

Introduction

Health professionals and students participating in a global health experience (GHE) may have the best intentions, but can easily end up engaging in *“unethical and potentially illegal”* activities (Rowthorn, Loh, Evert, Chung, & Lasker, 2019, p.1).

In order to address these risks, programs and schools have implemented different methods of pre-immersion education including in-person training, assigned reading, and virtual modules.

Purpose / PICO Question

Among multidisciplinary health professionals and students planning to participate in global health experiences, what is the effect of implementing pre-immersion education on the ability to manage risk while upholding ethical principles within the scope of practice abroad?



(image obtained from 123rf.com)

Literature Search

Databases

- CINAHL
- MedLine
- PubMed
- Academic Search Complete/Premier

Search parameters

- peer-reviewed
- within past 7 years

Keywords

- risk management
- scope of practice
- abroad
- international health professional
- nursing care abroad
- ethical clinical experiences abroad
- ethical global health experiences

Current Evidence

Scope of Practice (SoP)

Almost *two-thirds* of medical workers practicing abroad report practicing outside of their SoP (Doobay et al., 2019a)

Most common procedures practiced outside of SoP: *“basic ultrasound, fracture management, wound care and suturing of lacerations, endotracheal intubation, vaginal delivery, and neonatal resuscitation”* (Doobay et al., 2019a, p.1009)

Ethical Considerations

The **most ethical** global health experiences are the ones that **collaborate fully and sustainably with the community** in which they are taking place.

“The ethical principle of justice requires partnering with local leaders to ensure that the potential burdens participants can place on local communities abroad are minimized” (DeCamp, Lehmann, Jaeeel, & Horwitch, 2018, p. 652).

Risk Management

Assessed risks of practicing abroad without pre-immersion education:

Harm to patient & community: patient unable to understand medical procedures thus unable to deem procedures culturally appropriate; limits autonomy; crosses ethical boundaries; potentially harms economy

Harm to provider: accidental needle sticks and lacerations, bodily fluid contamination, improper use of personal protective equipment, and musculoskeletal injuries; potential loss of license

Pre-Immersion Education

“Pre-immersion preparation can maximize learning during the [global health] experience”(Brown, 2017, as cited in Noone, Kohan, Hernandez, Tibbetts, & Richmond, 2019, p. 236).

Pre-immersion education learning objectives:

- scope of practice, awareness of the community as a client, social determinants of health, impact of policy on community health, and public health ethics

Only about half of students going abroad for global health experiences receive pre-immersion education, while 77% report that it contributes to feelings of preparedness (Kironji et al., 2018).

Education Plan & Implementation

Purpose and Method

Video presentation sent to key stakeholders to emphasize the importance of pre-immersion education for multidisciplinary healthcare professionals and students participating in global health experiences and to determine the best method for education

Target Audience (Key Stakeholders)

- Village Life Outreach Project (VLOP)
- UC Office of Risk Management
- UC International

Learning Objectives

1. Participants will be aware of the current prevalence of lapses in maintenance of scope of practice and nonadherence to ethical principles during GHEs.
2. Participants will demonstrate understanding of the need for pre-immersion education on the promotion of risk management and adherence to SoP and ethical principles.

Feedback

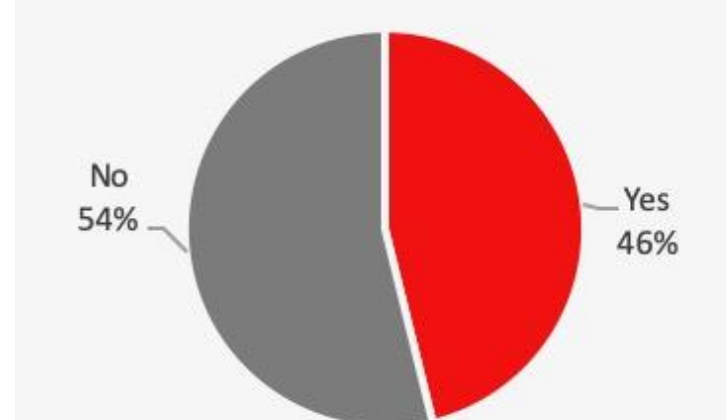
Results of pre and post immersion survey on participants of 2020 Tanzania GHE with VLOP:

Pre-immersion:

Participants indicated they were either “very confident” or “somewhat confident” to stay within their scope of practice abroad.



Experienced or Witnessed Scope of Practice Issue Abroad



Post-immersion:

Almost half of participants indicated that they **experienced or witnessed** a lapse in maintenance of scope of practice.

Key stakeholders endorsed modules and understanding of materials through Google Forms and written feedback.

Lessons Learned

1. Realized importance of involving Key Stakeholders in project development process.
2. Learning modules were determined to be effective means of comprehensive pre-immersion education.
3. Global health experiences should include risk management by promoting ethical principles and maintaining scope of practice.



picture taken with consent of those photographed

Recommendations

Modules drafted by students to be used in an online learning environment by multidisciplinary healthcare professionals and students participating in global health experiences should continue to be developed by key stakeholders and future capstone groups.

Areas of focus:

- scope of practice
- risk management
- ethical considerations
- cultural competence
- travel preparedness

References

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