

# What's the Allure of India?

## Our recent trip to India

Erin C. Connor, DO

Mt. Sinai EM Program, Miami Beach,

Scott Stirling, MD

Univ. of South Florida, EM program, Tampa

During residency, there comes a point when your enthusiasm begins to wane and a little cynicism creeps in. Running in circles in the ED, the big picture can become cloudy and you wonder how you ended up here in the first place. Sometimes, changing your perspective is all that is needed to bring back your drive and focus and remind you why you chose EM.

When Dr. Sanson sent out the e-mail inviting EM residents to apply for a grant to participate in the 5th Annual INDO-US Emergency and Trauma Program in Coimbatore, India, we both jumped at the chance. Like other residents interested in international EM and facing the day-to-day challenges of residency, we saw this as a golden opportunity. Along with eight other EM residents, we were awarded the TeamHealth grant, which proved to be one of the most exciting and rewarding experiences of residency to date.

The mission of the INDO-US program is to promote the advancement of academic EM through an exchange between Indian and American academic institutions. The partnership involves the USF Global Emergency Medical Sciences Program, SUNY Downstate Department of Emergency Medicine, Baroda Medical College-SSG Hospital, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences and TeamHealth. It was an excellent opportunity for attending physicians, residents, medical students, nurses and

other healthcare providers from India, the U.S. and other countries to come together for one common goal.

India is the second most populous nation in the world, with over one billion citizens. Its geographical area is three times smaller than that of the U.S., yet this area contains four times the population. It was amazing

how he had taken different elements from EDs he had seen in the U.S. and elsewhere and had incorporated them into his department. While some of the equipment may not have been state-of-the-art, the triage system and trauma protocols were as streamlined as any U.S. center. It was fascinating to hear the staff talk about their advancements and their plans for the future and to liken these conversations to ones that must have taken place in the early years of U.S. EM.

As residents, our role was to serve as models of American EM residents. We all had the chance to present a core emergency medicine topic and to assist in the suture and ultrasound labs. There were research posters and presentations on topics we consider exotic here in the U.S. but are mundane in India - including snakebites, malaria, dengue fever and other tropical diseases. This is not to say that the trip was all work. Our evenings were full of wonderful meals, social gatherings and even a grand gala, replete with 'Jai Ho' and a snake charmer!

We arrived back in the US with a renewed energy, a new appreciation for EM and a whole group of new friends. We were excited to come back and share our experience with our colleagues in Florida. Thank you to our Indian hosts, TeamHealth, Drs. Sanson, O'Keefe, Galwanker and all the other residents. It was an invaluable experience.



to arrive in Coimbatore and witness the buzz of excitement surrounding the conference. Trauma surgeons, orthopedic surgeons, and ED physicians from the U.S., India, and other countries attended.

The expansion of EM in India in the past five years has been incredible. New trauma centers and EDs have been built across the country. Funding for EM training has increased. Finally, and most importantly, physicians themselves have become more organized in their advocacy for the specialty. One of the highlights of the trip was our visit to the PSG Emergency and Trauma Center. The director was eager to show us