

## STUDENT OVERSEAS ELECTIVE PROGRAM



### Historical Background

Working in a developing world hospital will be an experience that you will never forget! You will treasure the memory of unusual transport used to get to your site as well as the different cuisine you will experience. You will see diseases in stages of development you have only read about. Many students have found this experience helps them put perspective to their medical or dental education. Since this program began in 1968, over 200 students have been sponsored. They traveled to all corners of the globe.

**In general,** sponsorship will be granted where the service overseas is related to a Christian medical outreach and the applicant holds a regular membership with CMDS (includes a signed copy of the Statement of Faith), and sees the opportunity for working overseas as a means of service and learning as well as an opportunity for first hand exposure to a developing country.

Here are some questions candidates often ask:

### **HOW SOON CAN I GO?**

To begin, you should be in the final years of your medical/dental school program. Most schools do not offer elective periods before that. Until you have some clinical experience, you will not be very helpful to an overseas program or receive its fullest benefits.

### **WHEN DO I START TO PREPARE?**

This does not mean, however, that you wait until your final year to begin planning for it! Most overseas programs that take students are already full a year beforehand so you should begin trying to make contacts with places and countries you are interested in before your final year.

## **HOW DO I START?**

This is where most get stuck. You want to go, but what are the requirements, who do you contact, and how will your overseas elective be financed? Let's break down the process.

Make an appointment with your Dean of Student Affairs and discuss your interest in an international health elective. If you are a resident, check with your program director.

You probably want academic credit for the experience so you will be using one of your student elective periods to go. Some students also combine the time with a vacation to stay longer.

Many schools have requirements as to when you may and may not take electives away from campus. They may also have requirements regarding the qualifications of your overseas medical mentor. Check this out first so that, as you further explore your options, you will not waste time setting up a program that your school will cancel for some previously unknown reason. Also, ask for information about what you and your mentor will have to do to receive academic credit (written reports, etc.).

## **HOW DO I LOOK FOR A SPECIFIC LOCATION?**

**Firstly**, your school may have a list of locations where other students have traveled. Ask about this.

**Secondly**, contact your local CMDS Campus Contact (C.C.C.) and through them, your local CMDS graduate group. They can suggest Christian faculty members who you can contact as well as Christian physicians and dentists in your area who will know of peers working overseas.

**Thirdly**, ask your pastor, priest or missions committee member at your church if there are any missionaries supported by your congregation/denomination doing medical missions.

**Finally**, consult the list of International Preceptor Sites below.

## **HOW TO MAKE CONTACT?**

As an initial step, it is usually best to directly contact the hospital and doctor you wish to work with. Tell them who you are (medical or dental student, resident, male, female, married, single, with or without kids who are coming etc.), the months you would like to come, how you heard of them, and why you are interested in doing such an elective. Also include any specific requirements of your school. When applying to a mission hospital, you should include something of your faith experience and church background. Ask if they are willing for you to come. If your requested time is not available, find out if there are other options.

If this person and hospital are agreeable to your proposal, what is the next step from their organizational perspective? Many missions require that even those going for a two month elective fill out at least a short form application to the general mission as part of the process. Government organizations may have other requirements. Every situation is different so follow up carefully on any instructions you receive from your new mentor.

It is also important to clarify, in this contact, what your financial obligations will be. Generally, you can assume that you will pay your own way and living expenses but each situation differs slightly in terms of the specifics. It might be helpful to phrase it in terms of "I presume that I will be paying my own travel and living expenses while there. Are there any other financial obligations I need to consider? Approximately how much are monthly living expenses, etc.?" You may wonder why you have to pay at all when you are going to work, but keep in mind that the missionaries and ministry you plan to work with are being supported by donations and all are on a limited budget. Welcome to the club!

## **HOW DO I FIND SUPPORT FOR MY PROJECT?**

Students are encouraged to find a major portion of their financial backing through interested friends and churches. CMDS Canada offers some financial assistance for students and trainees going overseas.

After setting up your project we recommend that, with the help of your CMDS Campus Contact, you contact your local CMDS graduate chapter and let them know of your plans. Application forms are available at [www.cmdscanada.org/OverseasElective](http://www.cmdscanada.org/OverseasElective) or by contacting the CMDS National Office. These forms must be completed and approved at the chapter level. Chapters are encouraged to offer financial support to students from their area. The National CMDS office will maximize financial assistance up to \$1500.

There is an application process. The sooner you apply, the more likely your project will get approved. The chapter executive will send your application, with their approval, to the National office along with some direction as to how much the chapter feels able to contribute. If your project is with a mission, which has a Canadian office, CMDS will forward the funds to the mission board where you will have an account. In some cases it is not possible for the bursary money to be applied to the airline tickets. In these cases, we ask that you keep records of all expenses connected with accommodation and transport to the site of your elective, and submit this record on your return home. We will then pay you directly. Your church or family may provide further avenues of possible financial support. Many mission-minded churches want to encourage their young adults to consider missions as well as helping the missionaries where you will serve. They are often very willing to help, at least partially, in funding such an experience. Individuals who wish to help you with funding for your elective can send donations, clearly marked with your name and 'student elective program' to CMDS Canada. A tax-deductible receipt can be issued for these donations. Please note that these funds can only be released to you, the intended beneficiary after

- 1) We have the approved application form and
- 2) We have appropriate receipts for expenses incurred.

If this is God's purpose for your life, he has a way of working out the finances. To us that always seems like the biggest issue, but to Him, it is the smallest. The main question is, "Is this God's will for me?" Pursue that first. Matthew 6:33 tells us to "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you." Matthew is discussing our concern for how we will have our material needs met. This is God's problem, not yours. Yours is to ascertain his will and purposes and then talk with him to discover how he will bring it all about! That's basically what the heroes of the faith listed in Hebrews 11 had to do. We're no different.

## **SHOULD I TAKE MY SPOUSE?**

If you have one, YES!! There is no way to ever share the experience through words. Since you will be considering the impact of this time as part of God's total leading in your life, we truly believe it is best done together. Even more, it's part of building your own family history - the "Do you remember when?" part that no one else can quite share!

## **MORE INFORMATION:**

Physician Travel Packs (PTP) and Dental Travel Packs (DTP) are available from Health Partners International of Canada. These travel packs are portable medical and dental kits designed for medical and dental missions in developing countries. They are available by calling 1-800-627-1787 or visiting the HPI website at [www.hpicanada.ca/ptp.cfm](http://www.hpicanada.ca/ptp.cfm). Traditionally the National Office has received donations to cover the cost of these travel packs. Please contact the office to verify that this subsidy is available.

## INTERNATIONAL PRECEPTOR SITES

Here are suggestions of mission organizations involved in medical work, which accept medical students for short-term electives.

### **AFRICA INLAND MISSION (INT'L) CANADA**

1641 Victoria Park Ave.  
Scarborough, ON    M1R 1P8  
416-751-6077 or 877-407-6077 Ext 28  
416-751-3467 fax  
[www.aimint.org/can](http://www.aimint.org/can)  
Email: [shorttermassist.can@aimint.net](mailto:shorttermassist.can@aimint.net)

### **CANADIAN BAPTIST INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES**

7185 Millcreek Dr.  
Mississauga, ON    L5N 5R4  
905-821-3533  
905-826-3441 fax  
<http://www.cbmin.org/>

### **CHRISTIAN and MISSIONARY ALLIANCE**

Box 7900, Station B.  
Willowdale, ON    M2K 2R6  
416-492-8772  
Email: [nationaloffice@cmacan.org](mailto:nationaloffice@cmacan.org)

### **EMMANUEL HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION OF CANADA**

Dr.A. Ninan, Executive Director  
3220 Faul Bay  
Regina, SK    S4V 2W9  
306-546-3718  
[www.eha-health.org](http://www.eha-health.org)  
Email: [alninan@yahoo.com](mailto:alninan@yahoo.com)

### **INTERSERVE**

10 Huntington Blvd.  
Scarborough, ON    M1W 2S5  
416-499-7511 Ext. 20  
416-499-4472 fax  
Email: [ncot-can@securenym.net](mailto:ncot-can@securenym.net)

### **LATIN AMERICA MISSION**

3075 Ridgeway Dr., Unit 14  
Mississauga, ON    L5L 5M6  
905-569-0001  
905-569-6990 fax  
Email: [info@lamcanada.ca](mailto:info@lamcanada.ca)

### **THE LEPROSY MISSION**

40 Wynford Dr., #216  
Don Mills, ON M3C 1J5  
416-441-3618  
416-441-0203 fax  
Email: [t1m@t1mcanada.org](mailto:t1m@t1mcanada.org)

### **HBS FOUNDATION (Hôpital Bon Samaritan)**

PO Box 1290  
Lake Worth FL 33460  
561-553-0883  
<http://www.hbslimbe.org/>  
Email: [hbsfl@bellsouth.net](mailto:hbsfl@bellsouth.net)

**OMF INTERNATIONAL - CANADA**

5155 Spectrum Way, Bldg 21  
Mississauga, ON L4W 5A1  
905-568-9971 or 888-657-8010  
905-568-9974 fax  
Email: [omfcanada@omf.ca](mailto:omfcanada@omf.ca)

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH of CANADA**

Lindsay Hepburn, 50 Wynford Dr.,  
Don Mills, ON M3C 1J7  
416-441-1111 or 800-619-7301  
<http://www.presbyterian.ca/>  
Email: [lhepburn@presbyterian.ca](mailto:lhepburn@presbyterian.ca)

**SIM CANADA**

10 Huntingdale Blvd.  
Scarborough, ON M1W 2S5  
416-497-2424 or 1-800-294-6918  
416-497-2444 fax  
Email: [info@sim.ca](mailto:info@sim.ca)

**THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE MISSION (TEAM of Canada)**

2635 32<sup>nd</sup> Street SW  
Calgary, AB T3E 3R8  
800-295-4160  
Email: [TEAM@TEAMcanada.org](mailto:TEAM@TEAMcanada.org)

**CROSSWORLD - CANADA**

1020 Matheson Blvd. E. #11,  
Mississauga, ON L4W 4J9  
905-238-0904  
905-629-8439 fax  
Email: [bonita.sparling@crossworld.org](mailto:bonita.sparling@crossworld.org)

**WEC INTERNATIONAL**

37 Aberdeen Ave.,  
Hamilton, ON L8P 2N6  
905-529-0166  
905-529-0630  
[www.wec-canada.org](http://www.wec-canada.org)  
Email: [info@wec-canada.org](mailto:info@wec-canada.org)

**(HCJB WORLD RADIO) WORLD RADIO MISSIONARY FELLOWSHIP**

2476 Argentia Rd., Suite 201,  
Mississauga, ON L5N 6M1  
905-821-6313  
905-821-6314 [ECUADOR]  
Email: [hcjbcan@hcjb.org](mailto:hcjbcan@hcjb.org)

**NEPAL**

Dhadeldhura Hospital  
Chauchari Hospital  
Lamjung Hospital  
Email: [elective@hdcsnepal.org](mailto:elective@hdcsnepal.org)

Tansen Mission Hospital  
Okhaldhunga Hospital  
[www.tansenhospital.org.np](http://www.tansenhospital.org.np)  
Email: [tansen@umn.org.np](mailto:tansen@umn.org.np)