

Chapter 8

Development and Evaluation of Cooperative Healthcare Bidirectional People-to- People Exchanges

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ABSTRACT

Bidirectional, interdisciplinary cultural exchanges result in increased understanding of cultural differences allowing for better international collaboration. The success and sustainability of cooperative

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agreements depend on regular continued communication with each partner institution, along with a key contact person “on the ground” in each participating country. International efforts represent an exciting beginning of people-to-people involvement in the global quest for improved access to safe surgical, anesthesia, and medical care in developing countries. Academic institutions are uniquely positioned to make a global impact helping others through the bidirectional exchange of education, research, and culture. International efforts can have a recognizable impact on partner locations. All individuals and institutions involved continue to learn from the knowledge and examples of others to further enhance their impact. Continued evaluation and reevaluation are important to improve the experience and achieve the needs and objectives for all involved participants.

INTRODUCTION

At the Kansas University Medical Center (KUMC) Office of International Programs (OIP), a major goal of the global health education initiative is to develop and foster ongoing international partnerships and relationships to further build efforts for collaborative research and education. Worldwide, this has resulted in numerous cooperative agreements with hospitals and universities for the exchange of education, research and culture. This collaboration has benefited medical students, nurses, health professionals and physicians from all participating countries and KUMC.

Over the last four years, a bidirectional educational exchange program for observation and teaching has developed between KUMC and partner institutions in Ghana and Peru. This has gradually evolved to include the healthcare fields of anesthesiology, nurse anesthesia, nursing and emergency medicine, including emergency medical technician (EMT) training.

This chapter aims to describe, illustrate and evaluate the development and benefit of these programs overall and in a people-to-people context. Pros and cons of individual experiences will be discussed as well as specific concepts learned by participants from the USA, Ghana and Peru.

KUMC OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

The KUMC OIP is committed to developing worldwide partnerships through outbound and inbound relationships that promote global health opportunities and training for students, medical residents and faculty at both KUMC and international partner institutions. A main emphasis is the bidirectional exchange of education, research and culture that are beneficial to worldwide partners, communities, patients and health systems. The number of KUMC students, residents and faculty who chose to participate in an international educational experience has grown from 57 in 2013 to 225 in 2019. There was also a corresponding increase in various on-campus global health related programs and events from 35 in 2014 to 200 in 2019. Attendance at these on-campus events grew from 634 participants in 2014 to 3,000 in 2019.

Following the outbound expansion of the OIP's education experience, the inbound program has experienced an increased emergence of more opportunities for reciprocity. Through new and existing partnerships, there has been a continuing interest in the development of special programs for observerships and research. The subject of this chapter is the development of people-to-people bidirectional educational and research opportunities with partner institutions in Peru and Ghana.

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