

INFORMATION SHEET FOR SENIOR MEDICAL STUDENTS, PHYSICIANS AND OTHER VOLUNTEERS WISHING TO WORK IN CAMEROON BAPTIST CONVENTION HEALTH BOARD PROGRAMS

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with the Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Board. The information which follows should give you the basic information you'll need in order to decide if you want to complete the application form. If your application is accepted, we will send you additional information that will help you prepare for your time in Cameroon.

I. APPLICATION FORMS, INFORMATION PACKAGE

All volunteers with the Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Board should complete the Health Board application form. Write your official name as found on your passport.

Please understand that there is limited housing available at our two hospitals and this limits the number of volunteers that we can have at any one time. Only medical students in their final year can be accepted. In addition, we cannot have more medical students than can be properly supervised. If you are flexible as to the time of your visit, your application has a better chance of being accepted.

II. WHO ARE WE?

The Mission Statement of the Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Board is as follows:

The Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Board seeks to assist in the provision of care to all who need it as an expression of Christian love and as a means of witness, in order that they might be brought to God through Christ. Thus, the Health board shall provide exemplary health care with genuine compassion, with the overriding purpose of evangelical witness.

We thus require that students and volunteers who wish to serve in our health institutions be in support of, or sympathetic with, our endeavors to witness for Christ through health care. The comportment of the students and volunteers must be consistent with a conservative evangelical Christian lifestyle. Drinking of alcoholic beverages and smoking are forbidden within the hospital and its premises. Participation in politics and/or critical comments on the government is forbidden within the community of the hospital. There must be proof of marriage for visitors of the opposite sex to live together in one room.

III. INFORMATION ON CAMEROON

To enter Cameroon you will need a valid passport with a current Cameroon visa, and an International Health Card with a current yellow fever vaccination.

Visitors should be up-to-date on tetanus and polio vaccinations. Hepatitis A and B, and meningococcal vaccinations are recommended. Malaria prophylaxis is required. Please follow current Center for Disease Control guidelines:

(<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/regionalmalaria/cafrica.htm>). For the latest travelers' health information see the CDC website www.cdc.gov/travel/cafrica.html. See also <http://mdtravelhealth.com/destinations/africa/Cameroon.html>. Travel insurance is recommended.

For more information on Cameroon, see

<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/print/cm.html> and other websites, and for information on religion, people groups and churches, refer to the book *Operation World*, 2001.

For current safety bulletins from the US State Department, see

<http://travel.state.gov/cameroon.html>. For general travel information, security alerts, and cautions, see <http://travel.state.gov/wwwcl.html> and <http://www.voyage.gc.ca/dest/report-en.asp?country=47000>.

EXPENSES

Health Board Visitors (final-year medical students, residents, and volunteers) staying two months or less are responsible for all expenses. Physicians usually come on a fee-for-service basis, keeping track of their expenses. Medical students and residents are accepted only on the following flat-fee arrangement:

Final-Year Medical Students and Residents: A flat fee is charged based on the length of stay in Cameroon. For visitors staying one to two months, the fee is US \$1100. For those staying one month or less, the fee is US \$800. Due to varying exchange rates, this fee is subject to change at any time. The following services are included for this fee:

- Meeting you at the international airport in Douala; arranging overnight there if necessary
- Transportation to the hospital in a mission vehicle or taking you to the bus station and arranging your trip
- Room and two meals a day, plus weekly laundry while staying at the hospital guest house
- Information and handouts including a copy of the treatment protocol and drug formulary for physicians and medical students
- Transportation back to the airport either in a mission vehicle or commercial bus

This fee is a payment, and not a deposit. No balance will be refunded (if for example, you do not eat all the meals at the rest house). If you are accepted to come, you will be sent information on how to transmit these funds to Cameroon to pay for your stay. This payment is expected prior to your arrival in Cameroon.

In addition to the above fee, you are responsible for other incidentals, including other meals, phone and e-mail expenses, local private trips, and souvenirs.

Health professionals requested by the Health Services Board to come to Cameroon to meet a particular need, and who stay for more than three months, will be provided inland transportation by the Health Services Department. The remainder of their expenses will be their own responsibility.

IV. ANSWERS TO SOME FOREIGN MEDICAL STUDENTS' QUESTIONS

a. What will the student's duties, and what is expected of him/her?

Medical students doing an elective at Bango Baptist Hospital (BBH) or Mbingo Baptist Hospital (MBH) will work under the supervision of one of the physicians there. They will participate in daily rounds on one of the hospital's five wards at which time they will be responsible for assessing and writing orders for the patients. Students will also assist daily in the consultation and treatment of patients in the hospital outpatient department and will share in nighttime call responsibilities. Students will usually have the opportunity to visit one of the outstation clinics.

b. What can the student expect to learn here?

Medical students can anticipate seeing, and gaining facility with treating, a myriad of tropical diseases including malaria, filaria, typhoid fever, tuberculosis, amebiasis, and schistosomiasis. We also care for most of the diseases routinely seen in the West. HIV disease accounts for a large number of the hospital admissions.

c. What type of supervision will be given the students?

Medical students will be provided with appropriate medical supervision for all clinical responsibilities. We have many well-trained national physicians currently providing most of the medical care in our hospitals. If your elective requires supervision by a physician with board certification, please let us know. There is no guarantee that an expatriate physician will be available for your supervision. The Health Board "Drug Formulary and Treatment Protocols" is a useful handbook for visiting physicians and medical students. This will be provided for you at the hospital. At present, no Medical Malpractice Insurance is required in Cameroon.

rev. 1 Nov. 2006