



International Placements Guiding Beliefs and Principles for Students Participating in International Fieldwork Experiences

Introduction

The UBC Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy is committed to the vision of the UBC community. As stated in the Trek 2010 White paper, UBC programs "... will prepare students to become exceptional global citizens..." (~ *Trek 2010: A global journey*) A key learning goal stated in the UBC Trek initiative is: *increasing opportunities for student participation in international projects and study abroad programs.*

Thus, the Department supports students in participating in International Fieldwork opportunities. This document serves as a basis to ensure appropriate learning outcomes for students participating in international FW placements; to assist with collaboration; to help guide the students in determining their contribution to the receiving communities in a meaningful way; and to assist with learning exchange. The following are a list of beliefs and guiding principles that the Department and Students support.

Guiding Principles/Beliefs:

- **Global Citizenship: we believe...** that UBC students have a responsibility and moral obligation to promote and strive to improve the health of all citizens around the globe
- **Duty to assist and provide care: we believe...** this concept is inherent in our code of ethics & that students will conduct themselves in such a manner whenever it is deemed necessary though within their scope of practice and within their student role.
- **Duty to share knowledge: we believe...** the student: therapist relationship is considered to be reciprocal and that students have much to share as well as learn
- **Relationships: we believe...** every student encounter is a partnership whether it be local or global. In a global context we recognize that **each** partner brings value and knowledge to the relationship
- **Empowerment of the community: we believe...** that students will include all relevant parties in any interactions or exchanges. Students will embrace the notion of inclusiveness.
- **Improve service: we believe...** students will "do good". They will continually evaluate their contributions and be flexible and adaptable to change at the request of the community.
- **Holistic Approach: we believe...** students will be aware of the importance of viewing the patients as whole beings within a community will know when to be humble about professional status.

- **Recognition of Internal capacity: we believe...** that many countries have an immense burden of care, large populations and severe shortages in the health care work force. We will ensure that we will not increase burden to the receiving communities by adequately preparing and supervising students working internationally
- **Building on Capacity: we believe...**students will evaluate local capacity of community and continue to build on/release the capacity that exists, using local resources. This will include training of local individuals
- **Local Relevance: we believe...** students will show evidence that they have researched and understand the local community and larger cultural context they are entering. They will abide by the rules, customs and values embraced by the community or organization
- **Sustainability: we believe...**that the community has the local capacity to begin or improve practices and that local persons are best able to identify their needs. Students will do everything in their power to deliver sustainable services based on locally defined need (through education, train the trainer models, use of local resources)
- **Utilize the ICF as a conceptual framework for guiding work in any international setting: we believe...**students will understand the ICF framework and its' applicability for looking at people's abilities in functional domains of health

Roles for Occupational Therapy Students:

- Provision of therapy where needed as guided by supervisor (OT or other health care practitioner)
- Transfer of basic skills to community members- through training, observation, working together to create solutions
- Research & understand local resources and utilize where appropriate
- Create positive attitudes through training

Desired Outcomes of International Placements:

That students will gain knowledge, skills and abilities in the competencies of practice as dictated by the context in which they completed their placement. It is hypothesized that students will gain greater skills in the "soft skills" such as communication, clinical reasoning , professional interactions and empathy. It is understood that students will leave behind teaching, direct intervention as determined by the people and community they were serving, and that they will adhere to the UBC guiding principles and the values and beliefs of the receiving agency/country.

Objectives for Students on International Placements : See Objectives document

Policy on Student Eligibility for Pursuing an International Placement: See International Placement Policy Document

Supervision Models for International Placements: See Supervision Models Document

Appendixes: Information of International Placement Sites