INTERNATIONAL MEDICINE ROTATION ELECTIVE SYLLABUS

Level of Training
PGY2 or PGY3 (rarely PGY1)

Length of Rotation
2 weeks

Preceptors’/Attendings’ Name(s) and titles
Family Medicine faculty, physicians at international sites

Contact’s Name
Lisa Jernigan, MD (FMC faculty contact)

Location(s) of the Rotation
Central America
Caribbean
Others

Description of the Rotation
If you choose to participate in an international elective, you will have the unique opportunity to practice medicine in a setting that is very different, both medically and culturally, from what you may experience in medical training in the U.S. In developing world settings you will see tropical diseases, severe nutritional deficiencies, and common diseases that present in uncommon situations. You are also confronted with different cultural and health attitudes that demand sensitive and compassionate patient interactions. You also have the opportunity to gain an appreciation of the difficulties of life and medical practice in medically undeserved areas. Finally, you may develop an awareness of the magnitude of the medical need that exists in many parts of the world, and feel the satisfaction inherent in helping to meet that need, even in very small ways.

Specifically, residents begin an international rotation by learning about medical issues related to foreign travel by researching pre-trip requirements for travel to the country of their rotation. This includes learning about required vaccines, necessary prophylactic medications, and the general precautions that travelers should observe at their chosen site. Once in the foreign country, you participate in providing medical care under the supervision of a preceptor. If the preceptor is a full-time clinician at the site, you follow his/her usual schedule as closely as possible to gain an appreciation of the reality of practicing in such an area. “Low-tech” approaches to diagnosis and treatment are emphasized. Although basic laboratory technology is generally available at rotation sites, the emphasis of an international rotation is more appropriately on the use of the constantly available tools of history and physical examination for
Throughout the rotation, residents are encouraged to highlight both those disease processes most common in the host country, and areas of similarity between the host site and practice in north Florida. You will observe the general living conditions of the people you serve, and should be able to describe the effects of such issues as educational level, poverty, health habits, eating habits, and the contamination of food and water on the health of the populace. Issues such as the accessibility of health care and basic medicines are also considered on international rotations.

**Schedule**

Residents will be involved with the usual activities at the rotation site, and are scheduled out of the FMC for one of the weeks of the rotation. Prior to leaving, residents will:

- **12 weeks prior to leaving**: go on the Internet to research appropriate pre-trip preparations for travel to your selected rotation site, prepare an outline of necessary immunizations and prophylactic medications, and detail the precautions to be taken with food and water. Plan to receive recommended vaccines.
- **Week before your travel**: The team may be scheduled to meet once or twice to discuss diseases and their presentation and management in the international setting, to learn some basic medical Spanish if needed, and to pack supplies.
- **Following your return**: The team will usually get together to share thoughts and generally debrief and evaluate their experience.

**Learning Goals**

During this experience, the resident will gain skills in:

1. knowing the challenges of foreign travel and proper preparation for travel to a specific country (Competencies: Medical Knowledge 1, 2, Problem Based Learning 5).
2. understanding the types of medical needs in a foreign country and which needs may reasonably be met (Competency: Professionalism 3).
3. practicing effectively in an international, medically underserved site (Competencies: Interpersonal and Communication Skills 1, 2, 3, Professionalism 3, Patient Care 4, 7b).

**Learning Objectives**

**Knowledge**

After this rotation, you should be able to:

1. research appropriate pre-trip preparations for foreign travel, prepare an outline of necessary immunizations and prophylactic medications, and detail the precautions to be taken with food and water (Competencies: Medical Knowledge 1, Problem Based Learning 5).
2. prior to travel, describe to the FMC rotation preceptor the following tropical diseases common in the host country (Competency: Medical Knowledge 2):
   - malaria, including chloroquine resistance
   - intestinal parasitic diseases (roundworm, hookworm, tapeworm, etc.)
   - amoebic dysentery
   - dengue fever
   - cholera
   - diarrheal disease and oral rehydration
   - schistosomiasis
   - trypanosomiasis
   - filariasis
   - leishmaniasis
   - leprosy
   - others, as appropriate to the host site

3. prior to travel, describe to the FMC preceptor (usually Dr. Jernigan) the common presentations of kwashiorkor, marasmus, failure to thrive, pellagra, and other vitamin deficiencies and describe a plan of treatment and follow up appropriate to the patient and host site. The resources of the local population must be considered in this plan and be communicated to the patient and/or family in a way they can understand (Competencies: Professionalism 3, Patient Care 4).

Skills

At the end of this rotation, you should be able to:

1. diagnose the following tropical diseases as seen in the rotation site (Competency: Medical Knowledge 2):
   - malaria
   - intestinal parasitic diseases (roundworm, hookworm, tapeworm, etc.)
   - amoebic dysentery
   - dengue fever
   - cholera
   - diarrheal disease and oral rehydration
   - schistosomiasis
   - trypanosomiasis
   - filariasis
   - leishmaniasis
   - leprosy
   - others, as appropriate to the host site

2. diagnose common presentations of kwashiorkor, marasmus, failure to thrive, pellagra, and other vitamin deficiencies, and develops a plan of treatment and follow up appropriate to the patient and host side. Also, describe various presentations of congenital heart disease and management in this setting (Competency: Medical Knowledge 2).
3. effectively utilize history and physical examination skills and basic diagnostic tests as appropriate at the rotation site (Competencies: Patient Care 7a, Systems Based Practice 2).

4. flexibly and creatively use medical resources available at the rotation site (Competencies: Professionalism 3, Patient Care 4).

5. given local community resources and conditions, appropriately adjust work up and treatment plans. (For example, dietary instructions to a diabetic patient need to consider the local foods and cooking methods, and skin care instructions for the treatment of impetigo should take into account possible contamination of the water supply) Competencies: Professionalism 3, Patient Care 4.

6. under the supervision of the preceptor, demonstrate improvement in the performance of physical skills and procedures such as incision and drainage, suturing, splinting, etc (Competency: Patient Care 7b).

7. demonstrate the ability to communicate with patients in a compassionate and sensitive manner that reflects an understanding of the everyday stresses of life in the host country, and the effect of these things on the health of patients (Competency: Interpersonal and Communication Skills 1).

Attitudes

As a result of this rotation, you should be able to:

1. demonstrate respect for different cultural and health attitudes through sensitive and compassionate interactions with patients (Competencies: Interpersonal Communication and Skills 1, 2).

2. demonstrate an appreciation of the difficulties and positive aspects of life and medical practice in severely undeserved areas by sensitively and compassionately interacting with patients and medical staff (Competencies: Interpersonal Communication Skills 1, 3).

Methodology for Teaching

As previously described, you will provide medical care in the host country under the supervision of your preceptor. You will learn by doing and gain new skills and refine others by caring for patients and through completion of assigned readings.

Evaluation

The preceptor that accompanies your group to the host site completes an evaluation of your performance at the end of the trip (see Attachment 1). In addition, you will complete an evaluation that addresses needs that might enhance educational experiences at that site. You are also evaluated on the extent and quality of your pre-trip research, your knowledge of tropical diseases commonly seen at your rotation site, and other information from the reading required for the rotation.
Recommended and/or Required Readings

The following readings are required for this rotation.

1. CDC summary on the host country (see www.cdc.gov on the Internet)

2. The Travel and Tropical Medicine Handbook, Jong, Elaine C., M.D. 
   Chapters 12, 18, 21, 27, 32-36, others as needed. (Available in Dr. Jernigan’s office).

Recommended Reading:

Additional Tropical Medicine Texts in Dr. Jernigan’s and Dr. Mazziotta’s offices.

Reviewed/Revised: 05/13/05, 02/08/06, 04/07, 05/08, 09/08, 08/10, 09/10, 08/11, 08/15