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## Medical Missions Frequently Asked Questions *Honduras*

### *General Information*

#### **Where do medical missions take place?**

Currently, all One World Surgery medical missions take place at the Holy Family Surgery Center in Honduras. The surgery center and volunteer accommodations are located on the property of Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos, a children's home about an hour outside of the capital of Tegucigalpa. We plan to expand to other surgery centers across the globe.

#### **What surgical specialties are provided on your medical missions?**

Currently, surgical services are provided in the following specialties: general surgery; orthopedics; gynecology; urology; ophthalmology; ear, nose, and throat; oncology, and spine. Most trips have 3-4 specialties. Specialties are pre-assigned to trips to ensure that all specialties are offered regularly.

#### **What medical roles are needed?**

Each mission requires surgeons (in the above mentioned specialties), anesthesiologists and/or CRNAs, surgical techs or surgical PAs, OR circulators, pre-op and PACU nurses, and sterile processors. We also welcome internists, cardiologists, physical therapists, first assists, X-ray techs, EMTs, CNAs, and intensive care and critical care nurses. Other medical professionals should reach out to [medicalmissions@oneworldsurgery.org](mailto:medicalmissions@oneworldsurgery.org) prior to applying to determine if there is an appropriate role for you on the trip.

#### **What are the eligibility requirements for medical volunteers?**

All medical volunteers should be currently licensed (if required for their profession) and working in their profession and have at least 1 year of experience. Volunteers who are retired or not currently working the field may serve in support roles.

#### **How long is a medical mission?**

Most medical missions are 1 week long and take place from Saturday to Saturday.

#### **How many people participate in a medical mission?**

Most of our missions have 30-45 participants. Our capacity is 60 volunteers per trip.

#### **Can my kids attend?**

Yes. The minimum recommended age is 5 years old, and children under 13 must be supervised by a nonclinical adult at all times. If you are a clinical participant, you must bring another adult family member or friend to help supervise younger children. Children will participate as general volunteers, rotating between different stations on the NPH ranch and in the surgery center.

Please note that some stations have minimum age requirements.



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### **Can nonmedical people attend?**

Yes. They will participate as general volunteers, rotating between different workstations on the NPH ranch and in the surgery center. Opportunities on the ranch include helping in the kitchen, tortilla house, and garden. Surgery center stations include turning over ORs, washing instruments, taking out the trash, and administrative projects. All adult general volunteers complete a special skills survey. They are contacted prior to the trip if their skills match an available project on the ranch or in the surgery center.

### *Applying for Medical Mission*

#### **I don't have my passport information available or am just applying for a passport. Can I still submit an application?**

Yes, you can still submit your application.

#### **I can't attend the entire week. Can I still apply for a medical mission?**

All first-time participants are required to attend the surgery center orientation on Sunday afternoon. Please contact [medicalmissions@oneworldsurgery.org](mailto:medicalmissions@oneworldsurgery.org) to confirm if a late arrival or early departure would be appropriate in your situation.

#### **I'm not available during your scheduled trips. Can I volunteer with One World Surgery during another time?**

At this time, volunteer opportunities are only offered during scheduled medical missions.

#### **Can I stay for longer than a week?**

Typically, we do not have opportunities for volunteers to stay beyond the mission week. Occasionally, longer term opportunities may be available for medical volunteers. Contact [medicalmissions@oneworldsurgery.org](mailto:medicalmissions@oneworldsurgery.org) for more information.

#### **When is the application deadline?**

Applications are accepted year-round on a first come first served basis. Applications are accepted until 10 days before the trip. We recommend applying at least 3 months before the trip. Surgeon spots and summer trips start to fill a year in advance. Applications for the following year typically open in May.

### *Requirements*

#### **Do I need a passport?**

Yes, you must have a passport valid for at least 6 months past the date you will enter Honduras.

#### **Do I need a visa?**

U.S. passport holders can stay in Honduras for up to 90 days without a visa. Participants who hold passports from other countries should confirm requirements with a Honduran Embassy or Consulate.



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### **I don't speak Spanish. Can I still attend?**

Yes, a team of local interpreters works with us during every mission.

### **Cost**

#### **How much does it cost to attend?**

- Program fee (covers accommodations, emergency medical/evacuation insurance, meals, and ground transportation in Honduras)
  - \$1000 for first participant
  - \$500 for additional family member 18 and over
  - \$250 for additional family member under 18
- Flight costs
- Any additional travel costs (i.e. recommended immunizations, baggage, cost of applying for/renewing passport)

#### **How much do flights cost?**

Flight costs typically range between \$500 and \$1,400 roundtrip. Flight costs vary depending on time of year, departure airport, and time at which flights are booked.

### **Preparing for the Medical Mission**

#### **How do I book flights?**

Participants are responsible for booking their own flights according to the guidelines found in the trip informational packet. Participants fly into Toncontín International Airport in Tegucigalpa, Honduras on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the mission and depart on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the mission.

#### **What immunizations do I need?**

Hepatitis A and Typhoid are the recommended immunizations for this trip, but they are not required. If you are travelling directly from a country with risk of Yellow Fever transmission (the U.S. is not one of these countries), you will be required to show proof of Yellow Fever vaccination.

### **What to Expect**

#### **Where do volunteers stay?**

Volunteers stay in our conference center, the Moscati Center, which is located on the ranch property about a 10 minute walk from the surgery center. All rooms have a bathroom, and most have 4 single beds. Volunteers can make roommate requests on their applications. Due to limited space, volunteers may share rooms with other volunteers they do not know or our local team members.

#### **What is the weather like in Honduras? How should I dress?**

Honduras is hot and humid year-round. The average high temperature nationwide is 90°F and the average low is 68°F. June- November is considered the rainy season. December-May is



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considered the dry season. Mornings and evenings can be cooler (60°F) December-March. Dress on the ranch and in Honduras is conservative, and most people do not wear shorts. If you choose to wear shorts, they should come at least to mid-thigh, and tank top straps should be thick. Casual clothing is fine, but you should bring a nicer outfit if you plan to attend mass (shorts are not permitted).

### **Is it safe?**

The surgery center is located approximately 1 hour northeast of Tegucigalpa on the 2,000 acre property of the children's home Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos (NPH). We remain on the NPH property for the entire trip, with exception of traveling to and from the airport. The NPH ranch is gated and patrolled 24/7 by a team of security guards. Emergency medical and evacuation insurance is purchased for all participants. We have never experienced a security incident during a medical mission.

### **Will there be an opportunity to explore the city or other parts of Honduras?**

Participants are required to stay on the ranch property. Sightseeing is not included in the medical mission.

### **What is the typical schedule?**

*Saturday:* Arrive and settle in, optional mass with the NPH community

*Sunday:* Ranch tour, activity with NPH children, surgery center orientation

*Monday-Friday:* Surgery and clinic all day, dinner and programming in the evening, half-day on Wednesday to explore the ranch

*Saturday:* depart

### **What is NPH?**

NPH, or Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos, is a children's home that provides a loving environment to nearly 300 children. NPH-Honduras is one of 9 homes in Latin America. The Holy Family Surgery Center is located on the NPH-Honduras property known as Rancho Santa Fe or "the ranch". Visit the [NPH website](#) to learn more.

### **Will we have an opportunity to interact with the children?**

Opportunities are built into the weekend schedule for volunteers to meet some of the children who live at NPH. Children are in classes during the week and have after school routines (i.e. homework, chores). We respect these daily routines in order to maintain a sense of stability for the children. Volunteers will not serve as direct caregivers or teachers. These duties are filled by trained, long-term, Spanish-speaking staff for the benefit and safety of the children.

### **Do medical volunteers have an opportunity to volunteer on the ranch?**

This trip is primarily a medical service trip. Typically, medical volunteers are needed to fill their assigned role in the surgery center during the entire week. We usually build a half-day of surgery into the schedule to allow medical volunteers an opportunity to spend time on the ranch.



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**I'm a medical volunteer. Will I stay in the same role the entire week? Will I have the chance to learn a new skill or observe surgeries?**

Generally, we have just enough volunteers for each area, and we need to use each medical volunteer for his/her particular skills. Medical volunteers usually serve in the same role all week and will not have the opportunity to observe surgeries. Because we are committed to providing safe and high-quality care, medical volunteers will only perform skills in which they are trained and experienced. For example, a nurse with primarily PACU experience will not serve as a scrub in the OR.

**I'm a pre-med student or a student of another health profession. What will I be doing?**

Patient care is provided only by trained medical professionals, and we will never sacrifice patient safety in order to provide a volunteer with a learning opportunity. We also expect all volunteers to participate fully in the service aspect of the trip. Pre-med students and students of other health professions will serve as general volunteers, rotating among different opportunities on the ranch and in the surgery center. Occasionally, students have clinical training and experience (i.e. EMT, CNA) that they can use to contribute to a different role on the mission, such as assisting in pre-op. If your expectation is that you will be able to spend the entire trip observing or scrubbing in on surgeries, this may not be the right trip for you.

**I'm a medical student. What will I be doing?**

Volunteers are never permitted to perform duties that exceed their skills, training, or licensure. Current medical students will be permitted to participate in the medical mission in the following ways:

- Shadowing physicians in clinic and assisting physicians, as needed (NOTE: Separate translators will not be provided for medical students.)
- Acting as a scribe for the physician, writing notes from the consult legibly in the charts
- Observing/Scrubbing during surgeries (NOTE: Medical students will be required to adhere to all observation policies, including signing up for scheduled observation shifts. Again, students will only be permitted to perform tasks within their current level of training.)
- Helping the circulators find supplies for the ORs

Because our medical missions are, above all, service trips and require a team effort, medical students will also be asked to participate in general volunteer duties. If your expectation is that you will be able to spend the entire trip observing or scrubbing in on surgeries, this may not be the right trip for you.

**What kinds of donations can I bring for the kids at NPH?**

Please see the NPH Honduras in-kind [donation site](#) for current wish lists for each home. This ensures that all donations can be used by the ranch. Donations should be turned in to our Visitor Coordinator upon arrival to ensure that they are distributed appropriately. Volunteers will not have the opportunity to give donations directly to the children. Please do not bring small gifts or candies to randomly pass out. This can create feelings of jealousy and teach the children to expect gifts from all visitors.



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### **What kinds of donations do you need at the surgery center?**

One World Surgery accepts pre-approved donations of goods. Please see the [in-kind donations page](#) of our website for lists of items needed. Complete the in-kind donation form on the website or contact [kate.c@oneworldsurgery.org](mailto:kate.c@oneworldsurgery.org) for donation approval. Most donations will be transported to Honduras via volunteers' checked luggage. Do not attempt to ship anything directly to Honduras.