

Two Months of Global Health in Maseru, Lesotho

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Background

- Career interest of community pediatrics in urban underserved areas
- No prior global health experience in Africa
- Baylor International Pediatric AIDS Initiative (BIPAI) is well-established in Lesotho, provides excellent quality of care, and educates foreign and national scholars



Objective

- Adapt skills and knowledge to limited-resource settings
- Learn about medical education system, health delivery, and socio-political impacts on health delivery in Lesotho
- Understand and initiate workup and management of children with HIV, TB, malnutrition, fever, and diarrhea

Preparation

- Pocket book of Hospital care for children
- Online global health modules
- Prior GH experiences
- Lesotho health information: 2.1 million people
 - HIV prevalence, up to 25%
 - HIV incidence of 21,000 in 2016
 - 52.9/1,000 infants die before 1yo
 - 66.5/1,000 children die before 5yo
 - Leading causes of death: HIV/AIDS related illness & drug-susceptible TB

Experience

- Conducted routine HIV and TB follow-up visits
 - Infants and children at the Center of Excellence
 - Adolescents at Queen Mamohato Memorial Hospital (QMMH)
- Assisted monthly clinic at local orphanage & monthly teen club
- Attended weekly CME & clinic meetings
- Participated in QI & presented on QI
- Updated general pediatric PowerPoint lectures for national medical learners
- Rotated on the neonatal ward at QMMH
- Traveled throughout the country on weekends with my husband

Reflection

- Diverse pathology seen: TB, HIV, meningitis, toxin-induced multi-organ failure, testicular torsion, acute diarrhea, severe acute malnutrition, HIE, neonatal respiratory distress, hyperbilirubinemia, CHD, pneumonia
- Understanding cultural & socio-political impacts and influences on health is essential. This is possible through cultural immersion, travel, and reading – also requires time
- The role of western trained physicians in global health is shifting from providing clinical care to capacity building & administrative roles
- Family and professional support of my global health ventures is key for wellness



Future Directions

- To be determined...
- Possibly a fellowship with GH opportunities, humanitarian aid, med ed abroad, build GH curriculum for medical students

