Global Health Education Programs
Senior Clinical Elective in Lilongwe, Malawi
Spring 2015

The UCLA Center for World Health has forged strong relationships with institutions in Malawi in order to conduct clinical, behavioral, and basic science research, and to provide training opportunities for UCLA students, residents and fellows. Our main collaborator in Malawi is Partners in Hope (PIH) Medical Center (pictured) in Lilongwe, the capital city. PIH provides free HIV prevention, care and treatment to over 5,000 patients, and has also developed outreach programs to support rural clinics in central Malawi.

We are pleased to offer a clinical rotation at PIH Medical Center for two senior medical students in the spring of 2015. Malawi is among the poorest countries in the world. Students participating in this elective will gain broad experience in the delivery of primary care medicine to extremely underserved populations. The rotation has an emphasis on the management of HIV/AIDS in resource-limited settings (HIV prevalence in Malawi is approximately 11%), and the management of malaria, other parasitic infections, and common routine health problems such as diabetes and hypertension. Students will rotate through an HIV clinic and a small inpatient ward, and also participate in rural outreach clinics in central Malawi. Approximately 70% of patients are adults, although at least two clinic sessions each week focus on pediatric HIV care. Students will also have opportunities to visit Kamuzu Central Hospital (Lilongwe’s largest tertiary care center), an antenatal/OB clinic, nutrition programs, and organizations serving orphans and vulnerable children.

Students will have the opportunity to work closely with Dr. Chris Tymchuk, a UCLA faculty mentor within the Department of Internal Medicine, for at least a portion of their stay. Students will also be supervised by other U.S. Board certified internists and family physicians, and work alongside Malawian clinical officers, nurses and providers-in-training. UCLA students are expected to participate in educational conferences and journal clubs during the rotation.

The rotation in Malawi has been developed with formal goals and objectives. We are seeking students with an interest in caring for underserved populations, and those with enthusiasm for global health, HIV, infectious diseases, and health service delivery in resource poor settings. Students will be expected to demonstrate the highest level of maturity, professionalism, and cultural sensitivity. Students should be adaptable to the challenges of living in Malawi (frequent power outages, limited communications such as internet).

Interviews for the elective will take place on November 1, 2014, with a few additional time slots the week prior to that. Students selected for this rotation are required to participate in a full day pre-departure training program in Los Angeles on Saturday, February 7, 2015. Upon return home from Malawi, students will be expected to provide feedback through written evaluation forms, and to participate in a lunchtime feedback session on June 4, 2015.

Students will receive $2,500 of support for the Malawi clinical rotation. These funds are awarded to contribute to the costs of roundtrip airfare and in-country accommodation and food. Students will need to cover the remaining expenses from other funds, as the cost of this rotation will exceed the amount provided through the Global Health Education Program.

Rotation dates for Malawi have been confirmed. **Students applying to this elective must be able to commit to being abroad from April 6 through April 24, 2015.** Note that an April 6 start date will require departure on April 3, 2015 at the latest.

Questions regarding this rotation should be directed to Dr. Traci Wells at twells@mednet.ucla.edu. Thank you for your interest in the clinical experience in Malawi!