

Preparation vital before embarking on short-term global health experience

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Editor's note: *The 2018 AAP National Conference & Exhibition will take place from Nov. 2-6 in Orlando.*

While participating in short-term global health experiences as a medical student and resident, Heather A. Lukolyo, M.D., M.H.S., FAAP, saw how trainees who were unprepared often burdened their hosts.

“I started thinking about the impact that the revolving door of learners coming into these international sites had on host preceptors, institutions and communities,” she said.

Since then, Dr. Lukolyo has researched the impact of short-term global health experiences on visitors and hosts, and has led local, regional and national training on pre-departure preparation.

Dr. Lukolyo will lead an interactive group forum titled “Ready, Set, Go Global: Preparation for Short-Term Global Health Experiences (I3119)” from 4-5:30 p.m. Monday, Nov. 5, in room W224G of the convention center. She will be joined by Stephen D. Warrick, M.D., FAAP, who also has extensive experience in preparation for global health work.

“This session will be useful to the global health novice hoping to complete their first global health experience, to the global health educators and mentors who help prepare learners for their time abroad and to the experienced global health traveler who wants to learn best practices for pre-departure preparation,” said Dr. Lukolyo, assistant professor of pediatrics and director of the Community, Outreach and Advocacy, Global HOPE (Hematology Oncology Pediatric Excellence) program at Baylor College of Medicine, Houston.

Dr. Lukolyo and Dr. Warrick, who are members of the AAP Section on International Child Health, will discuss the complexities of short-term global health work; how visitors can positively and negatively impact a country's health care systems and personnel; and resources for preparation.

“Negative impacts can be one of the greatest challenges for global health work,” said Dr. Warrick, volunteer assistant professor of clinical pediatrics, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. “The list of impacts is extensive, but examples can be negative cultural interactions, changing workload on the local system with arrival of expat teams and poor outcomes due to lack of knowledge/understanding of local disease and treatment processes.”

The session also will be highly interactive with participants working in small groups to generate strategies for global health preparation to suit their individual needs.

“As more and more trainees participate in short-term global health experiences, we have an obligation to ensure their trips are ethically sound and mutually beneficial,” Dr. Lukolyo said. “We will build a case for the importance of pre-departure preparation prior to any short-term global health experience and equip participant attendees with resources and strategies to overcome barriers.”

*For more coverage of the 2018 AAP National Conference & Exhibition visit <http://www.aapublications.org/content/aap-national-conference-2018> and follow @AAPNews on *Twitter* and *Facebook*.*

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