



Pioneer Christian Hospital
Hôpital Évangélique « Le Pionnier »
B.P. 10, Impfondo
République du Congo (Brazzaville)

Healthcare Student Rotations

Pioneer Christian Hospital welcomes medical, nursing, pre-medical, and allied health professional students for clinical rotations and/or volunteer service. All students who come to serve at Pioneer Christian Hospital are assigned a mentor from our missionary healthcare team. They also work closely with, and learn a lot, from our local staff. Opportunities in clinical work will vary depending on prior experience, level of training, motivation, ability to learn, attitude, courage and other factors including patient mix and availability of supervisory staff. We expect all students to:

- Participate in daily staff devotions and morning report and weekly chapel services
- Attend, assist and/or present in medical/nursing conferences
- Participate in daily & grand rounds
- Accompany our community health nurse on some house calls
- Transport patients
- Take vital signs
- Conduct preliminary clinical assessments
- Wash/clean patients & equipment as needed
- Assist our staff with whatever needs to be done to provide quality patient care
- Complete an evaluation (and often a report) about their experience here

When appropriate, students are also called upon to:

- Obtain patient histories and complete preliminary physical exams
- Become proficient in taking a spiritual history
- Evaluate patients and write SOAP notes
- Draw blood and collect other lab specimens
- Administer nutritional support
- Start IV's
- Insert urinary and gastric catheters
- Observe, circulate, and/or assist in surgery
- Suture minor skin lacerations
- Assist with routine deliveries and newborn resuscitations
- Complete a neighborhood or community health assessment
- Lead patient education & small group sessions
- Assist with individual and group counseling

Aside from participating in clinical care, student volunteers are encouraged to take advantage of numerous opportunities to learn about Congolese life, culture, and religious beliefs. Experiencing the harsh reality of subsistence living in Central Africa is a natural result of living and working with the patients and staff at Pioneer Christian Hospital. The following activities may also be offered to round out the time spent in the hospital context:

- Shopping/bartering in local markets and stores
- Special meals in the community and local restaurants
- Evangelistic outreach to outlying villages, at times including multimedia presentations
- Learning to paddle a dugout canoe with local fishermen
- 1/2 days working in traditional manioc and banana plantation with subsistence farmers
- Rainforest hikes with a focus on natural medicine & other forest products, led by BaAka (Pygmy) guides
- Participation in local churches and small groups

There are two nations called Congo. The wars/upheavals that make the news are mostly in the Democratic Republic of Congo (also called DRC, with its capital Kinshasa), not the Republic of Congo (capital Brazzaville) where we are located. In Congo-Brazzaville the civil war ended in 2001, and we have experienced peace and development since then. As you noticed, Pioneer Christian Hospital is located on the border with DRC, and the problems there definitely do impact our daily life. About 50% of our patients are refugees who fled the fighting in DRC. Our physical safety hasn't been a problem, but we offer no promises or guarantees. God is in control and we trust Him with our lives.

Language barriers are a huge problem/obstacle/opportunity all over the world. While French is the official language, there are 67 mother tongues spoken in Congo. Even if you know French, communication is often difficult since a lot of our patients speak more Lingala than French. We have a limited number of translators. At the same time, it is good to experience the reality, and realize the vital importance of language learning wherever God is leading you in order to be effective in ministry. In general, the needs in French-speaking Africa are much greater than in English-speaking Africa, or the Spanish-speaking world. God wants you to serve where you are needed most! If you are ready, willing, and able to serve in Congo, you should do it!

We recommend you leave enough time at the end of your experience to transition back to your home country, spend time with your family, and get ready for your return to university.

**Pour la santé et l'espoir,
Joseph Harvey, MD, MPH&TM**

**Directeur Médicale
Hôpital Evangélique « Le Pionnier »
BP 10, Impfondo
République du Congo (Brazzaville)**

**Cell: +242.06.662.57.92
Airtel: +242.05.549.04.52
JHarvey@UUPlus.com**