

STTP Description: Nicaragua

Survey Research Projects to support the expansion of emergency health care capacity in Nicaragua



Project SEMILLA (Strengthening Emergency Medicine, Investing in Learners in Latin America) is a collaboration between U.S. and Nicaraguan emergency health care professionals. Our mission is to improve emergency healthcare capacity in Latin America through education, system organization, and improved access to technologies. Our partners include the medical schools of the national university of Nicaragua (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua) and the national association of emergency physicians of Nicaragua (AMENic). We welcome interested medical students to join us in working on this collaboration during the summer of 2015.

Interested students must be socially adept in different cultural contexts, be humble, open-minded and patient in order to represent UCLA well. Our reputation and relationships depend on having positive and helpful interactions with community members and health care professionals in Nicaragua.

Program Description: There are two projects that offer medical student opportunities for the summer of 2015.

1. A Survey of Pre-hospital Capacity in Leon, Nicaragua and surrounding communities.

Pre-hospital care in Nicaragua is currently sparse, and the services that exist are a patchwork provided by the Red Cross, Fire Department, and volunteer services. There is no centralized call in number or certification of ambulance workers. There is interest in improving pre-hospital services, but in order to determine the initial steps, baseline data must be obtained. This study will be a survey of ambulance service workers that ascertain their training, knowledge, and available resources while on the job. This study will yield important data for planning future training programs for pre-hospital workers.

2. A Follow up survey of First Aid Course Participant skill utilization and perspectives on the curriculum

This project will entail a follow up survey questionnaire of prior first aid course participants. Study subjects will include two groups: laypersons from the rural areas outside of Leon, Nicaragua and preclinical medical students at UNAN Managua. Participants who have been exposed to the curriculum in basic first aid will be asked follow up questions including whether they have performed first aid since the course and in what setting. In addition, their perceptions of the course will be explored areas in which they feel their skills need reinforcement. The information obtained from this survey is important In determine how the curriculum might be revised in for future courses.

Students will be involved in preparing the IRB applications for approval by UCLA and UNAN. They will also help develop the survey instrument. On arrival in Nicaragua, with the help of UNAN faculty, will identify and meet with possible study subjects and administer the surveys. With help of the U.S. mentors they will clean and enter data and perform statistical analysis. They will present their findings to members of Project SEMILLA as well as at the UCLA poster session.

Opportunities to shadow physicians at the teaching hospital (Hospital Escuela Oscar Danilo Rosales Arguello or HEODRA) in Leon and to learn about health in Nicaragua will also be organized by the UNAN mentor.

Language Requirement: Proficient Spanish is required.

Mentorship:

Olive View-UCLA mentors

Breena Taira, MD, MPH

Aristides Orue, NP

Luis Lovato, MD

UNAN based mentors:

Orlando Morales, MD (UNAN Leon)

Carolina Ulloa, MD (UNAN Managua)

Positions: up to 6 students

Dates: June 8 to July 17, 2015

Duration: 6 weeks

Approximate Costs

Students awarded the STTP funding through the Center for World Health will receive a stipend of about \$3600. The following are a list of approximate costs that the stipend will be used to cover.

Plane ticket \$750

Housing \$650

Food \$15 per day (\$615)

Site fee: \$750

Airport transfers \$140

Transport between survey locations \$100

Nicaraguan cell phone with prepaid minutes \$40

Optional advanced Spanish classes are available in the evening hours for an additional fee.

Pre-departure Requirements:

1. Attend planning conference calls
2. Attend an in-person meeting with mentors at Olive View.
3. Participate in the preparation of IRB applications for UCLA and UNAN.
4. Attend UCLA PGH/GHEP orientation on April 11, 2015.

Deliverables on-site and after return home:

1. Presentation to UNAN faculty prior to departure
2. Participation in a post-experience feedback session with UCLA-based faculty
3. Submission of a written report within one month of return
4. Preparation of a poster for presentation at the UCLA DGSOM STTP Josiah Brown Poster Day on July 30, 2015.
5. Students will have the option to continue to refine analysis throughout the fall in preparation for national conference submission and manuscript publication.

Note: Many students who visit Nicaragua may want to take time to travel before/after the program. This is a wonderful way to combine tourism with this academic experience. However, all travels plans are the responsibility of the student and should be scheduled so as not to conflict with the regularly scheduled program activities.

For further information, please contact Dr. Breena Taira, btaira@ucla.edu