

2018 NAFEA Scholarship recipient

My name is Martin, I am currently in my second year of nursing at the University of Tasmania. In May this year (2018), I did four weeks of placement at the West Coast District Hospital, located in Queenstown (Tasmania); this was my second placement. The facility covers many facets of health care, however the ones in which I helped were: acute/emergency (two emergency bays, 10 acute beds), aged care (16 beds), and community care. Ordinarily a hospital this remote may not have emergency bays, but with Queenstown's history of mining, it was required to have such provision.

Taking care of patients in either aged care or in the acute beds, solidified previous ward nursing experience, and bolstered confidence in aiding people with their activities of daily living – such as toileting and dressing. This was also my first time taking care of people with dementia, so inter-personal tact was something I had to pay attention to, and developing a good rapport with all the residents was something I enjoyed.

A few emergency patients value-added to my experience, where quick thinking was needed. It helped me gain experience in skills, such as placing ECG probes in correct anatomical positions. One observation I made during an emergency admission, tested my ability to perceive things at greater depth – I later liaised with a nurse after the event, and confirmed what I had observed, so it was good for me to know that I was on the right track.

This rural placement's greatest joy and greatest challenge came from community nursing. It was most enjoyable to drive around, visiting people in their homes, where they are comfortable, and helping them in whatever manner was needed. However, it was the rural setting that, as I had been shown and taught in my first semester, there was a great(er) need for people to be educated about their health, for facilities, and the need for motivation of the community to actively engage in their own wellbeing. Sticking on a band-aid is easy; teaching, motivating

someone to do it themselves, not so much – I think this is what I came away with the most from my rural placement.

Thank NAFEA for the financial assistance, it was greatly needed; I have just completed my third placement, it too was rural (Dover, Tasmania).