

University of Colorado SOM Predeparture Orientation

Medical trainees have increasing interest in taking part in global health experiences. Adequate preparation and reflection prior to and after the experience is essential to ensure a safe, valuable, and mutually beneficial interaction between the trainee and host institution. Your predeparture orientation will consist of three parts: Online modules, In-person training and reflection session, post-trip debriefing.

Part I: Please complete the following modules prior to the in-person session.

EdX- Practitioner's Guide to Global Health modules. *Complete sections one and two only.*

<https://www.edx.org/course/practitioners-guide-global-health-bux-globalhealthx>

Ethics modules- collaboration by Johns Hopkins and Stanford. *Can omit the final two modules on research.*

<http://ethicsandglobalhealth.org/>

Part II: Please complete these reflection questions prior to the in-person training

What to expect abroad?

- What stressors do you anticipate? How will you cope with these?
- What do you hope to gain out of this experience?
- What are your biggest weaknesses/strengths in your personal life? In residency? How might these be exaggerated in a resource limited setting?
- It is common to encounter ethical dilemmas while working in resource-limited settings, particularly with regard to practicing outside your scope. What can you do to anticipate these situations? How will you respond?
- Residency and medical school can be very demanding, sometimes it is easy to feel like your global health elective is a "vacation from real life," especially within a cultural context where time takes on a different meaning than it does in Western culture.
 - **Monochronic time:** *Time is the given and people are the variable. The needs of people are adjusted to suit the demands of time – schedules,*

deadlines, etc. Time is quantifiable, and a limited amount of it is available. People do one thing at a time and finish it before starting something else, regardless of circumstances. Often the Western view of time.

- ***Polychronic time:*** *Time is the servant and tool of people. Time is adjusted to suit the needs of people. More time is always available, and you are never too busy. People often have to do several things simultaneously, as required by circumstances. It's not necessary to finish one thing before starting another, nor to finish your business with one person before starting in with another. This is often the view of time abroad.*
- Will you feel more like you want to be on vacation? Or have trouble adjusting to “polychronic time”? What are some ways you can anticipate these challenges now?

What is expected of you abroad?

- Work as hard as you do during residency or medical school. Given the possible different perspective on time above, how will it be difficult to maintain the same work ethic?
- Be professional.

Seemingly minor things like missing a day of work, poor hygiene, inappropriate comments, etc can have a lasting impact and affect host-volunteer relations. While a global health elective will likely be one of many profound, enlightening experiences in your life, your presence is a rare, exciting event for most host institutions. This effect is magnified in rural areas where people are often very isolated from the outside world. All your actions, good and bad, will be scrutinized and remembered long after you are gone.

- Be sure to research the area you will be visiting for both cultural and disease-related information. Understanding and respecting cultural norms and how they differ from your own is very important for building a good relationship with your host institutions.

Emergency Planning and Safety

- What hospital or clinic will you go to if you become sick?
- Who is your primary contact at the elective location? What is their phone number?

- Consider any medical or mental health problems you may have? How will you address them if they become active on your trip? Do you need any extra medications?
- Review the CDC website for recommended travel vaccines and prophylaxis. Arrange an appointment at least one month prior to your trip.
- While many travelers are concerned about rare diseases and crime while abroad, remember that motor vehicle accidents are the most cause of injury in US travelers abroad.

Part III: Please complete this section upon returning from your trip.

EdX- Practitioner's Guide to Global Health modules. *Complete section three.*

<https://www.edx.org/course/practitioners-guide-global-health-bux-globalhealthx>

- Were the challenges you encountered similar to those you expected prior to the trip?
- What ethical dilemmas did you encounter? Were you asked to practice outside your scope?
- What cultural differences did you encounter? How did you approach these?
- Would you take part in this experience again? Why or why not?