

International Clinical Internships in Kenya

General Info about the Kenya Working Group

The KWG of the International Centre for Disability and Rehabilitation (ICDR) at the University of Toronto is an organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for people with disabilities in Kenya through rehabilitation-focused education, service provision and research. In partnership with the Disability Service Programme (DSP) the KWG has been sending Canadian physiotherapy and occupational therapy students to Nyanza Province in Western Kenya for clinical placements since 2004.

Partner

The Disability Service Programme (DSP) office and clinic is located in Opapo, a village outside Homa Bay in Nyanza Province. The DSP clinic is in operation Tuesdays and Thursdays with the remaining days of the week spent in the surrounding districts doing home visits, outreach clinics, and school visits. As the only community focused rehabilitation organization providing services for people with disabilities in the area, the DSP is in high demand.

Disclaimers/Precautions (If Any)

This placement may not be suitable for students who:

- May have difficulty being immersed in a very different culture with prominent issues such as gender roles, polygamy, and poverty
- Have severe environmental or dietary allergies (The nearest major hospital is 2-3 hours away by vehicle in Kisumu)
- Feel uncomfortable with a rustic lifestyle i.e. limited access to running water and electricity

General Info about The Placement

This international placement site has the potential to enhance skills and problem solving abilities in a way that Canadian sites may not. The development of 'soft' skills, such as resourcefulness, cultural competence, adaptability and personal reflection, cannot be avoided in this uniquely challenging environment. It is essential that interested students understand that the development of Western 'hard' skills is not necessarily a focus of this placement rather an appreciation of global health challenges will be fostered.

Within the context of a community-based rehabilitation (CBR) programme, students will work with a wide variety of clients, patient populations and clinical presentations. Children comprise a large percentage of clients seen.

Supervision

KWG strongly supports the importance of working with local professionals to truly appreciate the influence of local culture within the context of local health needs and services. The

placement supervisor is either a Kenyan physiotherapist or occupational therapist, and may not be of the same profession as the visiting student due to limitations in availability.

Accommodations

While students have the option of staying at a local motel, students generally stay at the household of the DSP founder, Mr. Carilus Okidi. This enriching experience allows visitors to have a better understanding of the Kenyan culture and lifestyle.

For more information, please contact Ellen Leung, Vice-chair of Education at:
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