meetings and teaching sessions. I found this all very interesting and insightful regarding my own choice of specialty. I found everyone around me to be very welcoming and willing to teach or give a helping hand. I gained a lot of experience and knowledge while seeing patients and speaking with doctors. My favourite of all the things I did were speaking with patients and building rapport. I also enjoyed being in the OR and assisting when needed or asked to.

I would recommend the programme to other students because it is a good incentive. It broadens your world view as well as experience by going to a different country and working/studying. It is a nice change from your own university and you get to meet a lot of new people and make new connections. Within the programme you can apply to go directly to a place where Erasmus has connections with so that makes everything much easier.

I would like to add that from my own experience there should be more transparency and sharing of information to students choosing to participate in the mobility. At times I was not sure what was required for the mobility and after completion so I had to send an email asking for the information.