



Global Health Outreach
A ministry of the Christian Medical & Dental Associations



PARTICIPANT MANUAL

for Short-term Mission Trips



Global Health Outreach

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Global Health Outreach is a ministry of the Christian Medical & Dental Associations. The Christian Medical & Dental Associations was founded in 1931 and currently serves more than 19,000 members; coordinates a network of Christian healthcare professionals for personal and professional growth; sponsors student ministries in medical and dental schools; conducts overseas healthcare projects for underserved populations; addresses policies on healthcare, medical ethics and bioethical and human rights issues; distributes educational and inspirational resources; provides missionary healthcare professionals with continuing education resources; and conducts international academic exchange programs.

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Contact Us

This handbook is intended to serve as an introduction to serving with us on a short-term mission trip. It may not answer every single one of your questions, and that's where we come in. Our staff members are available to help you, so we encourage you to contact us with any questions you may have. Our offices are open Monday through Thursday from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

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INTRODUCTION

to *GHO* and *CMDA*



Welcome to Global Health Outreach

Welcome to Global Health Outreach (GHO). We are short-term missions ministry of the Christian Medical & Dental Associations (CMDA). This manual will help you understand our mission teams better and allow you to make an informed decision as you seek to determine whether the Lord is leading you to serve on a GHO team.

Our mission trips vary in length from one to two weeks depending on where they are serving. We have teams serving in Central and South America, Africa, Europe, the Middle East and Asia. We send primarily general medical and dental teams with some specialty focused teams, including general surgery, orthopedic surgery, human trafficking, orphan care, refugee care, prison ministry and plenty of family and student friendly teams. There is a team for anyone who has a heart willing to serve Jesus Christ through healthcare missions.

The primary goal of our mission trips is evangelism and discipleship. We hope to create disciples who go on to make disciples. You have the opportunity to offer hope and healing through the gospel message of Jesus Christ. We have trained team leaders who will direct your team. Through our teams we disciple participants, grow national churches, share the gospel and provide physical and spiritual care for the poor and needy who typically have little to no access to healthcare services. We serve in a variety of settings from rural areas with minimal resources to urban squatter settings. We will frequently provide additional areas of ministry including a Vacation Bible School (VBS) type children's program, pastor training conference, reading eyeglasses clinic, etc. We work with our national partners to be strategic in our missions seeking to serve the least, the last and the lost.

There are opportunities to grow your faith exponentially as you stretch yourself outside your comfort zone. This mission allows you to step away from the distractions of everyday routine and share praise and worship with your team, twice daily team devotions and/or testimonies by team participants and learn and grow with and from each other. It allows the opportunity to connect and learn from another culture and people and see the bigger picture of the body of Christ around the world.

As you travel the world serving through healthcare missions, you will seek to be the hands and feet of Jesus to a hurting world. In this, you will see Jesus in the very people you have come to help. And feel more blessed than you have given.

About CMDA

At Christian Medical & Dental Associations, our vision is to bring the hope and healing of Jesus Christ to the world through healthcare professionals. CMDA educates, encourages and equips Christian healthcare professionals to glorify God.

Thousands of CMDA members are located in the U.S. and around the world. Through our Campus & Community Ministries, we evangelize and disciple the next generation of Christian healthcare professionals on nearly every medical and dental school campus across the U.S. CMDA also produces educational and inspirational resources. In addition, we serve as the voice of Christian healthcare professionals by standing up for the rights of the unborn, working to protect the right of conscience for healthcare professionals and providing a much-needed voice for numerous other bioethical and healthcare issues.

For more information about our various outreaches, please visit www.cmda.org

It is not a requirement to be a CMDA member in order to participate on a GHO mission trip, but we do encourage you to join alongside other healthcare professionals who are actively working to glorify God with the gifts and talents He has given them.



Who Can Apply?

Anyone with a heart to serve God can apply to serve on a GHO trip. Our teams are about two-thirds healthcare professionals and one-third non-medical or “servant” helpers. Our servant helpers frequently help in the pharmacy, reading eyeglass clinic, dental clinic cleaning instruments, public health training, evangelism and discipleship. They also help with other programs such as the children’s program or pastor training conference, and wherever there is a need. Students have opportunities to shadow their area of interest such as a pre-medical student shadowing with different physicians or a nursing student shadowing with the nurses at triage. They also work in the various areas of clinic. We allow families to serve together so children are welcome on most teams. However, some mission trips are not appropriate for children, and our team leaders will help you decide if it is appropriate to bring your family along on a particular team. Our teams frequently recruit:

- Physicians
- Surgeons
- Dentists
- Nurse Practitioners
- Physician Assistants
- Nurses
- Physical Therapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Opticians
- Optometrists
- Dieticians
- Public Health Specialists
- Health Education Specialists
- Pharmacists
- Dental Hygienists
- Dental Assistants
- Emergency Medical Technicians
- Paramedics
- Pastors
- Non-medical servants

GENERAL
Information



Christians and Non-Christians

You do not have to be a Christian to join our mission trips. We invite people from different faith traditions to join our teams, as long as they read and accept our biblical basis of ministry and personal standards of conduct. We have had people from many backgrounds join our teams. Some faith traditions hold to beliefs that are not consistent with our biblical foundations and would likely find our teams uncomfortable to serve on. We do expect all team members to fully participate in our team meetings, praise and worship and devotions and/or testimonies. If this would make you uncomfortable, then we encourage you to seek other service opportunities.

Non-discrimination Statement

Global Health Outreach, a ministry of the Christian Medical & Dental Associations, does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, age¹, or disability² in acceptance, treatment, or participation in its programs, services, or activities.

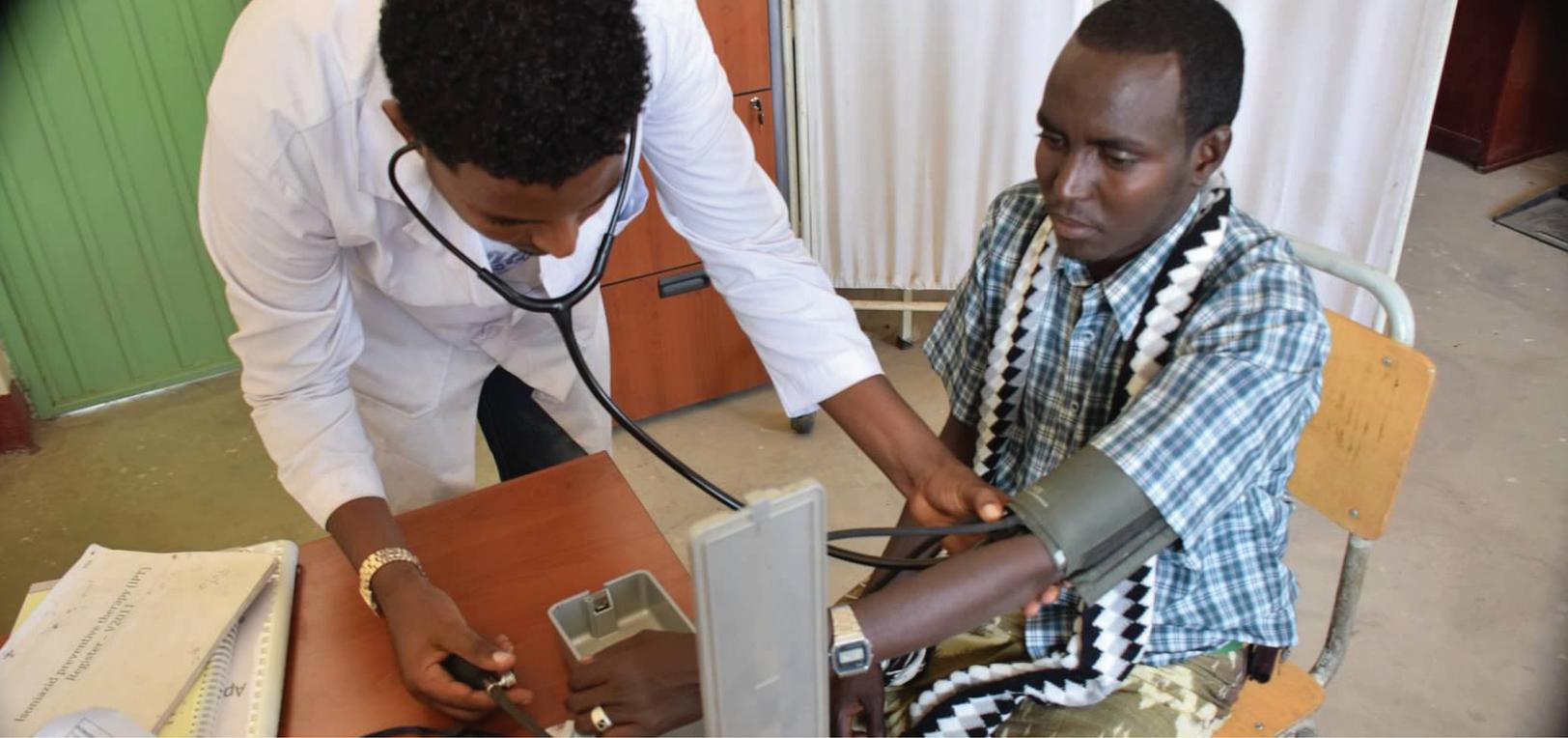
Global Health Outreach follows the well-accepted holistic view of health and medicine, as sanctioned by the World Health Organization. This view understands the bio-psycho-socio-spiritual integration of body-mind-and-soul. Disease affects our whole being. The best healthcare requires consideration and treatment of each component of our being.

Global Health Outreach treats patients without regard to race, religion, gender, culture and social class, and is fully compliant with all federal anti-discrimination requirements.

Global Health Outreach is a Christian ministry and has a Christian witness reflected in its work. However, non-Christian participation is welcome. Each team member is expected to fully participate in all aspects of our mission allowing the team to unify as one body under Christ Jesus.

¹ Some international sites or healthcare activities are not suitable to children.

² While it is not our wish to limit participation based on ability, mission trips to international sites cannot always accommodate disabilities.



Trip Costs

Project fees listed for your trip include in-country costs and an estimated cost of your airline ticket. The registration fee paid with your application is put toward your project fees. Project fees cover all fees in country, including food, lodging, bottled water, transportation, security, formulary and equipment/ supply rentals, eyeglasses, licensing fees, health and emergency evacuation insurance, limited evangelism materials, public health teaching materials and the supplies you will receive, which includes a GHO shirt, EvangeCube, song book, name badge, devotion book, etc. Healthcare professionals will also receive a copy of The Handbook of Medicine on their first mission trip with GHO.

Also included in your trip costs are the local wages paid to our interpreters, local pastors who join the evangelism team, local healthcare professionals and security personnel. It helps cover the costs of an emergency kit for team use as necessary and an HIV kit for potential exposure testing and prophylactic treatment. In addition, GHO regularly gives a donation to the church or national partner so as not to drain their resources and help them continue to disciple the community long after our team leaves for home.

Fundraising

You are encouraged to raise support to help pay for your trip fees and airfare. Once you are accepted to the team you will receive an email from ServiceReef, with information on how to set up a fundraising letter and a personalized webpage. This is a wonderful opportunity for your family, friends, church family and prayer warriors to be a part of this mission team. All donations are tax-deductible according to current Internal Revenue Service regulations. All donations solicited are with the understanding that CMDA has complete control over the use of all donated funds as required by the IRS in order for us to provide charitable contribution receipts for tax purposes.

Scholarships

A limited number of scholarships are available for each mission trip. For more information, please visit www.cmda.org/scholarships.



Safety Concerns

GHO does our best to make your mission trip as safe as possible. We are constantly monitoring global security threats from natural disasters, terrorism and infectious diseases. We receive daily WorldAware Intelligence Briefings and twice daily Overseas Security Advisory Council newsletters. We work closely with our national partners, as well, who are our “boots on the ground” eyes to the area we are serving. They are also working to take sensible precautions for our teams to have safe housing and transportation as well as secure areas we serve as much as is possible.

As part of our safety procedures, we provide volunteer missionary travel insurance for each team member. This cost is included in your project fees. This includes emergency medical evacuation, security evacuation and health insurance that helps to cover any unexpected costs beyond your private health insurance.

Overseas malpractice insurance is available for you to purchase independently if you wish, but it is not routine on our general medical and dental missions. For our surgical trips operating in a hospital setting, all medical personnel team members will automatically be enrolled for medical malpractice insurance. This is required by the hospitals, and GHO will take care of arranging this for you. This cost will simply be added to your total project fees.



Application Process

The easiest way to apply is to visit www.cmda.org/gho. You can find links to more information about GHO, view our trip calendar to learn about upcoming trips, email team leaders for additional information, etc.

Once you select a mission trip, you can apply for the trip through our website. Our online application system will walk you through your application, as well as any necessary documents and forms. There is a non-refundable registration fee along with submitting your application that will be put toward your trip fees.

Once your application is submitted, it is sent to the team leader. The team leader for that particular trip will review the application and determine if there is room for your position on the team (i.e., physicians, nurses, non-medical servants, etc.) They have to balance the number of positions available on their team. You will receive an email notifying you when you are accepted to the team. You may be contacted by the team leader if they do not have space for you on their team. They or the GHO staff can help you find a team that has space or is more appropriate for you.

Occasionally it may be necessary for you to cancel from your mission team. You must contact GHO and complete the Cancellation Form. You are not canceled from the team until this form is completed and returned to GHO.

Team Acceptance

You will receive a welcome letter from GHO once you have been accepted to a team. You will begin hearing from GHO staff regarding necessary documents they need for credentialing as well as completing the necessary travel and waiver documentation. Credentialing is simply getting a temporary license to practice medicine or dentistry in the country you are going. This will not be necessary for every team member depending on your role on the team. The requirements for this are different for each country, and GHO staff will let you know what documents are needed. Commonly requested documents are:

- Copy of your passport
- Additional passport style photo
- Travel/waiver forms
- License
- Diploma
- CV or resume
- Board certification
- Student/resident letter of enrollment

Your team leader will contact you as well, but initially it is normal to have minimal communication early in the team building phase. Once the team is complete or nearing completion, you will begin hearing more from your team leader regarding the trip.





Immunizations and Malaria Prophylaxis

As soon as you are accepted to a team, we recommend you set up an appointment with a local travel clinic to be sure you have plenty of time to get the necessary vaccines for the location you are going to. The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) is a great resource for health and travel immunizations. Many of these vaccines require multiple doses and may take some time to complete. You will also want to make sure your current vaccines such as Tetanus are up to date. Healthcare workers should already have Hepatitis B.

Many of our mission teams also require Malaria prophylaxis. The travel clinic should be able to help you determine if you need this where you are going. They will be able to review medication options with you to help you decide which medicine to take for prophylaxis.

Travel Arrangements

We have our own GHO Travel Coordinator (GHOTravel@cnda.org) who works to purchase each team member's airline tickets typically about two months before the team leaves. Flights are coordinated so team members connect with the team prior to their final destination. This ensures that your team will arrive in country together and go through customs and immigration together.

Since tickets are purchased for each team member individually and we have team members from all over the U.S. and Canada, it is not possible to know the exact cost of each ticket and the estimate does not include an in-country commuter flight to an international airport.

It is possible to book your own airline tickets using your travel miles, but you must contact the GHO Travel Coordinator beforehand to ensure your arrival and departure times coincide with the rest of the team. Do NOT book your own flights without first consulting with the GHO Travel Coordinator.

Importantly, airline tickets will not be purchased for you without a signed waiver/travel form. If you have any specific desire for travel deviations, you must contact your team leader and the GHO Travel Coordinator as early as possible.

The GHO Travel Coordinator will send you a flight itinerary to review for approval. Once your ticket is purchased, you own it and it is **NONREFUNDABLE** and **NONTRANSFERABLE**.

Travel documents you will need are a passport that has an expiration date six months beyond the trip return date. Also, many countries we travel to require a Visa. Your team leader will help you to know if this is necessary for the country you are going to and help walk you through that process.

Spiritual Preparation

Spiritual preparation begins before you ever sign up for a GHO mission trip! Prayerfully consider whether God is leading you to serve on a medical and dental mission trip. One of the most important aspects of your preparation for a mission trip is prayer. We encourage you to spend time in prayer. Humble yourself before the Lord and ask Him to guide and direct every aspect of your participation on this mission trip. "The mind of man plans his way, But the Lord directs his steps" (Proverbs 16:9, NASB).

Your team leader will help guide your team's pre-trip devotions. Each one does this differently, but the team leader will email either daily or weekly team devotions before your team leaves. This will help to unite your team to serve as one body united in Christ Jesus.

Each team member will receive a devotion book to use before, during and after your mission trip. There are a few devotions specific to your preparations before leaving for the mission field. In addition, it includes daily devotions to read during your mission trip. There are also some devotions to help guide you through re-entry once you return home.

Prayer warriors are an essential part of our teams. Each team member will be asked to select a handful of people you feel would be good prayer warriors for you and your GHO team. This way daily updates and prayer requests can be sent out for the team. There is typically one prayer warrior stateside who receives these emails and then sends off the prayer requests and updates to the remainder of our prayer warriors. This is necessary for security reasons, particularly when serving in closed countries.



National Partners

GHO always works with a national partner in every country we go to. Before we send in a team, GHO has completed a site visit to the area you will be serving. We work to establish a relationship with our national partner. They are typically evangelistic pastors and church planters, missionaries or faith-based schools. They help us begin to build relationships with the local community, government and area churches. They also help us make arrangements for adequate housing, safe food sources, transportation, security, interpreters and other details necessary for the mission team.

Our national partners help us navigate complex cross-cultural challenges and help the team understand differing worldviews and cultures. They help us bridge the gap by having an established relationship with the community. We, in turn, can extend their outreach and bring some legitimacy to their ministry.

We rely on our national partner to continue to minister to and disciple our patients long after our team returns home. They are able to follow up and disciple new believers, continue to build relationships with others and carry on the work that was started during our trip to share the love of Christ to a hurting world.



Packing List

The following is a general guide to packing recommended for travel on most of our GHO teams. Your team leader will be able to answer most questions specific to the area you will be serving.

GHO Items

- GHO shirt to wear on your travel day to identify other team members, unless otherwise instructed by your team leader
- Nametag to wear throughout the mission trip, particularly on clinic days
- Devotion book
- Songbook
- EvangeCube
- Earplugs
- Humanitarian aid letter (may help at the airport with luggage costs)

Carry On Luggage

- All liquids and toiletries need to be in a quart sized Ziplock bag
- Personal prescription medications
- Equipment needed for the first few days of clinic (stethoscope, scrubs, etc.)

Travel Documents

- Airline ticket confirmation
- Passport
- Visa (if required)
- Immunization record (Yellow Fever card if required)
- Photocopies of important documents in case of loss

Women

- Long pants, jeans or scrubs
- Long skirt or dress for church (below knees)
- Tops with sleeves (no tanks)
- Scarves for head coverings (some locations)
- Modest one-piece bathing suit
- Raincoat/jacket
- Toiletries

Men

- Long pants, jeans or scrubs
- Shirt with sleeves, polo
- Shirt with collar for church
- Swim trunks
- Raincoat/jacket
- Toiletries

Personal Medications

- Prescription medications
- Antimalarial
- Antidiarrheal
- Analgesic
- Antihistamine
- Antibiotic for traveler's diarrhea
- Anti-nausea medication

Helpful Miscellaneous Items

- Hand sanitizer
- Snacks
- Flashlight
- Sunscreen
- Sunglasses, hat
- Mosquito repellent with DEET
- Small Bible, journal
- Cash for souvenirs, drinks, snacks
- Credit card for emergencies
- Photocopies of credit cards and passport
- Pocket multipurpose tool
- Electrical converters
- Extra batteries
- Nalgene water bottle
- Extra bags for storage (shopping, Ziplock)
- Money belt
- Travel pillow
- Small backpack or purse



GHO Team Structure

Each GHO team is different and one of a kind. They can vary in size from a team as small as 10 to more than 50 team members. Some are going to open countries where you can freely share the gospel, while others are going to closed countries where it is illegal to share the gospel. Many countries require a visa, but others do not. GHO staff is always available to help, so feel free to contact us as needed. You can contact GHO by visiting www.cmda.org/gho and sending us your contact information. Otherwise, your team leader will be your key contact to get information about your particular mission.

Team Leader

The team leader for your mission trip will be your best source of information regarding your particular trip. Our team leaders have been on multiple GHO teams and are well experienced on the mission field. They have also typically been on mission to the location they are leading multiple times and have established a relationship with our national partner. Our team leaders are trained annually on multiple mission related topics such as safety and security, discipleship and cross-cultural challenges. They are responsible for managing all aspects of your mission.

Medical Director

This position is an experienced physician who is responsible for managing the medical clinic in country. They help with education, provide clinic set up and oversight, interface with the team's Pharmacy Director on medication availability and communicate with the rest of the team's healthcare professionals. This is the contact person for clinical questions or concerns.

Dental Director

This position is a dentist experienced in missionary dentistry. They supervise all dental care and work with the team leader to acquire the necessary medications, supplies and equipment. They make sure the dental instruments are cleaned and sterilized according to World Health Organization (WHO) standards using pressure pot sterilization. They also take responsibility for the team HIV kit used in instances of exposure to a potential blood borne pathogen, seeing that testing is done appropriately and consulting with the team leader and/or medical director on initiating prophylaxis treatment when deemed necessary.

Pharmacy Director

This position is a missions experienced pharmacist who works with GHO staff to oversee the formulary, adjusting the standard formulary to reflect the needs of the area or country being served. They are responsible for overseeing the packaging and dispensing of medications in the clinic. They also have the authority to make substitutions for prescriptions in consultation with the Medical Director.

Team Pastor or Spiritual Leader

This position directs the evangelism area of our clinic and may frequently be the team leader, a pastor or the national team. They also assist in evangelism efforts and work with the national pastors and church leaders to provide culturally appropriate spiritual care to our patients. Most team members will have the opportunity to participate in this area of clinic. The team leader will work to organize the twice daily team praise and worship as well as devotions and/or testimonies.

Team members will have the opportunity to share their testimony and/or lead one of these devotions. These are typically brief, usually 10 to 15 minutes and are a special time for your team as you open up and share with each other what the Lord has been teaching you or where you have been struggling. If you have never had the chance to share your testimony, this is the perfect opportunity to step outside your comfort zone and share a brief part of "your story" and your walk with Jesus.

You will be provided with an EvangeCube. This is a device designed to help you learn to share the gospel message with your patients. Most people learn through stories and pictures. This will unfold as you share the gospel message to different pictures that go along with the message. It is a helpful tool to use, particularly when working with an interpreter, which adds the complexity of forcing you to stop frequently to allow them to translate. This also gives the patient a visual to help in understanding through language and cultural barriers. You will have the opportunity to learn how to use this and can practice with fellow team members. There are instructions with this and some Scripture recommendations. YouTube videos are also available to learn how it is used.





What Can I Expect on the Mission Trip?

GHO has done a lot of work behind the scenes getting you ready for your mission trip. The first thing you need to do is double check your flight itinerary well before your departure date. Remember, you need to arrive three hours ahead of time for international flights. When you prepare to leave, remember to wear your GHO shirt. This will help you find your team! Most of your team will not know each other and looking for “the shirt” is extremely helpful. You will be given a team flight itinerary prior to departure so you will know how many people on the team will be on your particular flight.

You will likely receive some medications or supplies to pack and bring with you. This should be in your checked luggage unless instructed to bring as a carry-on. Most of the time you can balance this between your suitcases to allow for weight requirements, which are typically a 50-pound weight limit. You will have been given a supply list that reflects the medicine or supplies you are carrying. Put a copy of this in each suitcase that has supplies. Remember to keep items essential for your role on the team (stethoscope, scrubs, etc.) in your carry-on in case of lost luggage. This way you will still be able to work on your first few clinic days. Also, remember to keep your Humanitarian letter in your carry-on, as it may help avoid additional luggage fees.

Typically, your team will arrive in country on a Saturday. This allows for the team to gather together and begin getting to know each other. This also allows for some rest to begin to recover from jetlag before your clinic begins on Monday. You will go to church on Sunday with your national partner. Frequently they will use this time to introduce the team to the national team you will be serving with at the clinic. Sunday afternoons are used to pack the medications from bulk into unit doses as directed by the Pharmacy Director. This is called a pill party because it is fun to talk with and get to know your team members better. You may also view the clinic site and begin to set that up.

The hotel you will stay at will be relatively clean and safe. The food will be safe to eat as much as we can arrange. You will have bottled water available as well. We do our best to keep our teams healthy. Still, it is best to be very careful with what you eat and drink on a mission trip. It is also helpful to plan for stomach upset issues by bringing over-the-counter stomach aides such as antidiarrheal and nausea medicine, as well as antibiotics for travelers' diarrhea. Keeping hand sanitizer with you is also recommended, and GHO provides a small clip-on bottle for your backpack.

A typical clinic day begins with an early breakfast at the hotel, praise and worship, team devotion and/or testimony and then travel to the clinic site. Our clinics typically run like a normal business day, beginning around 8 or 9 a.m. and lasting until 4 or 5 p.m. with a break for lunch usually onsite, which is frequently peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. Then the team departs for the hotel. There is a brief break, dinner, then praise and worship, God sightings and another team member shares a devotion and/or testimony. God sightings are your chance to share with each other where you have seen God at work that day, and it is one of the most special times of your mission trip.

You will be surprised at how quickly the week will pass, and before you know it you will be working your last day of clinic and begin feeling sad about leaving! It is amazing how bonded you will become with your team and the national team! You will frequently have a tourism day on Saturday. This is your chance to see a little of the local interests in the country you are serving and have some fun time with your team. It will help you decompress and begin to process what you have been seeing and hearing of the struggles with those you have been caring for. This is the beginning of your re-entry processing and important for you to begin to go through with those who have been serving alongside you. The culture shock on returning home is frequently harder than the culture shock you experienced on arrival just a short week ago. Allow the Lord to work in and through you as you go through each phase of your mission trip. God is at work to change you and open the eyes of your heart for His people around the world! The body of Christ has now grown much bigger in your eyes. This is indeed one of the blessings of serving on our teams.





GHO Clinic

Be assured that our primary goal is evangelism and discipleship. Having said that, we do want to use best practices and ethics on our mission trips to deliver the best healthcare possible on a short-term mission trip. We also need to keep in mind that it is very easy for helping to hurt.

GHO has developed a patient safety plan for our clinics. To start, it is important to stay within your scope of practice. You should only practice medicine or dentistry according to what you would do in the U.S. In other words, you should not be learning new skills on the mission field. This is important in working with students as well. They should not be doing any skills or procedures they have not already learned in their training. The mission field is not the place to learn a new skill. We do not want our patients to feel that we are “practicing” on them or give them any reason to feel we are giving them substandard care.

We welcome specialists on our teams, although they will likely end up practicing general medicine. Many have not done this in years or since specializing. GHO has developed a standardized diagnosis and treatment protocol to help assist the team. This is a list of the most common diagnoses you will make on the mission field and our recommendations for treatment. This recommendation fits within WHO standards and fits our standardized formulary we bring on our teams. Each clinician is given a list of available formulary and our diagnosis and treatment protocol to guide them. This will not be all inclusive, and we understand there will be some deviations as you may be trying to treat more than one disease or illness.

All healthcare professionals are required to watch a pre-field patient safety video. This will review some of the differences in practicing medicine and dentistry on the mission field and measures that can be taken to improve the safety of our patients. There are also available education courses that do allow for continuing education (CE) credit on all of our teams. Even if you are not interested in continuing education, it is recommended you review some of these videos to educate yourself on diseases and illness you are more likely to see in a developing country. If you are going to Central America, it would be helpful for you to review the video on tropical medicine. If you are going to Africa, you would want to review the video on diseases in Africa. Of course, other areas or topics may be of interest to you.

GHO has developed a public health training program. Instead of simply teaching some measure of public health such as clean water or washing hands to our patients, we train members of the national team who can then continue to teach others in their community. This allows them to be the church for their community. We are engaging from a different culture without first having a relationship. We have an inadequate cultural worldview to relate with them, and changing behavior requires a long-term commitment. This is why training the local partners is more effective.

Typically, one to two team members are dedicated to serving as public health trainers. Their “students” will get a backpack with the supplies necessary and learn how to assess patients, take vital signs, offer common first aid and how to treat dehydration. They can then teach this in their community and use these skills to help their community, as well as use this as an outreach for their ministry.

Photography

GHO encourages you to bring a camera! We understand you will want to take pictures of your experience. We do have some guidelines for you; however, this can be dependent on what type of mission trip you are serving on and where you are going. First, do not bring your camera out the moment you arrive at the clinic and begin taking pictures like you are at the zoo. The patients there have been waiting to be seen for quite a while, so focus on getting the clinic going. Secondly, do not take any pictures of your patients without first asking permission. And then show them the picture! They enjoy seeing what they look like as many frequently do not have mirrors at home. They also enjoy seeing the pictures of their children.

Your team leader and the national partner will likely give you guidelines. Some allow no pictures at all at the clinic site, and we have to respect their wishes. We typically do not allow clinic pictures on human trafficking or refugee care teams to protect our patients and national partners. You can still take pictures of the town or village, scenic areas and, of course, your team.



Social Media

We understand you want to post about your mission trip on social media. Frequently team members will post about it to help with their fundraising. Before you post anything, from the moment you are accepted to the team, please check with your team leader.

Many of the countries where we serve are considered closed countries, or we may not be allowed to openly evangelize or proselytize. These are intentionally listed on our trip calendar vaguely, such as Middle East or East Africa. You may list it as such on social media. We do not allow you to post any pictures of your national team or clinic patients in closed countries. This is for their safety, and we must consider this of utmost importance.

More open countries you are able to post pictures, but again not without permission from the patient and national team. We must respect their privacy! The most important pictures are the ones that mean something to you, such as the patient you led to the Lord or had a profound connection with during the trip. With permission, feel free to take these pictures for your own personal use. That does not mean you are free to put it on social media. Ask permission! You will be allowed to share these in private settings, such as sharing about your mission trip with your church or small group. Caution is essential! If in doubt, don't post the picture.





Final Thoughts

Serving God through healthcare missions using the very gifts and talents He has given you is a tremendous blessing. It is not just a blessing, but it is also a command from our Lord and Savior. "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20, NASB).

Our teams are strategic, and we are able to gain access into countries or certain areas of countries simply because we are offering free healthcare. Churches or evangelists might not be allowed, but our medical teams are because there is a hurting world out there with little to no access to healthcare. At GHO, we believe God is using our teams to reach the lost for their good and His glory. We welcome you to join us on mission together!

