Going Global: A Multi-Program Perspective on International Clinical Rotations

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Agenda

- Background

- Key Players and International Rotations
  - Clinical coordinators
  - Sponsoring University/Program
  - PA Students
  - International Site

- Discussion (Q & A)
Background
International Rotation Experiences

- International Clinical Rotation (ICR)
  Educational experiences for students in clinical phase
  Provides hands-on clinical training
  Consistent with other PA program clinical rotations
  Elective

- Other International Experiences
  A non-clinical international experience is an opportunity to travel, learn, and/or provide service related to health care that is listed or sanctioned by the PA program
### International Experiences Statistics

**Table 1. PAEA International Rotation Survey 2008-2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of International Experience</th>
<th>2008 (134)</th>
<th>2009 (142)</th>
<th>2010 (135)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Survey Responses (Response Rate %)</td>
<td>99 (74%)</td>
<td>107 (75%)</td>
<td>104 (77%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total International Experiences (n/%)</td>
<td>45 (46%)</td>
<td>47 (44%)</td>
<td>49 (47%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Active International Clinical Rotations (n/%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30 (29%)</td>
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</table>

10% of PA students in Clinical Phase (Range 1.6%-52%)

30% of Medical School graduates completed and ICR

Drain et al, 2007.; PAEA, 2011; AAMC, 2010
Evidence Based Benefits

- Attitudes towards working with underserved populations
- Knowledge of public health and tropical diseases
- Self reported cultural sensitivity/competency, and humanistic self awareness
- Primary care career choice
- Compare Health Systems

Evidence Based Challenges

- Bilateral cooperative agreements
- Shared educational programs for local and guest students
- Pre-departure training
- Student Safety
- Costs and Liability

Shah & Wu, 2008; Elansary et al; 2010
Clinical Coordinator
Initial Steps

- Determine benefit of rotation for students
  - Knowledge, attitudes, impact on career choice?
  - Review with primary faculty to ensure benefits are consistent with goals of program

- Develop syllabus
  - Determine if rotation will be defined as an elective, public health, rural or community medicine
  - Determine objectives
    - May vary from site to site
    - May vary according to university/institution mission and goals for international rotations

A Report on the Findings of the Association of Physician Assistant Programs (APAP) Ad Hoc Committee on International PA Education [2003] Table 1
Selecting International Sites

- AAPA
- Other PA Programs
- PAEA
- Student experiences

Resources to Consider
Selecting International Sites

Questions to consider

- Are costs for travel and site feasible for students?
- Is site consistent with University mission?
- Safety
- ARC-PA Standards - C4.02
Communication with Selected Site(s)

- Provide syllabus to preceptor
- Determine if site will be able to provide an adequate clinical experience according to individual program’s requirements
- Define responsibilities of supervising physicians
- Inquire into housing options for students
  - Host family
  - Dormitory
  - Independent arrangement
Site Evaluation Considerations

• How to site visit?

ARC-PA Standard – C4.02: The program must document that each clinical site provides the student access to physical facilities, patient populations and supervision necessary to fulfill program expectations of the clinical experience

• Constraints
  • Budget
  • Time
  • Faculty availability

• Potential solution
  • Consulting and collaborating with other universities/sponsoring institution
Student Selection

- Create process for selection of students to attend international rotations

Guidelines for selecting students for international rotations:
From “A Report on the Findings of the Association of Physician Assistant Programs (APAP) Ad Hoc Committee on International PA Education [2003] Table 2”
Details!

- Create timeline for students to complete necessary requirements for travel overseas
  - Requirements vary
  - Orientation prior to departure
  - Assign other faculty/staff with clear roles to assist clinical coordinator and student with process
  - Time frame?

- Consider indemnity release
Communication with Student

- How much/little communication is required will vary between institutions
  - E-mail check-in
  - Phone check-in
  - Itinerary/in-country travel plans
  - Mid-rotation evaluation from preceptor
  - Skype
  - Blog

- Potential constraint: internet and phone service availability!
Final and Ongoing Evaluation

Student
- Preceptor Evaluation
- Debriefing
- Written examinations
- Experience log/journal

Presentation

Site
- Student evaluation of site
- Student case logs
- Site Visits
- Student exam performance
University/Sponsoring Institution
University Mission & Global Education

• Is your University mission aligned with the promotion of ICR?

• Are other schools/programs promoting international education?

• Are there University resources dedicated to global education?

• Is your program leadership interested in ICR?
Institutional Concerns

- Student safety
- Financial responsibility
- Liability
- Accreditation compliance
Student Safety: Travel Warnings

- US State Department ([www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov))

What constitutes a warning significant enough to prevent the rotation?

- **Midwestern University:** *any* travel warning regardless of cause is grounds for denial of rotation approval by Dean/President
  - Checked upon student application for rotation and just prior to departure

- **Duke University:** List of “restricted regions” in addition to USDOS travel warnings

- **Yale university:** Communication with local preceptors about emergent crisis
Student Safety: Travel Registration

- Smart Traveller Enrollment Program (STEP)

- [https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/](https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/)

- Free registry for US citizens living/traveling abroad

- **Midwestern University**: Not a requirement
- **Yale university**: plus University specific international travel registration website for students and faculty
Student Safety: Pre-travel healthcare

- Students will often require vaccinations and/or prophylaxis while training internationally

Who assumes responsibility for 1) costs and 2) ensuring that this is completed?

- **ARC-PA Standard:** A3.09 Principal faculty, the program director and the medical director must not participate as health care providers for students in the program.

- **Midwestern University:** Responsibility for obtaining medical evaluation and vaccines/medications is placed *solely* on the student. No advice/referral is provided.

- **Duke University:** Program verifies completion of pre-travel medical evaluation

  - Form filled out that does not specifically list health care services rendered

- **Yale University:** Must be cleared by Student Health Services
Student Safety: Insurance

Who is responsible for purchasing student comprehensive healthcare and accident insurance coverage?

- **Midwestern University:** Student is responsible for carrying comprehensive health and accident insurance, in addition to travel insurance (including evacuation coverage). MWU provides “Excess Student Accident and Sickness Insurance” at no add’l cost to student.

- **Yale University:** Program provides Evacuation Insurance (no cost)
  - Student responsible for finding in-country phone numbers
Financial Responsibility

• Lodging, travel, food, fees
  ✓ Midwestern University: all associated costs are the responsibility of the student; in addition, the student will still be charged full tuition for the rotation period.

• Scholarships, Stipends & Grants
  • Funding may be available from both internal and external sources
    • University scholarships, Office of Global/International Relations, Clubs/organizations
    • Financial Aid considerations
  ✓ Yale University: Program offers merit scholarship for ICR
Liability

• Who will provide medical malpractice coverage?
  ✓ Midwestern University: Professional liability and comprehensive general liability insurance does **NOT** cover the student while abroad- students must purchase policy if needed
  ✓ Yale University: malpractice insurance carries abroad

• Who is responsible for risk associated with health & safety of student while training internationally?
  ✓ Midwestern University: International Clinical Experience Travel Waiver release and Indemnification Agreement
  ✓ Duke University: Participation Agreement
  ✓ Yale University: Assumption of Risk Agreement
International Affiliation Agreements

- Discuss with legal counsel of your institution
  - Required by institution?
  - Required by site?

- Can be difficult to obtain
  - Barriers
    - Medico-legal liability variations from country to country
    - Language
    - Negotiation of mutual rights and responsibilities
    - Legal structure/ governmental structure variations
      - Private vs public facility
  - Time
  - Example:
    - MWU agreement w/ Royal National Orthopedic Hospital (Great Britain)
    - 24 pages long!
Physician Assistant Student
Student Preparation Guidelines

“Overall, an international rotation can be a benefit for both the students and the program, provided adequate preparation is completed prior to the rotation, adequate communication maintained during the rotation, and an evaluation of the experience completed after the rotation.”

Journal of Physician Assistant Education. Global Clinical Experiences for Physician Assistant Students. [2007]
"Minimizing the risk to the student while providing an enriching cultural and medical experience is a priority for an international rotation."

"Students must be adequately prepared for and understand the risks associated with the rotation."

Programs are encouraged to develop an orientation program to prepare students for international rotations.

Report on the Findings of the Association of Physician Assistant Programs (APAP) Ad Hoc Committee on International PA Education [2003]
Student Preparation Guidelines
Orientation Activities

- Required participation
- Comprehensive content
- Learning objectives for each session or content area
- The “To Do” list

Schedule
- Four to five sessions
- Clinical orientation week and Call back days

Instructors
- Clinical Coordinator
- Other faculty

Methods of instruction
- In-Person sessions
- Online modules
- Self directed
Orientation Sessions

- Introduction to Global Health Elective Rotation
- Language & culture presentations
- Mentoring session
- Journal club
- Highlights and discussion related to content from online modules
- Final Preparation Review
Online Modules

- Clinical Site and Health Care System
- Ethical & Privacy Considerations
- Practical Travel Preparation
- Adjusting to Foreign Cultures and Travel
The “To Do” List

- Participation Agreement
- Student Site Application
- Introduction Letter
- Travel Clinic Verification
- Health Insurance Coverage for International Settings
- Travel Documentation (Passport, VISA, etc.)
- Flight Itinerary
- Transportation Itinerary
- Register: US State Dept.
- Update Emergency Contact Information
- Preparation Review Session
Orientation Activities

Solutions to Challenges

- Making Time
- Write Specific Learning Objectives
- Select Comprehensive Content Resources
- Identify Instructors Early On
- Routine Follow Up On The “To Do” List with Each Student
- Evaluate the Effectiveness of the Orientation Activities

Resources

- U.S. Department of State
- Centers for Disease Control & Prevention
- Host Country U.S. Embassy
- World Health Organization
- Lonely Planet Travel Books
- Frommers Travel Books
- Health Sciences Library
- PAEA
International Site
Variability in International Rotations

- Types of international sites
  - Academic versus non-academic sites
  - By continent/country
  - By needs/interest

- Site visits
  - Why
  - How
  - When
Academic vs Non Academic Sites

- Site missions
  - Shared goals?

- Organizational structure
  - Site oversight
  - Communication

- Medical supervision/preceptors for PA students
  - In house versus contractual
  - Attendance policy
  - Evaluation

- Services offered
  - Airport and ground transportation
  - Housing and/or meals
  - Off clinical hours support
Rotations by Continent/Country

Where to start?

Have a plan B!

Adapt!!!
What are your needs or interests?

- By specialty
  - Primary Care
  - Pediatrics
  - Infectious Disease
  - Geriatric
  - Cardiology

- By setting
  - Urban vs Rural
  - Mobil clinic vs Hospital

- By interest
  - Tropical medicine
  - Exposure to alternative medicine
  - Language
  - Health care delivery system
Site Visit

• Rationale
  • Monitor and document
  • Improve communication with preceptors and staff in the field
  • Consistency independently of geographic location

• Timing
  • During own student rotation
  • During other students’ rotations

• Methods
  • Short visit of core faculty
  • Provide faculty appointments to preceptors abroad
  • Faculty travel with students
Debriefing

An opportunity to get feedback from key players and reassess!

- **Foreign Site**
  - Multiple perspectives

- **Student**
  - Were the goals of the rotation met?

- **Site Visitor**
  - What didn’t work well?

- **Clinical Coordinator**
  - What can be done to improve it?
Conclusions

- International Clinical Rotations (ICR) offer many benefits

- The challenges can be managed through prevention, orientation, and understanding of shared goals

- Time and resources must be devoted for successful ICRs
Time for Q & A
Potential Topics For Discussion

- Database of foreign sites
- Collaboration between programs for site visits
- Use of the listserv for real time advice between programs

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References


References


- Physician Assistant Education Associatio. 2010 Survey; Personal Communication Crecilla Scott. 7/22/2011.
