



My Road to St. James University Hospital, Leeds, United Kingdom

Dr. Charles Ochero Cornelio Langoya

The writer is a Core Medical Trainee (CMT) in the department of Hepatology and Liver Transplant Medicine in St. James' University Hospital, Leeds, West Yorkshire, UK.

He can be reached on charles.langoya@nhs.net

"S/he who wants honey should be prepared for a bee-sting" is a common saying in Africa literally cautioning people of hurdles to be encountered along a journey towards a valuable set target. The higher that target is, the more hurdles one has to overcome. Now let's talk about MTI and my experience (hurdles completed)...

Where did I get to know about the MTI?

MTI stands for Medical Training Initiative, a scheme set up by Britain to enable foreign doctors from selected countries to come and train in the UK. The existence of this scheme was brought to my attention by Dr. Eluzai Abe Hakim in 2010. It was something I doubted about at first like many of us would have done. The reason for the doubt was simple: "Getting a UK medical license is an unachievable dream".

What did I do then?

The decision of going for an MTI scheme is one of the best decisions I have ever made. Though it has challenges, I believe it is worth taking a path because all the hurdles won't count in the end with clear benefits outweighing risks. This was what I did (in this order):

- Got my part one Membership of the Royal College of Physicians (MRCP).
- Passed the MTI interview (in Khartoum) organized by the Royal College of Physicians of London which assessed clinical knowledge and language skills. This is an easy assessment to pass!
- Sat for Academic module of the International English Language and Testing System (IELTS) and obtained at least 7 score in each band and an overall score of 7.5. Remember that this is a minimum language requirement set by the British General Medical Council (the Medical Licensing Body) (GMC) for foreign doctors to get registered.
- Got all the recommendations needed from the clinical mentors in Juba and the UK to accompany the application. I am indebted to all of them.

Obstacles along the way

- I sat for a wrong IELTS version and had to redo the exams to take the academic version. So, take the right IELTS academic version!
- Obtaining a written recommendation from some of our South Sudanese senior colleagues was a night-

mare. I thank them for making me learn patience!

- The GMC registration could be a long one process (as in my case) but completing it means one is 97% certain of starting a rotation in a National Health Service hospital.

Advice to South Sudanese doctors wanting to come to the UK under the MTI scheme

- Make a decision and take part one MRCP.
- You will be shortlisted for the MTI interview which usually takes place in Khartoum (40 minutes).
- Sit for your academic IELTS before or after the MTI interview (to save time) and obtain the marks mentioned above.
- Never allow negative thinkers to influence your decision. If I can, then you too can.
- Always have a self-esteem and believe in yourself.
- Surround yourself with some positive senior mentors on who you can lean during this process. In my case these were Dr. Francis Oromo, Dr. Kenneth Lodu and, of course, Dr. Eluzai Abe Hakim among many others.

My first impressions of UK medical training

- Seniors and juniors value each other and daily teaching is just a friendly encounter.
- Everyone takes the responsibility he/she is assigned without a need of being followed by the boss.
- Medical practice is completely evidence-based. No gambling!
- Daily Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meetings discussing management of selected interesting and challenging cases. Here consultants challenge each other (knowledge wise) while the juniors sit listening to these scientific arguments. This is what I love most in Leeds but, unfortunately, our experience back at home is completely different in this aspect.

Final Word

Start the process NOW and ask for help should you need any!

(For more information on the MTI programme in the UK, see the advert on the back cover - page 48)