



**MENNONITE  
COLLEGE OF NURSING**  
*Illinois State University*

## 2014 Transcultural Experience in Eastbourne, England



L-R: Claire, Jenny (they were teachers), Amanda McNulty, Sarah Coleman, and Marissa Koszewski

*Three undergraduate nursing students, Amanda McNulty, Marissa Koszewski and Sarah Coleman, traveled to England on May 11, 2014 for a two-week transcultural experience. The following are journal entries the students wrote while on their trip:*

### **Journal Entry 1**

*By Amanda McNulty, Marissa Koszewski and Sarah Coleman*

To start off, we love it here! Today we went to Hastings (a neighboring town) to tour a labor and delivery unit in Conquest Hospital. We learned that Eastbourne General Hospital (across the street from our flat) is a low risk facility with only midwives available to deliver. Conquest has midwives and OBs stationed there and is considered a unit for high risk mothers. Mothers and midwives in the UK advocate for natural births and water births. The midwives encourage that cesarean births done in the theatre (operating room) are for emergency situations. Epidurals are also less commonly used.



Amanda McNulty and Sarah Coleman



Sarah Coleman, Amanda McNulty, and Marissa Koszewski in a room for water births

These hospitals focus on less invasive techniques for pain relief, such as baths and position changes. The mother's at Conquest deliver in one room and then move to another room with five other mothers to spend their postpartum time.

Another unit was the special care unit for babies. This hospital only has the resources to resuscitate babies 34 weeks and older. Most babies in here only need a little bit of extra oxygen. One fact that we all thought was very interesting was that mothers can leave after just 6 hours after delivering if everything went well! This was just surprising since we don't see that commonly in the U.S.

After this tour, we went to a class on postpartum hemorrhage. We could definitely relate to it from all we learned from our maternal infant classes. We did notice they use some different methods and medications from what we use. After class we walked around the town and found a great view from the hills. Everything is going very well!

## Journal Entry 2

*By Amanda McNulty*

Today, Marissa, Sarah, and I split up to follow a community midwives in different areas. I met my midwife in Langley where she started with antenatal checkups. Women who were anywhere from 10 weeks to 38 weeks pregnant came in. The midwife would ask questions, test the urine, listen to a heartbeat, and measure the patient's stomach. If anything was unusual the midwives were very quick with referrals or sending samples of blood or urine to the hospital. Each appointment took 20 minutes and there were at least 10 in the morning!

After lunch, a different midwife took me into the community. These were all postpartum appointments. A midwife usually visits on day three, six, and ten after a baby is born. This is necessary since the mom takes the baby home just six hours after birth. It was very interesting actually going to the different patient's homes. By doing these visits, you could really get the full picture of how the mother and baby are adjusting in their own environment. This is very laid back and the midwife would just ask questions, weigh the baby, do a heel prick, and check on the mom. Some mothers do choose by the 6 and 10 day to just come into the midwife center. Others do still want the home visit.

Overall, this was all very new and different since home visits are not a common thing back home. So much of what is done here is similar while other stuff is so different! This experience so far is amazing.



Views from cliffs in Eastbourne

## Journal Entry 2

*By Marissa Koszewski*

Today was a wonderful day! I was out in the community working with the community midwives. My day started at the community center where they had a small office and room to do routine check-ups on pregnant women in the community who needed prenatal care. It was interesting to see the differences in styles of care and procedures compared to what I had observed back in the states. After seeing some of the clients at the center it was time for me to join the midwife on some house calls.

It is recommended that the mother and baby have a one day postpartum checkup, followed by checkups on day three, six, and ten. Sometimes the mothers come back into the hospitals for these checkups and other times the midwife comes to them in their homes. At these checkups the midwife mostly asks questions about feedings and how the mother is coping and silently observes the environment.

Then the midwife will observe the mother and baby with a feed to ensure that the proper technique is preformed and the baby is receiving adequate nutrition. I think that these checkups are important to this particular community because a large number of women prefer to go home much earlier than we typically see in the states, sometimes less than a couple hours after giving birth. This means that the patients do not necessarily receive a lot of teaching while under the care of the midwife. The midwives use house visits as an opportunity to provide teaching and give advice. I was excited to finally be able to see the insides of a house, they are so different than houses back home! It was an amazing experience to be able to shadow a midwife and see what an average day would be like. I have learned a lot so far and continue to learn new and exciting things from the lingo to the medical practices. Cheers!

