

## INTERNATIONAL HEALTH ELECTIVE POLICY

**GENERAL STATEMENT:** An international clinical experience offers residents the opportunity to learn about health and healing from a more global perspective by becoming immersed in the work, as well as the cultural, social, economic and political issues of another country that may impact that nation's healthcare system. This elective rotation allows participants to be of service to an international community while broadening their thinking about the practice of medicine. Learning occurs through both independent study and hands-on experiences. Mentoring by the elective's director or identified faculty helps the resident design the experience to meet the goals and objectives set out in this policy.

**GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:** By completing an international clinical experience, the resident will continue to develop the attitudes, skills and knowledge necessary to achieve the following goals:

- Practice medicine in its socio-cultural context;
- Gain an appreciation for another country's healthcare system while providing healthcare services and medical aid to an underserved population;
- Grow in multicultural sensitivity;
- Become an advocate for underserved populations; and
- Continue the life-long learning process associated with the practice of medicine.

Specific objectives of the international clinical experience should include but are not limited to:

- Development of the capability of effectively understanding, living in and working in another culture;
- Understanding the patient and societal perspectives of practicing medicine in another culture;
- Improving his/her understanding of whole-person, whole-family, and whole-community medicine;
- Consideration of how multiple perspectives such as economics, law, politics and religion impact the practice of medicine;
- Learning about alternative healthcare systems in a resource deficient area;
- Developing a clear and more critical understanding of one's own personal/professional objectives;
- Enhancing interpersonal communication and teamwork skills; and
- Improving his/her ability to teach other medical professionals.

**ELIGIBILITY:** Residents from any department at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics (UIHC) interested in support for an international elective must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Complete the application found online<sup>\*</sup>; proposed rotations to a resident's home country will generally not be approved. Exceptions will be considered by the committee on an individual basis.
- Submit application materials to the GME Office for review by the International Health Elective Subgroup (Subgroup) at least 90 days prior to the beginning date of the rotation;
- Provide the dates of the international clinical experience (not to exceed 8 weeks), including an anticipated departure date for approval;
- Show evidence that the resident will provide his/her own funds for travel, room, board and any other expenses incurred during the rotation. If approved by the Subgroup, the resident's stipend will continue – if the elective is not approved, the resident's stipend will be suspended during the time they are gone and restarted upon return to UIHC rotations. Health insurance will also continue as per the house staff policy; however it is strongly recommended that residents traveling outside of the country also purchase travel health insurance.
- If temporary malpractice insurance is available in the country of the rotation, provide evidence that it has been purchased. If temporary malpractice insurance is not available, provide evidence of that information. Coverage by the Iowa State Tort

Claims Act will not be available to the resident during an international clinical experience.

- A visit to the UIHC Travel Clinic is required prior to leaving. An email to the Chair of the International Health Elective Committee is required after visiting the UIHC Travel Clinic.
- The International Health Elective Committee can provide advice about international travel if you desire – please notify the Chair of the International Health Elective Committee if you want to take advantage of this advice.

**SUBGROUP COMPOSITION:** The International Health Elective Subgroup of the Graduate Medical Education Committee will serve as a clearinghouse of expertise and resources for any resident or residency program who is interested in arranging educational rotations in underserved regions of the world. The Subgroup will be comprised of the following members:

- Chair – Program Director of a participating house staff training program. The position of Chair will rotate every three years, with approval of the GMEC Chair;
- Two additional Program Directors or Associate Program Directors, preferably from programs other than the Chair’s program;
- One or more other interested faculty members; and
- One or more interested house staff members.

The GMEC Chair shall appoint Subgroup members, in consultation with the Subgroup’s Chair. Proposed modifications to this policy will first be discussed and approved by the Subgroup, and then carried forward by its Chair to the GMEC Chair for consideration by and approval of the GMEC.

**ALLOCATION OF SUPPORT:** If an international elective rotation is approved by the resident’s Program Director and by the Subgroup, then the resident is eligible for stipend continuation by UIHC.

Rotations in countries with established preceptors with connections to the UIHC are strongly encouraged. Support will be granted to the resident if  $\geq 80\%$  of the Subgroup reviews the application and agrees that the rotation is appropriately designed, the applicant meets the eligibility requirements and the rotation is not deemed to be dangerous.

Approved applications will be reported to the Medical Director of GME and to the GME Committee.

**ASSESSMENT:** A formal evaluation of the experience shall be required by the Subgroup. This assessment shall be completed with 6 months of completion of the rotation and shall be comprised of the following:

- A presentation of 30-60 minutes to house staff members, intended to share information and experience – notify the Chair of the International Health Elective so others may attend the presentation (e.g. the CCOM Global Opportunities Interest Group)
- A written evaluation by the supervising physician at the site of service, submitted to and monitored by the Program Director; and
- A written evaluation by the resident of the international clinical experience elective submitted to the Program Director and copied to the Chair of the International Health Elective.

Approved by the Graduate Medical Education Committee	10/04/05
Reviewed/Approved by the Graduate Medical Education Committee without modification	12/06/05
Modification Approved by the Graduate Medical Education Committee	10/7/08

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- This policy can be found at <http://www.uihealthcare.com/depts/graduatemedicaleducation/policiesandprocedures/index.html>
- The policy and the form are also available on the Vault. Access to the secured log on is <http://anesthesia.healthcare.uiowa.edu/version4/gme/VaultResourcesfor/tabid/586/Default.aspx>. Once logged in, the form is at the ‘Resources for House Staff’ tab. For questions about logging into the Vault, call the GME Office at 356-2256.