

International Medicine: What to know before you go!

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Goals and Objectives

To understand the complexities involved in planning and going on a medical mission, including the effects on both self and community, and to come away better prepared to plan a medical mission.

- Be able to list the roles and responsibilities of being a team member
- Be able to describe appropriate travel medicine prophylaxis
- Be able to list general safety measures and precautions
- Be able to Discuss the importance of sustainability of any planned intervention with special consideration given to the local culture.

“ Be the change you want to see in this world”- Gandhi

- Global Health
 - Health of all populations that transcends the individual perspectives and concerns of an individual nation- to improve access for all people to medical care regardless of social, economic and political barriers
- World Health Organization (WHO)
- United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF)
- World Food Programme (WFP)

Medical Mindset

- Common Sense
- Flexibility
- Able to manage complex variables

Selecting a Trip

- Find a good time frame – short term
 - 7 days to a month
- Where do you want to go?
 - After you have a date, figure out what trips are available to you.
 - Shortmissiontrips.com is a very useful site (Start Here)
 - Heart-in- Motion
 - Global Health
 - MMI
- What types of trips are there?
 - City vs. Rural
 - Hiking to remote area vs. same location
- Go with a missionary team?
 - Several missions are supported by churches or religious organizations
 - Find out about what religious participation is required of you
 - There are mission that are not religious
 - Find out about the company you are interested in going thru – research them on the internet.
 - Sustainable? Don't create “medical waste”

Variables

- Environment
- Endemic Diseases
- Medical expertise of all team members
- Team demographics (medical records)
- Distance from medical facilities
- Availability of rescue

Medical Personal

- Common things are common
- Bring what you need not what you want
- Improvise you are definitely forgetting something
- Ask for samples

Attitudes

- Issues of control
- Differences in fundamental values
- Adventure and chaos coexist – so be prepared
- Lost in translation

Team Roles

- Medical Director
- Medical Personal
 - Doctor, PA, NP, nurses, and pharmacists
- Safety Officer
- Communications Officer
- Supply Officer

Medical Director

- Plans trip
- Select team
- Determine itinerary
- Select officers

Medical Personal

- Prepare for trip
- Know scope of practice
- Provide information as requested
- Get donation of supplies
- Figure out what they NEED vs. Want

Safety

- Know environment (toxins, snakes, climate)
- Know who can help
- How to be evacuated
- Notify the embassy
- Have personal files (with team medical record, vaccination record, medical certification, etc.)
- Make sure safety of members of the team is paramount
 - Back up batteries, epi-pen, extra meds (etc)

Communication Officer

- Designation of Equipment
 - Cell phone, e-mail, video
 - Telemedicine
- Written Plan
 - Drafts should be detailed enough for anyone to understand/follow in case of injury to the communications officer
- Staff Training
 - Make sure personal are trained on it's use (i.e. how to set up a satellite dish or use a Ham radio)

Supply

- What to transport?
 - Food, clothing, meds?
- How to transport it?
 - Pack mule, bus, or carrying
 - Who set up take down?
 - Power a locations
- How much you can move?
 - Airline weight limits
 - Containers
- Custom and needed documentation

Customs

- Call ahead
- Find requirements
- Document all goods
- Get pre-approved if you can

Research, Research, Research

- Look up the company that you are interested in?
- What kind of intervention can you do?
- Sustainability is key
 - “Give a man a fish and he will have a fish for one day-
teach a man to fish and he will have fish for life”
 - Ineffective care – “burdens on the local economy”, un
realistic or unattainable care.
 - Learn the local economy, foods, medical constructs, and
customs- this will help you find effective sustainable solutions

This Big Role of Education

- Education is key
- Handouts are good tool
 - Available thru WHO
- Group teaching sessions
 - Making culturally relevant suggestions

Language Barrier and Body Language

- Different gestures mean different things
- You can communicate silently
- Every move matters

The Application Process

- Nurses, Med students, PAs, NP, Residents and Docs are sought after
- Many times there are financial resources that may be available such as donation forms- These trips are tax deductible.
- Be Honest- sometimes you may get refused based on gender or faith.
- Also find out if the application fee is refundable if you are not selected- it may be.

Member responsibilities after acceptance

- After you get accepted :
 - Find out about the culture and what you can do to prepare
 - Learn some basic words in the language
 - Find out if you will be provided a translator
 - Bring a translation book because your translator may not know all the medical terms
 - Find out what documentation you need (make a copy for home, and extra to take with you)
 - License
 - Passport
 - Visa

Insurance

- Do you need mal-practice insurance? How are you covered?
- Evacuation Insurance
 - USAA
 - Medical institution
 - Other Sites
- Medical Insurance

Things to take

- Cipro
- Zofran ODT
- Tylenol
- Antihistamine
- Nasal decongestant
- Pepto-Bismol
- Imodium
- Vitamins
- Plus any other meds you need (anti-malarial, drugs for elevation sickness, etc.)

Packing Tips

- Be sure to pack them separately.
- Be sure to have them pre-approved by customs and have all the paper work filled out.
- Get donations from your clinic, stores, friends, church groups, on-line and drug reps.
- Go to yard sales and purchase an old suitcase that you can leave behind or donate to your group.

Packing tips

- Make a list of everything you will need
- Pack well in advance
- Make sure you have a camera and extra batteries
- Pack only things that you can leave behind if necessary
- Don't bring expensive things or jewelry

Packing tips

- Pre-treat your outfits
- Bring your own equipment and make sure that it is charged
- Make sure you have converters
- Don't over pack- take only what you need
- Some places have laundry services

Travel Medicine

- Several places have trained clinicians which specialize in travel medicine
- These clinics are great resources for both you and your patients
- They also often carry specific vaccines like typhoid or Japanese encephalitis

Immunization

- Yellow Fever
- Hep A
- Typhoid
- Menactra
- Japanese encephalitis
- Tetanus

World Health Organization

- Have on-line health guidelines
- Have supplies
- Have handouts

Prevention of Bites

- Bed nets
- Long Clothing
- Stay inside during the night (dusk- dawn)
- Apply bug spray
- Spray indoors

Prevention

- Wash hands often
- Only eat if you have peeled it or cooked it
- Keep water with you
- Sanitation

Anti-malarial

- Chloroquine (middle east and central america ONLY)
- Mefloquine (Lariam)
- Doxycycline
- Atovaquone and proguanil (malarone)

Remember....

- Seek advice of travel professional
 - Risk assessment and CDC guidelines and advisories
- Anti- malarial
- DEET/Pacardin
- Mosquito bite prevention
- Garments and bedding soaked in permethrin

Travel safety

- Watch advisories
- Have a back up plan
- Know your environment
- Know your resources
- Don't go anywhere alone

Sustainability in Global Health

- It has been defined as “capacity to endure”
- 1984
 - About 6% of medical students had short term medical mission experience
- 2010
 - About 30.8 % of medical students have a Global Health elective, with an overall trend increasing over the years
 - These students are more likely to report a commitment to working with the underserved

Mission Statement

Development of a suitable and adaptable set of principles that will guide and train these Students, Physicians Assistants, and Physicians as they go out into the world is essential to bring about sustainable change both at home and abroad.

Remember “First of all do no harm”

Ethics?

- “Medical tourism?” is what some people label Medical missions because they argue what can you do in such a short time? How can it be sustainable? They raise the following concerns
 - Self-Serving
 - Ineffectiveness
 - Imposing Burdens
 - Inappropriate Interventions
 - Unmet Expectations

Response to Objections

- Set up guidelines for your group that have a reasonable chance of sustainability
 - Education, Education, Education
 - Community and Ourselves
 - Educate others about your cause
 - Form a collaborative effort
 - Work with people in the community, find out what can be done, and what needs to be done.
 - Have a partnership both before and after to help ensure that your efforts can continue: find solutions that work for a community.
 - Consider telecommunications as a mode of collaboration (e-mails as well as office set up)

Kristof and WuDunn. *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for women worldwide.*
Published June 1 2010

Suchdev et al. 2007. *Ambulatory Pediatrics.* 7,317-320

Interventions that work- “A journey of a thousand miles begins with just one step”

- Empower the community to change, one person at a time
 - Microloans
 - www.kiva.org
 - Mostly given to women
 - Women work within their cultural beliefs
 - Realistic goals
 - High repayment (98.65%)
 - Loans generate a successful sustainable program

“Give a man a fish and he will eat for one day, teach a man to fish and he will eat for a lifetime!”

- Teach & Discover

- Community education is key
- Interventions must be realistic and not burden the community, not use resources and “fit in” with the lifestyle.
 - Mosquito nets – failure
 - Cloth filters- success
 - Formula- mixed results

So why do some of these work and others not?

"Never be afraid to raise your voice for honesty and truth and compassion against injustice and lying and greed. If people all over the world...would do this, it would change the earth. " - William Faulkner

- Advocate

- Work for laws that will help further the causes that have been chosen.
- Work in the USA as well as abroad

Internet resources:

<http://www.worldadvocacy.com/>

<http://pag.vancouver.wsu.edu/>



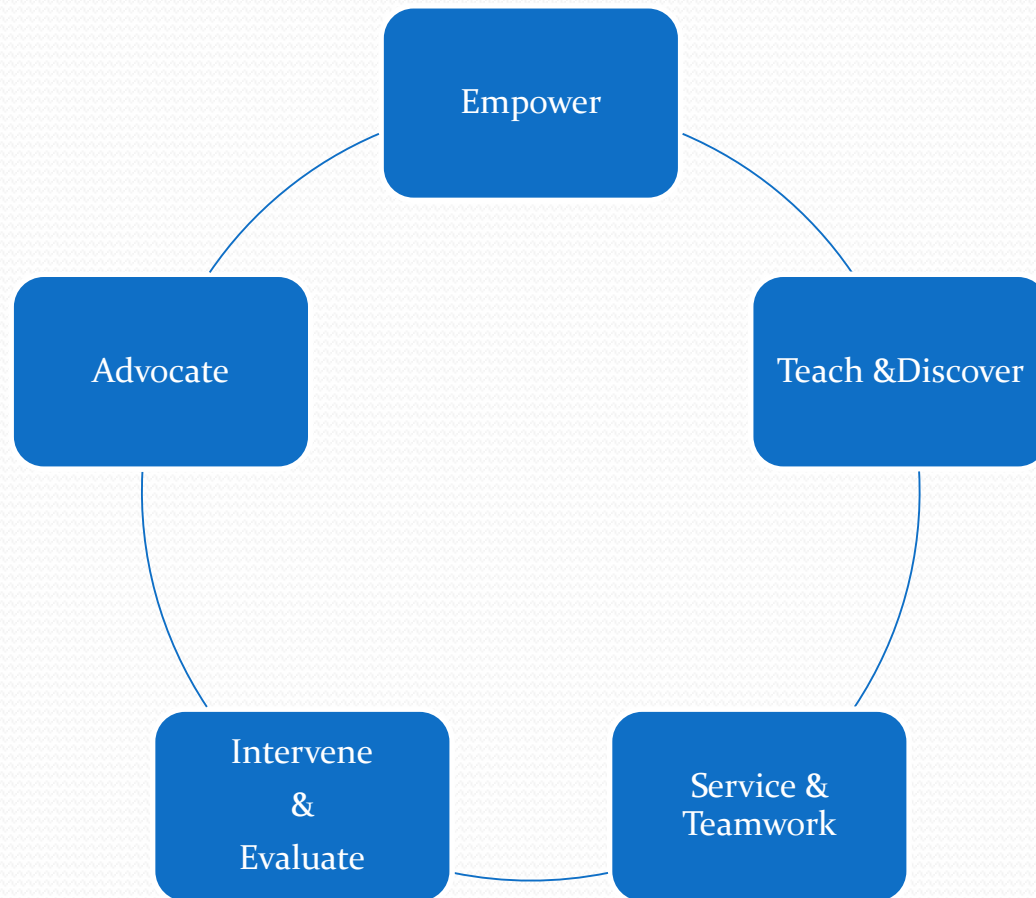
“Only a life lived in the service to others is worth living.”- Einstein

- Service and Teamwork
 - Repeat visits
 - Working with services already in the community
 - Don't make unrealistic goals
 - Our values and priorities are NOT always the same as the people you serve
 - Remember you are serving them and their needs, not your own
 - Communication and understanding
 - Coordinate as a team to implement interventions that work.

“One of the great mistakes is to judge policies and programs by their intentions rather than their results” -
Milton Friedman

- Intervene and Evaluate
 - Keep in communication with projects that you have started
 - Evaluate the program (s) at intervals. Is it achieving the goals? Why or why not?
 - Don't be afraid to change- if what you are doing is not working – change it!

Sustainably Diagram



Conclusions

- Be prepared but be flexible
- Have a back up plan
- Make sure any intervention made is sustainable and will help the overall health of all involved parties.

Questions?

