

HIV Clinical Care in Lubumbashi

Abstract

When I first came back from Lubumbashi, I wasn't quite sure what I had learned. I had gained a lot of interesting experiences, to be sure. But what for? What was I to make of them? At the time I was too naive and uneducated to turn them into anything more than a collection of fun party stories. Exciting and humorous anecdotes of the silly westerner making his way in a foreign country. Over the years however, as I found myself more and more drawn to remote and austere medicine, I found my prior experiences in Lubumbashi coming back to me with new insight. Having recontextualised my time there, they offered the ability to teach me something I was unable to learn years before simply due to age and awareness. Over the next couple of years I found myself reflecting back to those few weeks more and more as I was confronted with both theoretical and very real problems in the field of austere medicine. Ideas about medical care, access, and general ingenuity flowed from memories that had previously been little more than trivialities to me. Now they offer me a unique corner stone to my own path towards this field, having served as both an initial nudge towards this direction, and as a residual touch stone to reflect back onto as I gained both knowledge and experience.