

Please contact the IT Officer at it@insight.org.au to be put in touch with this placement participant for further information.

Placement

Mangochi, Malawi. Primary Care

Dates of Placement

09 September 2018

The Application Process

Email contact. \$1500 fee + Submission of passport, letter of good standing from uni and official academic transcript to Naturally Africa Volunteers.

Placement Structure / Typical Day

The placement involved activities of the medical project of Naturally Africa Volunteers (community wound care clinics and health education sessions) + placement at the regional hospital.

For 3 days a week I helped coordinate a wound care clinic in the AM and ran a community health education session in the PM. Lunch was provided and Friday afternoons were free time.

For 2 days a week, I undertook hospital placement from 8am - 2pm (not including the hour-long trip to and from Mangochi city) deciding to spend these days attending clinics.

Level of Flexibility on the Placement

Very flexible. I was needed to run a few of the activities of the medical project. However, this never hindered me from taking days to explore areas of interest e.g. attending a local antenatal clinic, spending a day in the hospital lab learning about malaria, bilharzia and tuberculosis diagnosis.

Wound care clinics and community education sessions were independent with support from an experienced coordinators available as required.

Minimal independence during hospital placement, observed clinics.

Expectations and Assessment

Expectation that I would assist the team with the medical project as required. Only assessment was the Dean's elective form.

Skills Gained

- Hands-on wound care and dressing
- Health-related communication skills with lay people, children and with interpreter assistance
- Planning of community health education sessions

Placement Highlights

Managing to get kids having fun while learning about hand hygiene at a health education session at the school run by the charity.

Challenging Aspects of the Placement

- Adjusting my medical advice and management to the resource-limited context of Malawi.
- Tailoring community education sessions to lay people and children while also utilising an interpreter
- Deciding to only attend clinics during the hospital placement so as to minimise the risk of acquiring TB (query TB patients were kept on the medical wards)

Other Activities

- Safari
- Visited local resorts
- Played sports and games with children at the local school

Would you recommend this placement to someone interested in global health?

Yes. The strengths of this placement were its flexibility, the significant exposure to public health in Malawi and the great support from the charity running the elective.