

## REFLECTIONS on EMERGENCY MEDICINE

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One of the scariest aspects of being a doctor is the moral obligation to assist in emergencies. I live in constant fear that one day I will be the most qualified medical professional in a situation and not have the adequate knowledge or skills to provide the best possible care to those in need. This fear, which I know many of my fellow colleagues' share I believe is an important driving factor, motivating us to become the best doctors that we can possibly be.

This year I have been fortunate to have received two emergency terms – my first was my first ever rotation as an intern and my second will be at the end of this year. The following is a poem that I have written in reflection of my emergency rotation as a new intern.

### **The Emergency Room - An Intern's Perspective**

*By: Nicole Villanueva*

*So its night one in emergency and I have no idea what to do.  
A bustling registrar suggests I see the category two.  
I step inside the curtain and my heart starts to pound,  
I become acutely aware of every little sound.*

*Suddenly everything I have ever learnt has vanished; boom – its gone.  
I am standing there like an idiot - looking rather forlorn.  
Thank goodness she's back – bloods taken and ECGs read.  
Finally the work-up is over and my brain feels like lead.*

*No time to reflect – it is onto patient number two,  
This one I do without freezing – but I still haven't got a clue.  
What am I doing? This is frantic – there are sick people all around!  
Psychotics screaming and blood covering the ground.*

*At last my first shift is over – I thought it would never end,  
They mistook me to be a doctor but medicine is not my friend.*

*Five weeks later and things are starting to go my way,  
I learnt to have a routine; know what to do and what to say.  
Every case is a new challenge – a diagnosis to be reached.  
I am prepared for the chaos the drama to be unleashed.*

*I did arterial blood gases, lumbar punctures and more,  
It is always a surprise what walks in through that door.  
Femoral nerve blocks, reductions, sutures and eyes,  
Emergency is where knowledge and skills both applies.*

*Suddenly it's over – I conquered my fear and passed this test,  
I survived a term in emergency without having a cardiac arrest.*

While emergency physicians inspire me in their ability to deal with emergencies everyday, I believe emergency medicine is an inherent part of being a doctor regardless of speciality. The bonuses in emergency medicine are the diversity of the presentations and the quick interventions, quite often with immediate results. However, the greatest joy in emergency medicine is the most obvious; preventing morbidity and mortality. The countless hours to years of learning, revising and working do not seem in vain when a person's life can be saved.