

Session: T234

# Navigating International Clinical Education: Risks, Resources, Research

Zehra Ahmed PA-C, MBBS

Rachel Ditoro MSPAS, PA-C

Nick Hudak MPA, MEd, PA-C

Kevin Wyne PA-C, MPAS, MSc



**PAEA EDUCATION FORUM 2015**

November 11–15 • Washington, DC

## ➤ Session Objectives

- At the end of this session the participants will be able to:
- Construct a framework for the **planning, implementation and evaluation of international clinical education** with physician assistant program curricula.
- Discuss the **approaches to establish** an international clinical education site, **develop criteria for student selection, student preparation, and evaluate learning outcomes.**
- Identify **available resources** for the development of an international clinical education site, the **creation of objectives to guide preparation**, and the **formulation of assessment outcomes** for the experience.
- Recognize potential opportunities to **research** international clinical education experience from program, student, and clinical site perspectives.

# Introduction

- Overview
- Curriculum
- Site Development
- Preparing Students
- Clinical learning and evaluation
- Lessons learned
- Research opportunities
- Q & A

# Overview

- **International Clinical Education (ICE)**
- Interest in International Rotations (IR) and Service Learning (SL)
- Navigating regulations & requirements
- Preparations for IR and SL
- Effectiveness
- Best practices

# Curriculum



# Planning

## ➤ Vision

- Institutional/Program missions
- Drive goals and learning objectives

## ➤ Contributors

- PA Faculty
- Office of International Affairs

## ➤ ICE

- Service learning trip
- Clinical elective rotation





# Implementation



## ➤ Education Modules

- Sustainability
- Cultural competency
- Common health/medical conditions

## ➤ Learning Objectives

- Address clinical learning and cultural sensitivity

- <http://www2.paeaonline.org/index.php?ht=a/GetDocumentAction/i/139471>



# Implementation

## ➤ Learning Objectives

- Discuss how the socio-economics of the host community and/or country influence the provision of medical care.
- Discuss how cultural beliefs may influence provision of medical care.
- Demonstrate respect for the local customs and culture of the community within which the student serves, including treatment decisions and medical recommendations made for patients.

# Evaluation Outcomes

## ➤ Students

- Pre and post-trip surveys
- Rotation evaluation

## ➤ Preceptors/Sites

- Evaluation of student
- Preceptor/site direct feedback

## ➤ Programs

- Program evaluation of site
- Student reflection questions
- Student presentations



# Panel Perspectives





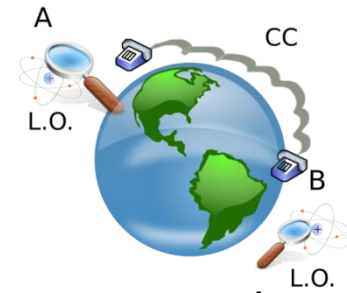
# Site Development

# Planning



- **Contributors to the Process**
  - Faculty Involved; Staff Involved; Time and Effort
- **Vision for a Sustainable Partnership**
  - Goals of Institutional/Program
  - Goals of Clinical Site/Host Country/Community
  - Goals of the Course/Student
- **Identify Potential Quality Sites**
  - Own Institution; Alumni; Preceptors; Recommendations from Other Programs; Organizations with History of Successful Student Placements; Organization Affiliations (Government, NGO, Religious, etc.)
- **Approach for Site Development**
  - Timeline; Information Gathering on Country, Community, Clinical Settings; Communication Methods; References; Point of Contact and Other Key Persons
  - Similar to Development of Domestic Site; Factors Unique to International Sites include Knowledge of PA Profession, Course Goals, Expected Student Involvement in Patient Care, Supervision, Housing/Transportation, Entry/Exit Requirements, Language

# Implementation



## ➤ Initial Contact with Site

- Interest and Feasibility; Goals for Site, Students, and Program; Supervision and Evaluation; Logistics and Cost

## ➤ Follow-Up Discussion at Program Level

- Reporting; Opportunities & Challenges; Approvals

## ➤ Ongoing Communication with Site

- Initial Contact Person; Other Key Persons (Clinical, Non-Clinical)

## ➤ Initial Site Visit

- In-Person, Proxy, Virtual

## ➤ Routine Check-In

- Site and Students During and Following Participation; In Advance of Subsequent Student Participants

# Evaluation of Outcomes



## ➤ Site Experience

- Student Preparation, Participation, Professionalism, Cultural Competence
- → Feedback for Program and Students

## ➤ Student Experience

- Learning Objectives, Survey of Student Experience, Preceptor Evaluation of Student, Other Evaluative Components, Experience with Transportation/Housing
- → Feedback for Program and Site

## ➤ Program Experience

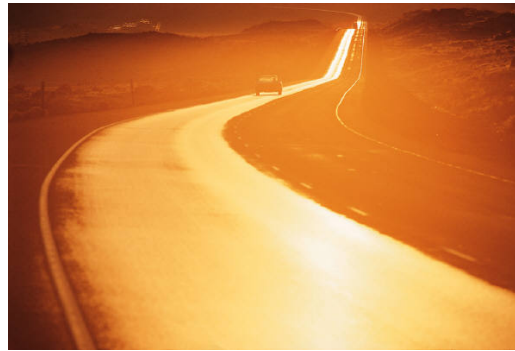
- Faculty Involved; Staff Involved; Time and Effort
- → Feedback for Site and Institution

# Panel Perspectives





# Preparing Students



# Planning

- **Student selection**
- Conditions of Participation/Disclaimer
- Orientation
  - Didactic instruction
  - Differing formats
  - Clinical skills and competencies

# Planning

- Responsible parties
- Regular meetings with information on needs; Timeline for requirements
- Site coordinator – gives specific information for each site
- **Medical clearance**
- **Safety & security**

# Planning

- **Documents:** Passport; insurance, prescriptions
- **Transport**
  - Air Travel: arrangements
  - Insurance: travel, medical
  - Registration of travel abroad
    - <https://step.state.gov/step/>;
  - On the ground: at airport, mode of travel, safety
- Contact card

# Planning

- **Daily routine at site**
- Safety concerns
- Housing & Bathroom facilities
- Food & water
- Packing lists (Clothing, bed nets etc.)
- Medications: personal; OTC; Pep Kit
- Medical supplies; Electronic devices; Phones
- Currency

# Implementation

## ➤ Immunizations

➤ <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list>

➤ Site specific; Routine vaccinations titers; timeline; prophylactic medications

➤ Changes in requirements

➤ Be aware of issues on re-entry

➤ **HIV & Pregnancy Test**

➤ **Prophylactic medication: Anti-malarial**

# Evaluation Outcomes

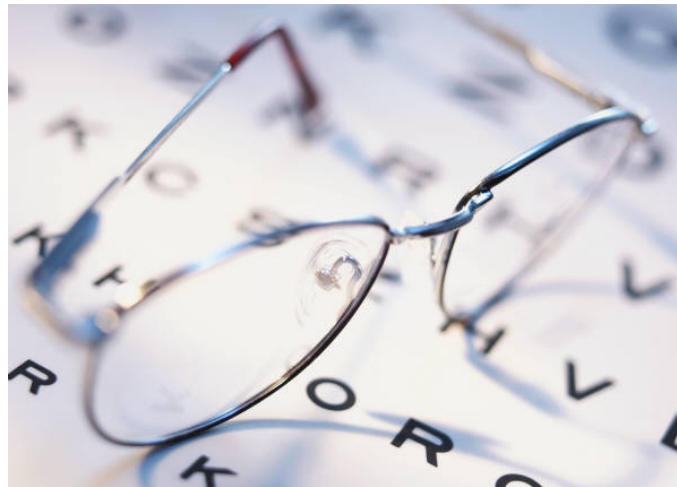
- Course Evaluations
- Feedback from students
  - Exit interviews
  - Reflective letters
- Preceptor and faculty debriefing

# Panel Perspectives





# Clinical Learning & Evaluation



# Planning

➤ What would you like the students to gain from the experience?

➤ Medical knowledge

➤ Cultural competency

➤ How does experience fit

with other aspects of curriculum?

➤ Ensuring similar experiences

➤ Grading (standard evaluation vs unique to experience)



my goals.

Eat. Fly  
Sleep. Swim  
quack.  
mate  
Lay eggs  
raise chicks  
~~Learn taekwondo.~~  
Build a nest.

# Planning

- What is the time frame for evaluation?
  - Type of international experience (clinical rotation vs. service learning trip vs. other)
  - Assessment before, during, or after experience
- Does evaluation assess desired outcomes?

# Implementation

- Develop objectives to reflect goals
- Creating assessments that accurately reflect student abilities and experience
- **Time-frame:**
  - Prior to departure
  - During experience
  - Post-experience assessment



# Implementation

- **Prior to departure**
- Participation in class sessions or online forums
  - Cultural competency training
- Presentation(s)
  - Host country, language, culture, history, proposed research, etc.
- Readings, journal club
  - Focused on country's culture, healthcare needs
- Pre-test(s)

# Implementation

- **During experience**
- Tracking patient encounters (similar to rotation/experience in U.S.)
- Preceptor evaluation of student
  - Also site evaluation
- Discussion sessions – depending on how experience is structured
  - Nightly reflections (mental photograph exercise)
  - Focused topics based on readings or experiences
- Journaling
  - Individual journal or individual/group blogging
  - Sharing of pre-experience letter to self



# Implementation

- **Post-experience**
- Reflections
- Discussion
- Paper
- Poster/Presentation
- Exam



# Panel Perspectives





# Opportunities for Research

- Sources of Data/Perceptions
  - Students
  - Key Persons at Clinical Sites
  - Faculty
- Quantitative
  - Example: patient encounters, disease processes
- Qualitative/Descriptive
  - Example: describe approach to clinical site development

# Opportunities for Research

- Survey, Mixed methods approaches
  - Example: student/faculty perceptions of cultural competency, clinical skills
  - Example: student characteristics predictive of success on ICEs?
- Partnerships with local providers/organizations
- Ongoing projects for sustainability
- Parallels with "PA" Programs abroad
- Student/faculty exchange opportunities



# Lessons Learned



# Lessons Learned

## ➤ Student Goals

- Cannot prepare students for every possible scenario...student selection very important
- Expectations
  - Student Having Sufficient Amount of Time in Clinical Settings and “Hands On” Experience
  - As much a cultural as it is a clinical experience
  - Treatment decisions may be different than what students expect/are used to given country/community's existing resources

# Lessons Learned

## ➤ Program Goals

- Create objectives and set clear expectations
- Time and resource intensive for faculty and students
- Faculty staffing to address student issues while abroad
- Structure evaluations to experience
- Illness – faculty and students
- Behavior issues
- Culture shock

# Lessons Learned

- **Student/Program Goals:** Tertiary Medical Center Inundated with Medical Learners
- Language barriers
- Be flexible
- Reverse culture shock
- **Site Goals:** Organization Wanting Students to Fund Raise as Pre-Requirement to Participation

# Take Away Messages

- **Plan for everything & expect nothing to go to plan!**
- PAEA resources for IR's
  - <http://www.paeaonline.org/resources/international-clinical-rotations-resources/>
- ICE should be done carefully and correctly
- Research is needed to share best practices

# References

- Crump JA and Sugarman J. Ethics and best practices guidelines for training experiences in global health. *Am J Trop Med Hyg.* 2010;83(6):1178-82.
- Legler C, Castillo P, Kuhns D, Pedersen K, Thomsen K, Woods D. Global clinical experiences for physician assistant students. *Journal of Physician Assistant Education.* 2007;18(3):86-93.
- Petersen KJ, Hooker RS, Legler CF et al. A report on the findings of the ad hoc committee on international physician assistant education – October 2003. *Perspect Physician Assist Educ.* 2003;14(4):224-5.
- Twenty-Fifth Annual Report on Physician Assistant Educational Programs in the United States, 2007-2008. Alexandria, VA: Physician Assistant Education Association; 2008.



**Thank  
You** *Mahalo*  
*Kiitos*  
*Tack*  
*Grazie*  
*Toda*  
*Thanks*  
*Takk*  
**Gracias** **Merci**



# Q & A

Zehra Ahmed PA-C, MBBS  
Assistant Professor & Interim Chair  
Department of Physician Assistant Studies  
New York Institute of Technology

Rachel Ditoro, MSPAS, PA-C  
Director of Clinical Education  
Arcadia University Physician Assistant  
Program

Nicholas M. Hudak, MPA, MEd, PA-C  
Duke University School of Medicine  
Assistant Professor, Department of  
Community & Family Medicine  
Clinical Coordinator, Physician Assistant  
Program

Kevin Wyne, PA-C, MPAS, MSc  
Faculty Associate  
UW-Madison School of Medicine and  
Public Health  
Physician Assistant Program