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extra

A humbling experience

Owen Haeny

I recently visited Uganda as a visiting clinician. After seeing the first patient, a child, my host asked about UK treatments. I admitted my uncertainty, since I had not treated a child for over a decade. I had a similar response when asked about an elderly man with dementia. The next patient presented in catatonia which prompted mutterings from me about the rarity of the condition at home. And another had psychiatric sequelae of a tropical disease, which left me amazed by the breadth of pathology. I confessed my awe at what Ugandan doctors had to know. 'Oh, I'm not a doctor, I'm a clinical assistant' he replied. 'I couldn't do what you do!'

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