



SWB

Specialists Without Borders
meeting needs through medical education

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In Brief.



Chair's Report: October 2013

An SWB team comprising 19 volunteer specialists, three project staff and five Australian medical students travelled to Malawi and Zimbabwe during the first week of September to run medical and surgical seminars for local students and doctors.

This was SWB's second visit to Malawi. Hosted by the Department of Surgery at the hospital in Lilongwe, situated about four hours by road from Blantyre, it was again a great success. Held over three days, the seminar included orthopaedics, vascular surgery, urology, neurosurgery, upper gastrointestinal surgery, colorectal surgery, trauma surgery and ENT, as well as intensive care, neonatology, radiology, paediatrics, psychiatry and oncology.

From Malawi the team went on to Zimbabwe to run a two-day seminar. Hosted by the Department of Surgery at the University of Harare, it turned out to be a very successful first venture into the country. The university's Head of Surgery, Professor Godfrey Muguti, expressed the great need for postgraduate teaching, and SWB's innovative and interactive teaching model was well received.

Informal feedback from both seminars has been extremely positive. SWB is fortunate to have Donald Bramwell from Flinders University managing our evaluation processes. Don's innovations have ensured that we maintain the highest standards in terms of presentation and appropriate material, and again this year we felt that we had made a further advance in refining our teaching methods. The formal evaluation of the seminars will be available shortly. In the meanwhile, I'd like to express my huge gratitude



to our fantastic team of volunteer specialists and project staff who made this trip possible, the delightful group of medical students who joined us, and the Malawian and Zimbabwean doctors and students whom we had the pleasure to meet.

Dr Paul Anderson
Chairman

WHAT WE DO

[www.
specialistswithoutborders.org](http://www.specialistswithoutborders.org)

SWB is an Australia-based non-profit organisation working to enhance the sustainability of medical service provision in developing countries.

SWB co-ordinates an international group of volunteer medical specialists, delivering specialist-led training programs for medical personnel in partner countries. For more about our projects and our volunteer teams of specialists, please visit our website.

2013 Malawi and Zimbabwe Seminars: A Volunteer Instructor's Perspective



Dr Amanda Foster is Fellow on the Acute Surgical Unit at Fremantle Hospital, WA. Having read about SWB in a Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) article, Amanda made contact with the Executive Committee and found herself a mere six weeks later bound for Rwanda with the SWB team. Impressed with SWB's approach and teaching model and recognising the huge need for teaching in the partner countries, Amanda signed up again for this year's trip to Malawi and Zimbabwe. Following the trip, she had this to say:

"There is obviously a great need in Malawi for improvement in health care and our teaching model seems to really suit their needs. The Structured Clinical Instruction Modules (SCIMs)

in particular allow close interaction with the local clinicians to tailor teaching to the particular skill and knowledge levels. We have a lot to offer there, and it was very interesting to teach in both Malawi and Zimbabwe during the single trip. I found the resources and level of training in Harare closer to what we are used to in Australia. The Professor of Surgery's passion for ongoing post-graduate education was apparent, and it was heartening to be made to feel so welcome. With good communication channels in place with the surgical department at Parirenyatwa Hospital, we could have a very successful collaboration in place. Again, the combination of lectures with SCIMs was an excellent model in the Zimbabwean setting."

The SWB Experience as an Accompanying Medical Student

Heidi McAlpine is a final year medical student at the University of Melbourne. Along with Brooke Driessen, Faye Johnston, Kathryn Kerr and Tracy Lim, she was selected to accompany the SWB team on the trip to Malawi and Zimbabwe to experience the SWB model of medical education in low-resource settings.

"As one of five accompanying medical students, I had the opportunity to travel with the amazing team of SWB specialists as they conducted their seminars for the local doctors in Malawi and Zimbabwe. The seminars were carried out over a number of days in each country, and consisted of short lectures from the specialists, followed by interactive tutorials.



The local doctors and students who attended the sessions were enthusiastic learners, and the feedback was consistently positive. Being a part of this remarkable program was a truly inspirational experience – we learnt about the importance of sustainable change medical care in developing countries, and also gained knowledge from the

content of the sessions, which covered many essential diagnostic and management skills for clinical practice. The specialists all made us feel extremely welcome, and we will take with us many fond memories not only of the seminars, but also of sharing meals together with the local doctors and students, an inspirational and truly fantastic group of people."



Introducing Allison Hempenstall, SWB's Medical Student Representative for 2014

Allison is a third year medical student studying at the University of Melbourne. She has a keen interest in global and public health with a particular focus on maternal and child health and education. Allison travelled as an accompanying medical

student with SWB in 2012 to Rwanda. For the past four years, Allison has also volunteered at an orphanage in rural China providing health education to local staff and medical assistance to over 100 children. Last December she also volunteered at a community-

based health project targeting the social determinants of health in Kolkata, India. Outside of medicine Allison enjoys hiking and recently trekked to Mt Everest Base Camp in Nepal.

Know Your National Executive Committee: Professor Suren Krishnan

Professor Suren Krishnan is Clinical Associate Professor of the University of Adelaide and Chairman, Department of Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery at the Royal Adelaide Hospital in South Australia. He is a graduate of the University of Adelaide Medical School and trained in Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

With a strong commitment to global health, Suren has been providing ENT and head and neck surgical services to PNG and the

Pacific Islands since 1997. In some countries the work has involved providing assistance to ENT surgeons dealing with complicated surgical problems. Other countries involved lack specific ENT services, and some countries only have very limited basic medical services. Suren's work has involved patient treatment and the provision of training and skills transfer to a small and select number of nurses, doctors, and surgeons.

Suren became involved with SWB in 2009, drawn by the organisation's strong emphasis on education, training and skill transfer. The SWB model of providing training to large groups of medical students and junior medical doctors ensures that, in relation to

Suren's specialty, a large number of patients in partner countries will have access to basic ENT assessment of common ENT problems. SWB's utilisation of Structured Clinical Instruction Modules (SCIMs) also provides the opportunity to teach young doctors to be confident in the assessment and management of ENT emergencies such as airway compromise and bleeding.



...And a Huge Thank You to Kim Yeoh, Medical Student Representative 2012 and 2013

Kim has done a fantastic job as SWB's inaugural Australian Medical Student Representative over the last two years, and the National Executive Committee would like to voice a massive thank you for all of the commitment, energy and

enthusiasm she brought to the role. Kim's contribution to establishing SWB's medical student recruitment processes and liaising with medical students over the last two years has been invaluable. As Kim has now graduated from the University of Melbourne and is working at St Vincent's Hospital, we are thrilled that she will continue to be involved with SWB, assisting to develop SWB's Junior Doctor Program.



You Can_Help.



Visit our website or join our Facebook group for more.

1. Join our Database of Volunteers

Please contact us if you are a medical specialist, nurse or allied health representative interested in volunteering your time to join us on a trip to a developing country to share your skills. We are always looking to expand our database of volunteer instructors.

2. Make a Donation

Whilst all the specialists involved in the training seminars fund their own flights and accommodation for workshops, general donations are invaluable to our work. Your donation can fund a developing country doctor to attend a seminar, or be used towards the provision of much-needed resources in developing country hospitals and clinics.

3. Become a Member

Help grow SWB by joining our membership, which is entirely free of charge. As a member you can provide input and feedback into the policies and direction of the organisation, attend SWB's Annual General Meetings and all members receive regular updates on our work.



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(SWB)**

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