

## Visit in China

### Hayley Johnson

I spent 2 weeks in No. 6 Guangzhou Middle School teaching English to the Children on the camp organized by the “Cambridge Summer Schools China” organization. Although this was not my elective, I was able to visit the nearby hospitals and enquire with the locals to get a better understanding of the differences between Chinese and Western Medicine. What initially struck me was the huge population strain on the service, with lines of people filling the whole hospitals as people queued to see doctors, get tested, and receive results. China has a completely different healthcare system with little primary care available, which means the first point of access to the healthcare service is the hospital. People queue up in Hospitals to sign up to clinics on the day, which is of course very different to the experience we have here in the UK. After speaking with the Chinese teaching assistants on my camp, I also learned that there is a substantial ignorance of social care, although this is currently improving. All that being said, I don't criticize the healthcare system there. I actually think it is incredibly effective, considering the enormous population (it's also probably way easier if you can speak and read Chinese!). As well as witnessing the healthcare in the main hospitals, I also wanted to find out the prevalence of the practice of Chinese medicine in China. I found that today, Chinese traditional medicine continues alongside western medicine, and traditional physicians, who also receive some western medical training, are sometimes primary care givers in the clinics and pharmacies of rural China. Various traditional preventative and self-healing techniques such as qigong, which combines gentle exercise and meditation, are widely practiced as an adjunct to professional health care. Despite my interest in the medicine in China, I also had many opportunities to travel and see as much of China as I could. Following the camp, I travelled to Hong Kong, Gulin, Shanghai, Hangzhou, Huangshan, Xi'an and Beijing, where we were able to climb the Yellow Mountain, raft through the rivers of Gulin and walk the Great Wall. I am so grateful to have been able to have this unforgettable experience, thanks to the Medical Elective Fund and I would recommend anyone to grab the chance to visit China if they get the opportunity!

