

Jackson Family Foundation Medical Missions Job Board

November / December, 2008



Study Overview

- Objective:
 - Profile doctors who may be interested in participating in medical missions
 - Understand how these doctors would like to search for medical missions opportunities
- Methodology
 - Survey our physician databases
 - A total of 3,015 respondents clicked through and began the survey

Summary of Findings

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Profile of Past Participants in Medical Missions

- Past participants account for 36% of total respondents.
- Approximately ½ of past participants are recent volunteers (within the past three years).
- Most of the respondents (18%) went through their church or independently.
- Approximately 2/3 found out about the opportunity via word of mouth (friend, co-worker, family, school/alumni groups, church).
 - ⇒ Only 13% were actively seeking an opportunity or organizing a trip on their own.
- A rewarding experience: 98% would be interested in volunteering again.

Profile of Past Participants

- Those who have participated in the past are more likely to:
 - Be licensed, practicing professionals for 20+ years
 - Designate their specialties as general surgery, family practice, ophthalmology
 - Be single
 - Describe their religious affiliation as Protestant Christian
- Those who have participated in the past are less likely to:
 - Be full-time hospital employees
 - Designate their specialties as radiology, interventional radiology, or mental health
 - Have children under the age of 18 at home

Potential Participants

- Non volunteers account for 64% of the total respondents.
- 96% are interested, but only 40% have actively investigated an opportunity.
- Expect to be “recruited”.
- Only ¼ are interested in the volatile Middle East.

Motivations for Participating

- Disillusionment with medical practice in the United States. Opportunity to get back to the practice of medicine in its purest form.
 - For some of those who have volunteered in the past, the experience of participating in missions reminded them of why they decided to practice medicine in the first place.
 - The opportunity to practice without insurance company interference or dictate.
 - The opportunity to help a population who wants to be helped and who is appreciative of that help.
 - The opportunity to feel needed.
 - The opportunity to give back (whether religious-based or not).
- Participating in missions is grounding, humbling and refreshing.

Desired Job Board Features

- Would like to search for medical missions opportunities by:
 - ⇒ Medical specialty: 75%
 - ⇒ Length of assignment: 58%
 - ⇒ Dates / times of the year: 51%
- Need / want details:
 - ⇒ Cost to me
 - ⇒ Stated, specific goals:
 - Expected outcome
 - Religious or not
 - History / profile of the organization behind the mission
 - Need driving the mission
 - ⇒ Documentation from past volunteers and current doctors / practitioners on the ground as well as past patients
 - ⇒ Who else is going? (Team leader, other volunteers)
 - ⇒ Pictures, video
 - ⇒ Type of support available: equipment, facilities, supporting personnel
 - ⇒ Living conditions, security, potential hazards, culture

How Jackson Healthcare Can Improve a Missions' Experience

- Missions tend to be disorganized
- Not much information is provided – a bait and switch feeling
- No lead time is provided; no ability to plan
- Subspecialists want to be able to contribute within their subspecialties, not just as primary care providers or surgical assistants
- There is a need for honesty: goals, conditions on the ground, potential outcome

Appendix: Detailed Statistics

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Statistics on Past Participants

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Past Participation

Have you ever participated in a voluntary, short-term medical assignment?	(n=3015)
Yes	36%
No	64%

Past Volunteers: Regions Served

In which region(s) did you serve?	(n=1066)
Central America (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama)	30%
Asia	27%
Africa	23%
South America	23%
United States	19%
Caribbean	18%
Other North American country outside the U.S.	11%
Europe	7%
Middle East	7%
Pacific Ocean (Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, Ne Caledonia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu)	5%
Other	6%

Past Volunteers: How Long Ago?

Which of the following best describes when you last volunteered?	(n=1071)
Within the past year	28%
Between 1 and 3 years ago	25%
Between 3 and 5 years ago	14%
Between 5 and 10 years ago	15%
More than 10 years ago	15%

Past Volunteers: For Which Organization?

For which of the following organizations did you volunteer?	(n=859)
Through a church ministry	11%
Independent mission	7%
Christian Medical and Dental Association	5%
Through medical school / residency	5%
Red Cross	3%
Operation Smile	3%
World Medical Missions	2%
Post disaster relief	1%
DocCare	1%
Flying Samaritans	1%
Healing the Children	1%
Health Volunteers Overseas	1%
Himalayan Health Organization	1%
Orthopedics Overseas	1%
Rotoplast	1%
Many, many others	

Past Volunteers: How Found Out About the Mission: Open End

	(n=921)
A friend	19%
Co-worker / associate	14%
School / alumni groups	11%
Church	11%
Actively searching / internet research	10%
Word of mouth	9%
Through work	5%
Medical association / organization	5%
Was recruited by a team	4%
Email	3%
Advertisement / article	3%
Organized a mission on my own	3%
From my family	2%
Military	1%
Conference	1%
Physician recruiter / jobsite	1%
Local opportunity	1%

Past volunteers found out about mission opportunities via word of mouth.

Past Volunteers: Willingness to Volunteer Again

Would you be interested in volunteering again?	(n=1031)
Yes	98%
No	2%

“It is satisfying to help people who want to be helped.”

“I find missions rewarding, keeps me humble, an obligation to give and serve the needy as Jesus commanded.”

“A change of pace. Nice to help an appreciative population instead of a demanding one.”

“I would like to volunteer for medical work in deserving areas because it would give more satisfaction than my work.”

“I have spend a long time and a lot of money gaining the understanding that I have. Somehow, this seems to me a waste if it was only utilized to make money, provide non-essential care for the richest nation on earth.”

“I am in my early sixties with massive experience in both ENT and plastic surgery and have time to do this work.”

“Most rewarding experience within medicine.”

“Enjoyed the challenge and sense of accomplishment.”

“To those whom much is given, much is required. It is one more way to be a good steward of what the Lord has blessed me with.”

“I loved the people, the culture and being able to treat as medically needed and not as insurance company wanted.”

“Feel that I went into medicine to give something to humanity; not feeling like that’s happening now in the States.”

Statistics on Potential Participants

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Have Not Volunteered: Interest Level

Would you ever be interested in volunteering for a short-term medical assignment?	(n=1871)
Yes	96%
No	4%

Have you ever actively investigated an opportunity like this?	(n=1789)
Yes	40%
No	60%

Potential Volunteers: Organizations Investigated

Which of the following organizations did you research / investigate?	(n=629)
Red Cross	23%
Operation Smile	16%
UNICEF	14%
Christian Medical and Dental Association	11%
Care International	9%
Medical Missions Response	7%
Hope for People International	5%
MAP International	4%
Other	59%

Potential Volunteers: Regions of Interest

In which region(s) would you be interested in serving?	(n=2781)
Central America (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama)	72%
Caribbean	69%
South America	67%
Pacific Ocean (Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, Ne Caledonia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu)	67%
Europe	60%
Asia	55%
United States	53%
Africa	53%
Other North American country outside the U.S.	43%
Middle East	27%
Other	5%

Potential Volunteers: How Expect to Find Out About Mission Opportunity

	(n=1347)
Email	30%
Online	26%
Friends / colleagues	21%
The missionary organization itself	7%
Associations / organizations	7%
Journals	5%
Direct mail	5%
The Jackson Family Foundation	3%
Via direct contact	3%
Advertisements	2%
Through work / hospital	2%
Conference	1%
University	1%
Recruiter	1%
Don't know	15%

Potential volunteers expect to be “recruited” for a mission opportunity. The majority have not investigated an opportunity, but would be interested in participating.

Team Participation

Which of the following best describes how you anticipate participating in this short-term voluntary medical trip?	(n=2797)
I would undertake this effort on my own and have the organization assign me to a team.	77%
I would be traveling with my entire team / staff. We would undertake this effort as a group.	17%
Other	6%

Title and Experience

Which of the following best describes your title? (multiple select allowed)	(n=2818)
Physician, MD/DO	81%
Registered Nurse	2%
Nurse Practitioner	5%
Physician's Assistant	4%
Other	16%

How long have you been practicing as a licensed professional?	(n=2817)
Less than one year	4%
1-3 years	7%
3-5 years	9%
5-10 years	14%
10-15 years	14%
15-20 years	11%
20 years+	41%

Current Position

Which of the following best describes your current position?	(n=2671)
Member of a single specialty group	18%
Full-time hospital employee	17%
Temporary / locum tenens / traveling position	14%
Full-time, independent contractor	12%
Own my own solo practice	10%
Member of a multi-specialty group	9%
Other	19%

Specialty

Which of the following best describes your specialty?	(n=2818)
Anesthesiology	17%
Family Practice	9%
Surgery, subspecialty	8%
Mental Health	7%
Internal Medicine, subspecialty	7%
Primary Care	6%
Women's Health	6%
Internal Medicine, general	5%
Radiology	4%
Pediatrics, general	4%
Pediatrics, subspecialty	2%
Ophthalmology	1%
Other	18%

Demographics

Gender	(n=2819)
Male	61%
Female	39%

Minor Children	(n=2819)
Yes	33%
No	64%
Prefer not to answer	3%

Marital Status	(n=2819)
Single	20%
Married	65%
Divorced / Separated	10%
Widowed	1%
Prefer not to answer	4%

Age	(n=2819)
25-34	12%
35-44	24%
45-54	29%
55-64	22%
65+	11%
Prefer not to answer	2%

Religious Affiliation

Which of the following best describes your religious affiliation?	(n=2819)
Protestant Christian	28%
Catholic Christian	19%
Non-religious	15%
Jewish	9%
Hindu	4%
Muslim	3%
Buddhist	2%
Prefer not to answer	12%
Other	8%

The Job Board

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Searching a Job Board: Top Three Ways

How would you expect to be able to search a short-term voluntary medical web board? Please choose your top three.	(n= 2798)
By medical specialty	75%
By length of assignment	58%
By dates / times of year	51%
By geographic region	38%
By country	30%
By assignment profile or goal	25%
By charitable organization associated with the trip	20%
Other	2%

What Other Site Features Would Assist in Making a Decision: Open End

	(n=2676)
Funding source / cost to me	14%
Purpose of the trip / goals for the mission	8%
Profile of the organization sponsoring the trip	7%
Details: itinerary, other team members, etc.	7%
Testimonials from physicians / others who had been on the mission	6%
Area description including customs, weather, population, etc.	6%
Risks involved, security	6%
Availability of support sources: equipment, other professionals, facility	5%
Description of living conditions / accommodations	5%
Description of duties, hours	4%
Specific need for specialty / subspecialty / qualifications	4%
Job board: matching skills and availability to need, see what is available, store credentials	3%
Length of assignment	3%
Special requirements: vaccinations, skill sets other than medical, physical activity, etc.	3%
Organizational affiliation (political, religious, secular, etc.)	2%
Opportunity to take family	2%
Language requirements	2%
Time of year, dates of assignment	2%
Contact information	2%
Pictures / video of site	1%
User friendly	1%
Online application process	1%

In short:
Tell me
how much
it will cost
and
provide as
many
details as
possible.

What Else Would Help in Decision-Making Process?

Documentation from Past Participants:

“A place where previous physicians who traveled to the region documented their experiences and provide their email address so questions could be asked of them from interested parties.”

“Ability to discuss directly with fellow doctor(s).”

“Connection to others who have already participated and a chance to speak with them via Internet about their experience.”

“Names and numbers of contact people who had been to the mission site.”

“Updated feedback on the community, weather, political climate, local colleagues’ contact info and those that provide/provided care in a particular region. Include geographic locations of interest – both historical, cultural and touristic.”

“Those that gave multiple times of the year for opportunities to serve, those that had some assistance with the travel cost, those that were varied in length of service from long-term to short-term service opportunities. Also, I would like actual information on the site from those that have received assistance from medical missions and those that have served on the mission field as to what we can be expected to do for the mission and also what the community expects from our mission.”

Understanding Goals for the Trip:

“An understanding of the goals of the trip and needs of the population. It would be important to know what medical skills were desired. A link to the State Department would be useful, so one could decide how much they might be endangering themselves with the undertaking.”

“Details about the necessity of the medical job, patient population.”

“Don’t know, but I would not be at all interested in work that had a religious component or was sponsored by a religious group.”

“Links to the organization affiliated with the trip to determine nature of the organization, for example, whether or not they have religious intentions involved.”

“My other experience was faith-based. I would only serve again with another organization that shared my same goals, etc.”

“I would be interested in how the organizers chose the venue, how they choose their volunteers, and the stated goals of the project. I would also want to be able to talk to a number of people who had volunteered with the organization previously.”

“Directors / supervisors, expectations for participants, nature of ongoing care, i.e. training local medical providers in follow-up care, etc.”

“I would not expect to be able to search by charitable organization, but I know other physicians not necessarily interested in Christian-based organizations who cannot easily find non-religious organizations with which to volunteer on a 5-10 day basis. For them, it would be helpful to know whether the trip is primarily, partially or not religious-based (the use the terms ‘converting’ or ‘proselytizing’). I also think if there was a map, where you could click on the geographic regions , it would be helpful to see a window showing upcoming trips to that region.”

“Number, background, and experience of participants/organizers; fiscal clarity (cost or remuneration to participant), logistical clarity (well-planned and organized), subsidy opportunities.”

“There must be a specific letter of invitation from a high ranking government official of the country involved actively in support of the mission. I do not want to get involved in any program which is pushing for political ‘reforms’ or ‘regime change’ or ‘democratization’ or ‘liberation’ or ‘empowering the people’ or any other sort of activity in which one group seeks to overthrow another group and take charge of the government.”

Details on the Area to be Served:

“Demographic information about the area to be served and the specific social, cultural, economic needs of the people there. A short description of the state of medical practice would also be helpful.”

“Info on the safety of the area, link to State Department risks of travel, problems with outbreaks of contagious disease in that country, political turmoil, etc. Also, travel and living expense estimates, or whether those are covered by sponsoring group.”

“Level of need in the possible areas of service, and current political situations and estimations of security issues in the area (e.g. State Department travel advisories).”

“Photographs of the region and description of local peoples’ spiritual-cultural beliefs including beliefs about healing. Would there be contact with indigenous healers for a richer cross-cultural experience?”

“Real-time information on stability and safety of the area; enough lead time to plan; clear description of goals; clear and detailed description of the assignment and location (i.e. not made pretty just to entice participation). Tell me the facts without making me guess where it is, etc.”

“Living arrangements like living accommodations, food, transportation, etc.; it will be very helpful if these can be arranged for a modest cost, so the physician does not have to worry about these in a foreign country.”

“Desired experience of the medical professionals, remoteness of the locations (i.e.: city vs. village), living quarters (tents, cabins, etc.).”

“Typical diet in the area; what to really expect with respect to accommodations and hygiene needs; gender issues and cultural expectations/roles for men/women. Who is taking the lead/organizational role to field problems and unexpected events.”

“Travel, room and board accommodations. Local customs, dangers, currency, health risks to me, ability to make a difference. I do not want to spend a relatively short time helping patients who then fall back into a culture which does not support the care I have provided.”

“What do I need to be able to do? What do I need to bring? What’s the weather expected to be like? What are the most common dangers (illness, violence, bugs, etc.)? What are the idiosyncrasies of the culture that may affect a volunteer? How much will it cost me, bottom line (e.g.: airline travel, food place to stay)?”

Level of Support to be Expected:

“Info regarding the continuity of this work by others after my involvement. Financial expense necessary to participate. Person or agency to contact regarding my availability.”

“Information regarding the organizational skills of the ‘ground’ personnel who pre-select patients for surgery. Also information regarding payment or kickback to the host hospital [or lack thereof].”

“Knowing who are the other doctors in the team, description of the actions, service, care I will be expected to give there, conditions of work in that country/hospital/clinic.”

“Equipment available, types; of surgical cases / patient problems, facility type, translators available.”

“Organizational information, safety, cost, equipment and facilities available, backup including other colleagues.”

Other Issues:

On Cost, etc.:

“Cost and assistance provided with cost of the trip, length of time estimated that one would have to serve and the ability to go for longer/shorter periods of time, languages needed, security provided.”

“Costs and malpractice exposure.”

“Costs, visa/passport requirements, other entry requirements (vaccines, etc.)”

“Out of pocket expenses, duties, length of assignment, history of organization in sponsoring trips.”

On How I Might Contribute:

“Since I am in a subspecialty that does not involve direct patient care, I would need to know how I could contribute – at a basic patient care level, for example, or actually in my field.”

“The ability to judge if I could practice my specialty and have access to internet resources for research. Contact with like-minded professional colleagues would be important, i.e., I would not like to be too far into the primary care arena. There would be nothing wrong with doing lots of primarily routine “plain films” though.”

“Would be nice to get alerts when opportunities in sub-specialty arise.”

“You might think about having a spot for retired people like me who are free and need no schedule.”

Other Issues, continued:

On Applications and Documentation:

“Unusual cases that would be seen, shots, vaccinations needed, type of documentation required.”

“Website features that include online initial application and a detailed description of duties, expectations, schedules for each assignment.”

“Online applications; we are currently considering Mercy Ships, but the amount of paperwork involved in the application is daunting.”

Summary and Recommendations:

- Doctors want to participate and give something back.
 - ⇒ Post-survey, we were flooded with requests for more information.
- Participating gives them a renewed enthusiasm for the practice of medicine.
- In a medical missions job board doctors want:
 - ⇒ Full disclosure: cost, objectives of the group sponsoring the trip, conditions on the ground, other teammates involved
 - ⇒ The ability to plan a trip in advance
 - ⇒ The ability to search by:
 - Medical specialty
 - Length of assignment
 - Time of year