

NHS Scotland Global Citizenship Doing it Well



Acknowledgements

The NHS Scotland Global Citizenship Guide “Doing it Well” has been developed with input from NHS Board Lead Champions and builds on the excellent resources and toolkits available which we have acknowledged in the Guide. It is a working document that we will continue to add to and build on, using the experience and learning from our colleagues involved in global citizenship.

Photograph shows the fistula surgery team – enjoying the satisfaction of working hard to treat Childbirth Injuries in Uganda. <https://www.scottishglobalhealth.org/projects/uganda-childbirth-injury-fund/>



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Introduction

The NHS Scotland Global Citizenship Guide provides advice and guidance for NHS Boards and staff about how to get involved in Global Citizenship.

This includes advice on how we can help from home; and if volunteering overseas, what needs to be considered in terms of risk assessment, safeguarding and maximising the impact of our commitment; guiding staff towards building sustainable partnerships and relationships which deepen and strengthen with time.

This guidance should be used together with contextually specific information and professional advice.



Section 1 – What is Global Citizenship?



There are several definitions of Global Citizenship, all expressing the following broad sentiment:

“It is a way of living that recognises our world is an increasingly complex web of connections and interdependencies. One in which our choices and actions may have repercussions for people and communities locally, nationally and internationally.”

Source: [IDEAS](#)

Why get involved?

Many NHS staff want to contribute to global health in low- and middle-income countries because they want to be part of making a positive contribution overseas and develop their skills. The motivations are multiple, but a common theme is the recognition that access to healthcare is a human right and that many people possess the skills in demand to help alleviate the gaps.

Exercise: As a starting point its worth asking yourself why you want to get involved in global health.

Some possible answers:

- I have skills that are matched with the needs
- I am a good teacher and can share my skills and knowledge with others
- I am an experienced engineer/technician/data analyst/water engineer and I can share my skills and knowledge
- I am interested in developing my skills and knowledge and interested in meeting new colleagues and building collaborative partnerships
- I am thinking about retirement and I have always wanted to see if my skills and knowledge can help
- I want to do research and contribute to global health in this way

Benefits of getting involved in global health work

There is clear evidence that involvement in global health benefits the people who participate, our healthcare system, and ultimately the Scottish population through a reinvigorated, self-sufficient, innovative and productive workforce.

Evidence for the mutual benefits of global health work can be found in the academic literature and in the experience of health systems that have combined the development of global health work with training and service delivery. Benefits to individuals include developing:

- Leadership and management skills
- Communication and teamwork
- Clinical skills
- Policy awareness and experience
- Academic skills
- Patient experience and dignity
- Personal resilience, satisfaction and interest.



Case Study: Chris Faldon, Nurse Consultant, NHS Borders

In 2012 I made a visit to our NHS Borders officially twinned partner St Francis Hospital, Zambia. Since then I have been privileged to make a contribution to a number of projects including: water, sanitation and TB control. Some of the main things I learned and gained personally and professionally are:

- 1. The importance of listening.** Need for flexible, locally-grounded approaches that recognise complexity and aim to find solutions.
- 2. The need to bring back the learning to the UK.** Despite overwhelming workload pressures I have witnessed remarkable results from a team of dedicated workers and volunteers – better than that achieved back in Scotland with respect to TB treatment completion rates. My findings and recommendations have been presented to TB Nurses across Scotland and to a national multidisciplinary TB conference.
- 3. The often under exploited value of peer-to-peer support and shared experience.** I am much more tuned into opportunities to better engage with the third sector.
- 4. A greater appreciation of the NHS.** Despite our real pressures we are comparatively well served in the NHS – especially with our workforce capacity. Am I utilising the strengths of my team to the fullest?
- 5. The positive impact of witnessing in action a workforce with a glass half-full attitude.** As a nurse consultant this has inspired me to take on local and national leadership roles back in the UK that I may have not been so confident to embrace without this global health experience.

Benefits to NHS Scotland and the Scottish Population

Working in low-and middle-income countries often enhances clinical expertise as a result of working in a setting with fewer diagnostic resources. This makes us better equipped to adapt to transformation and change in NHS Scotland.

The Scottish population is diverse, and we benefit greatly from staff with cross-cultural experience, awareness and understanding. The experience can also help stimulate innovation and learning through experience of different models of care and healthcare systems.

Benefits to NHS Scotland include:

- Enhancement of recruitment and retention
- System learning and capacity building
- Professional development of the workforce
- Improved patient experience
- Reputational development

Safeguarding and ‘Do No Harm’

International development and humanitarian assistance involve working with the most vulnerable people and it is critical that no harm is done. This includes harm which is not intended. The international development sector has been quick to act following the heightened media attention early in 2018 on abuses that had taken place during the delivery of humanitarian work. This intense scrutiny has put pressure on governments and international development organisations to demonstrate that they have robust safeguarding policies and procedures in place.

The [Safeguarding Support Package](#), “*Safer for All*” has been developed by Scotland’s International Development Alliance (SIDA) and designed specifically to provide information, tools, and resources and support needed to ensure that safeguarding practice meets the highest standards.

Scotland's International Development Alliance (SIDA)

The [Scotland's International Development Alliance](https://www.intdevalliance.scot/who-we-are/about-us) provides support to people and organisations in Scotland involved in international development. SIDA provide a range of resources including education and training as well as access to a comprehensive funding database. Further information is available at <https://www.intdevalliance.scot/who-we-are/about-us>

Scotland Malawi Partnership (SMP)

If you have an interest in Malawi, the [Scotland Malawi Partnership](https://www.scotland-malawipartnership.org/register/) (SMP) is the national civil society network co-ordinating, supporting and representing the people-to-people links between our two nations. The organisation represents a community of 109,000 Scots with active links to Malawi.

The SMP is a membership organisation which anyone in Scotland with an interest in Malawi can join. It is a non-governmental and politically neutral members' led organisation. For more information, please go to: <https://www.scotland-malawipartnership.org/register/>

Scotland Zambia Partnership (SCOZAP)

If you have an interest in Zambia, [the Scotland Zambia Partnership \(SCOZAP\)](https://www.scozap.org.uk/about-us) is the diaspora led organisation with membership of around 500 Zambians and friends of Zambia. SCOZAP is a membership organisation which anyone in Scotland with an interest in Zambia can join. It is a non-governmental and politically neutral members' led organisation. SCOZAP are a registered charity and currently taking part in a project in developing a peer support group network for young people (in Scotland) coming from a black and minority ethnic (BME) background. For more information, please go to: <https://www.scozap.org.uk/about-us>

Section 2 – Getting Involved



Active Global Citizenship

Everyone can get involved in active global citizenship by making the connections between our day-to-day decisions at home and the potential impact these choices have on people who live in low- and middle-income countries. This awareness enables us, as individuals, to do what we can to promote social justice.

Case Study: Emily Broadis, Public Health Registrar, Active Global Citizen

“Living and working in Malawi opened my eyes to inequality, resourcefulness and living in the present, and the friendships I made mean that poverty is no longer faceless. I think for me, active global citizenship is the explicit recognition that the way I live, through consumer and lifestyle choices, work and volunteering, can make a difference to those who are disadvantaged, and it brings a hope that both peoples’ lives, and planetary health, can be made fairer and healthier.”

Traditionally global health work, has been considered through the lens of overseas volunteering. However, staff from across the NHS contribute to global health in multiple and innovative ways including:

- Mentoring healthcare staff from low- and middle-income countries who come to work in NHS Scotland to develop new skills and learning
- Providing remote support including: virtual learning, clinical networks, coaching and mentoring using a wide range of technology from Scotland to staff in low- and middle-income countries
- Providing additional cover and support when a team member is volunteering overseas
- Fundraising to support local and global initiatives
- Voluntary work within Scotland to support refugees/asylum seekers
- Supporting healthcare system development in a low- and middle-income country with skills, experience and tools in areas such as project management, financial management and quality improvement.

For further information please see the Guide to Active Global Citizenship (coming soon) which includes thinking about our everyday choices and the impact these may have on others.

Case Study: Shobna Vasishta, Helping from home by fundraising

Over the last 25 years I have volunteered for various charities and raised funds in novel ways including charity balls, lunches and healthy challenges:

- Organising 22 Charity Balls with over 300 attendees at each raising between £20,000 and £40,000 at each one
- Hosting 10/10 Ladies lunches to raise money for the Fistula Foundation. The 10/10 format involves hosting a lunch at home and inviting 10 friends who make a donation to the charity (usually £10). Each of the guests goes on to host their own charity lunch raising a minimum of £100 a time.
- Organising various healthy fundraising challenges including short treks and a skip-a-thon where every school child in Dundee skipped for 10 minutes during their lunch to break the Guinness world record. The children paid £1 each to take part and support the disaster fund for water relief in Africa
- Organising small scale nearly new book and clothes sales with friends.

Environmental Sustainability, Climate Change and Global Health

One of the natural consequences of becoming a Global Citizen is being someone who makes an active contribution to local and global sustainability.

But what do we mean by ‘sustainability’, especially as it seems to mean different things to different people and organisations? Being sustainable simply means that things can be maintained at an agreed level or rate, usually of a given resource or resources. So, financial sustainability means that we are seeking to maintain the use of funding at an agreed level or rate, staffing sustainability means that we are training and recruiting the staff necessary to maintain services, and environmental sustainability means that we are using environmental resources in a way that maintains the integrity of our environment. When we consider global health, we are usually considering the ways in which we actively support the development of health and healthcare systems in a sustainable way.

Sustainable development has been described by the United Nations as:

“development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

Source: UN. [The Sustainable Development Agenda](#)

Linked to this overarching commitment are seventeen sustainable development goals (SDG) that make clear the actions that are necessary. When it comes to environmental sustainability and climate change in the context of global health, the necessary actions encompass:

[SDG 12](#) Responsible consumption and production: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns;

[SDG 13](#) Climate Action: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts;

[SDG 14](#) Life below water: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources; and

[SDG 15](#) Life on land: Sustainably manage forests, combat the spread of deserts, halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss.

For those involved in developing and delivering Scotland's global health response, it can be hard to see how such goals can be delivered practically. Even in Scotland, they can seem very distant from what we are all doing on a day to day basis. But this is why being a Global Citizen is so important.

In Scotland we are fortunate that our [national performance framework](#) – which sets out how Scotland will make the SDGs locally relevant – has sustainability as one of the outcomes. This means that by supporting what the NHS is doing locally in relation to sustainability, you are becoming a Global Citizen in Scotland. But more importantly, by becoming aware of, and acting to take forward the NHS Scotland Sustainability Action programme locally, you will be developing the practical day to day skills that mean you will be practicing in a more sustainable way when working as part of a global health initiative.

To help you get started, your local NHS intranet should be able to guide you to your local Sustainability Action contacts.

Building Collaborative Health Partnerships

Health partnerships are a model for improving health and health services based on ideas of co-development between people and institutions from different countries. The partnerships are long-term but not permanent and are based on ideas of reciprocal learning and mutual benefits.

Whether you decide to volunteer with a charity or as part of a health partnership, your input should be based on collaborative working and follow the principles of [Tropical Health and Education Trust \(THET\) partnership working](#).

Health partnerships take many forms; they can be an arrangement between friends, colleagues, organisations, charities or NHS Boards. However, fundamental to any partnership, is that they have been developed collaboratively and are based on need.

NHS Scotland recommends that all NHS staff engaged in health partnerships embrace THET's principles of partnership. This can be done prior to establishing a partnership, or established partnerships can be reviewed regularly to check that these principles are embedded in everything that they do.

THET's Principles of Partnership:

- 1. Strategic:** Health partnerships have a shared vision, have long term aims and measurable plans for achieving them and work within a jointly-agreed framework of priorities and direction.
- 2. Harmonised and aligned:** Health partnerships' work is consistent with local and national plans and complements the activities of other development partners.
- 3. Effective and sustainable:** Health partnerships operate in a way that delivers high-quality projects that meet targets and achieves long term results.

4. **Respectful and reciprocal:** Health partnerships listen to one another and plan, implement and learn together.
5. **Organised and accountable:** Health partnerships are well-structured, well-managed and efficient and have clear and transparent decision-making processes.
6. **Responsible:** Health partnerships conduct their activities with integrity and cultivate trust in their interactions with stakeholders.
7. **Flexible, resourceful and innovative:** Health partnerships proactively adapt and respond to altered circumstances and embrace change.
8. **Committed to joint learning:** Health partnerships monitor, evaluate and reflect on their activities and results, articulate lessons learned and share knowledge with others.

Source: THET's Principles of Partnership

Engaging with a Health Partnership

If you are looking to get involved in global citizenship, as a first step, you can get in touch with your NHS Board's Global Citizenship Lead Champion who will be able to guide you to further information and local staff involved in global health work. This can be helpful in thinking about the different ways you could contribute and also if there are any opportunities locally to get involved in your Board.

You can also search the [Health Partnership Database](#) which will give you an idea of the different health partnerships that are underway and an idea of what is involved and how your skills and interests could contribute. Many of the partnerships on our website also have links to their own websites and publications which can also help you to familiarise yourself with their work.

If a local partnership is involved in work outside of your field, it can still be worth having a conversation with the partnership leads. Many partnerships evolve as a result of local interest and expertise as well as the needs expressed by host organisations.

The Scottish Global Health Co-ordination Unit shares opportunities as they come up. To make sure that you see these, please regularly check the Co-ordination Unit website www.scottishglobalhealth.org and follow us on twitter [@ScottishGHCU](https://twitter.com/ScottishGHCU) for the latest updates and news.

Health Partnership Toolkits

THET has several excellent resources that could help you as an individual in setting up governance arrangements for your new partnership:

- **Principles of Partnership**
<https://www.thet.org/principles-of-partnership/>
- **International Health Links Manual**
<https://www.thet.org/resources/international-health-links-manual/>
- **Example Memorandum of Understanding**
<https://www.thet.org/resources/hps-memorandum-understanding-template/>
- **Students in Partnerships**
https://www.thet.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Students-in-Health-Partnerships_Toolkit.pdf
- **Duty of Care Guidance for health partnerships**
<https://www.thet.org/resources/duty-care-toolkit/>
– also includes advice on insurance, indemnity and visas etc

Measuring the effectiveness of what you are doing

Working out what you will have achieved in what you do is really important. Have I “made a difference”? Before you start, think about how you could measure what you do and have some plans in place beforehand. This should be kept very simple – large evaluations of programmes have their place but they are difficult to do and expensive.

If you are teaching, for example, could you use 'process measures'. Getting formal feedback on your teaching and assessing knowledge change before and after are easy to do. Assessing changes in practice (for better or worse) in the group you are working with is something that will allow you to further develop or to modify what you are doing. Online questionnaires such as Survey Monkey can be really helpful – but you need to really encourage people to complete them.

Think about how the work you do could be replicated over a longer period. Keeping any good intervention going over a period time or repeating it on a regular basis is bound to be more effective than something that is one-off.

Helpful Tips

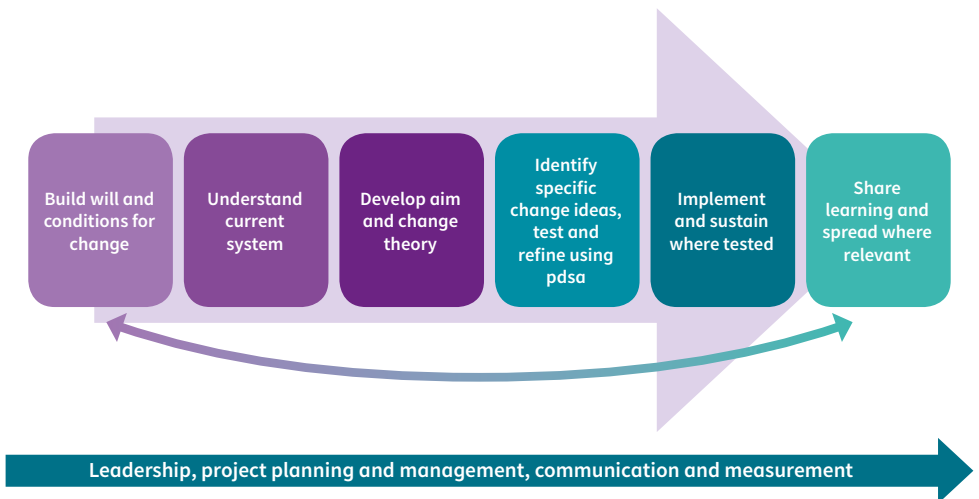
- Explore the current local data which is owned by the Ministry of Health in the partner country and ask questions about: what data is collected? (patient/services/procedures/outcomes), who collects the data? How is it stored and used?
- Consider the monitoring and evaluation plan prior to setting up the project or partnership. Can data which is already being collected contribute to this? Will your hosts be able to use currently collected data to evaluate this project? Try to avoid establishing parallel data capturing methods but rather consider how this project might strengthen current strategies in place.
- If appropriate, consider offering support to build professional capability in the field of data capture.

Quality Improvement Zone

In planning the sustainability of the health partnership you are involved in, the [Quality Improvement Zone](#) provides information and resources to support people with experience at all levels of quality improvement to develop their knowledge.

In the QI Zone you will find:

- Information on what is quality improvement, the improvement journey and related quality improvement tools and topics
- A range of educational resources, including eLearning modules, guides and frameworks
- Information on the different levels of experience in quality improvement and associated learning programmes



Knowledge and Evidence

Encouraging evidence-based practice is a key part of quality improvement. [HINARI](#) is a global initiative which provides access to high quality, up to date health research evidence and decision-ready evidence summaries for use at point of care. These are free of charge to local, and not for profit institutions in low resource countries. Training materials on evidence searching are available at <https://www.who.int/hinari/training/en/>.

Developing the role of health librarians and knowledge managers in low resource countries in embedding use of evidence in practice is a key enabler of high quality care. If you would like to find out more about developing these enabling roles, the Scottish Government Global Citizenship Coordination team <https://www.scottishglobalhealth.org/contact-us/> can direct you to relevant NHS Scotland initiatives and resources.

Volunteering with a Charity

Another way to volunteer overseas is to go with a charity. We have compiled a list of [Charities and Organisations](#) who can provide volunteering opportunities. The Scottish Global Health Co-ordination Unit is not specifically recommending these organisations but rather providing you with a starting point to begin to explore the different opportunities that might be of interest to you.

If you are interested in volunteering with a charity or an organisation, we suggest that you research the organisation, the work and country that they are working in, and whether they have processes and support in place for collaborative partnership working, and ethical volunteering, including Safeguarding and Conduct.

If you choose to volunteer with a charity or organisation – here are some questions that you should consider:

Questions to consider when choosing a charity:

- What is the vision of the organisation?
- Is the work community led, i.e. based on the needs of the community?
- Do the organisation's values resonate with your own?
- Is the organisation's vision based on social justice or charity?
- How is the organisation funded and is this transparent?
- Is there a safeguarding policy and is training available?
- Who has overall accountability for the project?

Surplus Kit and Equipment

If you are working as part of a health partnership, your host partners may identify kit and equipment that is needed. Medical equipment has become a fundamental part of modern healthcare delivery, enabling screening, prevention, diagnostics, treatment and palliative care. A huge mismatch still exists between the number of technologies produced by the global healthcare innovation community and the user in low-resource settings.

Donations of medical equipment can bridge some of these gaps, allowing for some of the surplus from high resource settings to be passed to low resource settings. Although most donations are made with good intentions, the results are not always positive when they are not properly planned and coordinated. If poorly executed, donations can burden the recipient, wasting an enormous amount of money, human resources and time, with long term implications of crippled healthcare systems and amassing environmental burden.

The following main barriers to effective donation of medical equipment have been identified:

- Lack of genuine partnership between donor and recipient
- Insufficient appreciation for the challenges of the recipient's context
- Limited standardised inventory of medical equipment in resource constrained settings to identify needs
- Insufficient support for the long term integration of new equipment
- Insufficient connectivity between activities undertaken by various organisations working on donations
- Lack of accountability – no tracking and monitoring of donations and no existing quantification framework for impact of donations
- Insufficient capacity and capacity building programs for recipients
- User manuals, service (maintenance) manuals, disposal instructions and software are not supplied or not in the user's language
- Consumables and maintenance materials required to use the equipment are not supplied or available
- Insufficient consideration for power supply of the donated equipment

If you or your partnership are considering donating equipment, the Scottish Global Health Co-ordination Unit recommends the following:

- ☑ Ensure that you comply with any internal Board controls or processes
- ☑ Complete the WHO training module on [Medical Devices Donation](#)
- ☑ Review the [WHO Donations Framework](#)
- ☑ Read THETs advice – [Making it work, A toolkit for medical equipment donations](#)

THETs toolkit provides UK-specific guidance to health partnerships to help evaluate whether or not to donate, and how to do so effectively from start to installation to ongoing support. It aims to be a practical resource which also leads to an understanding of good practice for medical equipment donations. Useful templates and resources are also included.

Do you know about Warp-it?

NHS Bodies and Charities can register for Warp-it at www.warp-it.co.uk where they can search for public sector bodies and connect with them to share unneeded resources, information and promotional tools e.g. posters which you can use.

Books and journals

Donations of books and journals should be carefully considered. Healthcare knowledge changes rapidly and needs to be appropriate to the context where it will be used.

Some key principles in selecting materials to send are:

- Resources should be up to date – outdated information is often irrelevant and can be harmful. For books, 10 years is usually a maximum cut-off point, and for many aspects of healthcare the pace of change means that 5 years is more realistic.
- Resources should be relevant to the priorities and the context where they are to be used. Resources based on processes, systems and devices used principally in the UK or the Western world are less likely to be useful in low- and middle- income settings.
- Digital access. Printed journals date rapidly and are largely replaced now by digital access through resources such as HINARI – available free of charge to local, not for profit institutions in low resource countries.
- Logistics – How will the resources be transported; how much will it cost, and will they definitely reach their destination?

Section 3 – Preparing for Going Overseas



If you decide that you want to participate in global health work that involves going overseas, you should give careful consideration and planning to the following areas:

What do you hope to achieve?

In order to make the most of the time you have in country it is important that you discuss and agree your objectives and expectations with your host.

Asking for leave from work

Speak with your line manager as early as possible to discuss your global citizenship plans. Your line manager will be able to discuss ways in which they can support you including referring you to the different [HR policies](#) that are available including: annual leave, paid or unpaid special leave, study leave etc.

Financial Implications

Work out how much the trip will cost you (if not covered by an organisation).

- Travel
- Travel insurance
- Time off work if unpaid
- Visas
- Health costs such as vaccines and anti-malarial medication
- Accommodation and within country travel
- Are you a caregiver, if so, who will undertake these roles when you are away? Will there be extra costs as a result?
- If you are volunteering for a longer time, will this have implications for your pension?

Case Study: Jacqui Doran, NHS Lothian

“I’ve been involved with Remote Area Medical’s (RAM) cervical cancer screening programme in Guyana since 2006. What started as a once-in-a lifetime trip to the jungle to wash speculums for the team very quickly had me hooked. I travel with RAM twice a year to continue our cervical cancer programme and we have since added dentistry, blood pressure testing, diabetes screening and a general medical clinic to our work.

My work in Guyana makes me very grateful for our NHS here in Scotland. I am reminded of how fortunate I am to have had opportunities made available to me that have resulted in the person I am today.

The high cervical cancer rate in Guyana’s interior makes me an advocate here at home for our successful NHS cervical screening programme too.”

Family

Things to consider:

Are you using holiday time which you would normally spend with your family to volunteer overseas, will this have implications for their holiday?

Are you a caregiver, if so, who will undertake these roles when you are away?

Discuss with family and friends early – are there any big events or occasions that you may miss?

Professional Registration

If you are planning to undertake clinical work, most countries will require you to be professionally registered with the local national professional council or equivalent regulating body. The Global Health Co-ordination Unit recommends that you register with the national professional council. This shows respect for national institutions and builds capacity within these institutions. The institution or facility where you will be working will

be best placed to advise. Alternatively, If you are working with a charity or organisation they will be able to advise.

The General Medical Council (GMC), Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) and Health Professions Council (HPC) websites provide contact details of most overseas regulators.

Professional Indemnity

Whether you plan to work as part of a health partnership or with a charity or organisation you should ensure there is clear policy and guidance to specify where the responsibility for indemnity lies. Professional indemnity provided by CNORIS is unlikely to cover overseas work so it is important that you arrange and pay for your own appropriate insurance cover. If you are responsible for your own cover, you can contact your usual provider to check what is required. The major UK indemnity providers do not generally provide cover outside of the UK, Australia and New Zealand. The institution or facility where you will be working will be best placed to advise.

In some cases, volunteers have been able to obtain professional indemnity at a cheaper rate by indicating that they are going to work in a low or middle-income country. If working with a Health Partnership or a Charity they should be able to provide a covering letter to help facilitate this.

Travel Insurance

You will need reliable, comprehensive travel insurance if going overseas. Make sure that it includes cover for pre-existing medical conditions.

Handy Tips:

- Save the emergency contact number and policy number in your phone
- Share the insurance policy with a colleague who is travelling with you and with your emergency contact at home
- Email the insurance policy to yourself or store remotely in case you lose your devices.

Travel Deals

There are opportunities in the travel industry to secure cheaper/flexible fares for travellers flying for humanitarian purposes. Travel agencies such as Key Travel, Global Links, Ian Allan Travel have negotiated humanitarian Fares with major airlines. [The Scotland Malawi Partnership](#) also has access to discounts for their members.

What are Humanitarian Fares?

While not always the cheapest they are always the most flexible. They offer a larger allocated amount of baggage; they often have a large hold period (about 11 months) where you can hold the flight you want before booking and you can change or cancel the flight after your final booking for a small fee. For some agencies, you don't have to pay any transaction fee for booking a humanitarian fare.

Travel Advice

The best way to get objective, specific and up to date travel advice for the country you are planning to visit is to consult the [Foreign Commonwealth Office \(FCO\) website](#). If you don't follow the advice from FCO it can invalidate your travel insurance.

Complete the [foreign travel check list](#) early in the planning stage of your trip, this includes entry requirements and visas, and advice about driving.

If travelling to more high risk destinations or for longer periods, you should register your presence in country with the UK Embassy or High Commission. This will enable them to reach you if there are any situation changes.

Living Arrangements and Lifestyle Restrictions

It is worth bearing in mind that working with overseas organisations may involve basic living arrangements alongside undertaking similar work. Other potential restrictions on personal freedoms may include alcohol consumption, style of dress, travelling at particular times or to certain locations, personal relationships and limited choices regarding diet.

In some countries it may be difficult to find somewhere safe to run or cycle or you may work during daylight hours and it is unsafe to exercise after dark.

Consider the following:

- Find out about your living arrangements during your planned time overseas if these are being arranged for you
- Are there any conventions regarding dress?
- If you regularly exercise, will this be possible while overseas?
- What are the local conventions on consumption of alcohol?
- If you have any dietary needs, such as gluten free or vegan, will the place you are staying be able to cater for these?
- Check internet connectivity with your hosts, before travel. It may be cheaper to buy a local sim card rather than using your UK number.

Knowing Your Environment

You can familiarise yourself with the country you are going to with the [World Health Organization country guides](#). Logistics Reports are available for some countries – contact the Scottish Global Health Co-ordination Unit for information and contacts for the country you are planning on going to. An outline of typical content in a Logistic Report content is provided in Annex A.

Case Study: Paul Gowens reflecting on preparing for first visit to Zambia.

“I had lots of experience in Emergency Medical Systems (EMS) internationally, in high income countries, so preparing for visiting Zambia, for my first time, was both exciting and daunting.

The most important part of my preparation was, 1) linking with colleagues at home who had in country experience, and 2) connecting with key contacts in Zambia prior to travelling. This was so important in terms of building collaborative relationships and also from a health and wellbeing perspective so I didn't feel isolated when in country.

I can't emphasize enough how important it is to thoroughly prepare before travelling. Planning who and where are you going to, making sure you have your vaccinations and immunisations, handy things like keeping copies of vital documents such as passport, yellow fever card and insurance. Also important to think about how you will get about and what accommodation you are going to be staying in.

My visa needed to be paid for in US dollars on arrival at the airport, Kwacha as Zambian Currency can't be taken into the country.

Many meetings can be adhoc and once people know you're there they will be very keen to meet with you. You have to be prepared to arrive with a very flexible itinerary.

I used WhatsApp as my primary communication method so having a sim card, data and WhatsApp are vital as soon as you arrive.

Immunisation

At present you may attend your local GP practice which means that vaccines that are free on the NHS can be given if required (Diphtheria/tetanus/polio, hepatitis A, typhoid and cholera). This should be done at the very least 6 – 8 weeks before travel. Additional vaccines if needed are not free, and a traveller must pay for them, e.g. rabies, yellow fever. Anti-malarials also have a cost.

If your GP practice cannot provide these additional vaccines, they will be able to signpost you to either a private clinic (where the cost is higher) or one of the three hospital-based clinics: Glasgow, Monklands and Edinburgh.

Some countries may have entry requirements which include evidence of having been vaccinated against some conditions such as yellow fever. Check the entry requirements on the [Foreign Travel Advice](#) site.

If you have a complex itinerary, underlying medical problems or are undertaking work in countries with a substantial risk of HIV transmission you should consider seeking travel health specialist medical advice specific to your situation. This should include a discussion about post-exposure HIV prophylaxis.

Your local Occupational Health Department will be able to ensure that routine NHS vaccinations and immunisations such as hepatitis B have been given and are adequate (all clinical NHS workers should be vaccinated and checked by Occupational Health) and discuss issues around TB.

The NHS Scotland website [fitfortravel](#) provides advice by country.

Checklist

Do you need vaccinations?

Do you need anti-malarial medication?

Do you have any long term medical conditions?

How will these be followed up?

Do you have enough medications to cover your trip?

How and where will you access emergency healthcare?

What is the healthcare structure?

Do you have travel insurance to cover all settings and activities?

It is important to note that some insurers will not cover infectious diseases contracted while working.

Looking after your Emotional Resilience

How you will cope working and living in a different country is a question you need to consider when contemplating undertaking volunteering in resource-poor environments. Sometimes language barriers, cultural differences or experiencing extreme poverty for the first time can have a profound effect on your wellbeing. Here are some steps you can take to prepare:

Consider the impact of living away from your home and family on your mental health, especially if you are going to a remote area and have never lived abroad before. You may find yourself feeling lonely or stressed. It is important therefore to have a good support structure, in your new country and at home, that you can turn to if you need help. Consider networking with other volunteers in the area for peer support.

Steps you can take:

- Speak to previous volunteers and NHS Board Champions who have worked in the country you are planning to travel to
- Invest in a good guide book and research cultural information
- Learn some important phrases in the local language
- Try to stay open-minded and not have too many preconceptions about the place you are planning to work
- Make sure you have an emergency contact in country and at home should you need it for any reason
- During your visit, plan how you will communicate with your hosts on your return, consider what method of communication will be most convenient and cheapest for them, what time of day will fit with your and their schedule best, taking into account time zones

On returning home it can also take time to readjust. Here are some things that can help:

- Keep in touch with the people you met while working overseas, especially in your host community. This is good for your emotional resilience and it is also good to build long term partnerships. Your hosts will miss you just as you miss them!
- Share your experiences with friends, family and other NHS Board Champions
- Share the work you were involved in on the Health Partnership Mapping Template so that others can learn from your experience
- It may be a stipulation of your leave or funding that you write a report and if so, try to do this in collaboration with your international partners.

Section 4 – Risk and Security



It is important to assess the risks you might face when you go to work abroad and consider if you are happy to accept them. [The Tropical Health Education Trust \(THET\) five step approach to risk mitigation](#) can be used at an individual and organisational level.

Risk is the extent to which we are vulnerable to threats. Threats may relate to security, health and safety or legal issues and although they cannot be influenced, vulnerability to them can be reduced.

5 Steps to Risk Management:

1. Identify existing threats

Threats are external factors which may result in harm, injury, loss or damage to an individual, programme or organisation. A context assessment can be used to identify threats, looking at the political, social, economic and cultural background of a particular environment. This can be informed by previous visits or through partner discussions or research. While it is highly recommended to consult the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) website, local knowledge about the situation on the ground is also invaluable.

2. Look at patterns and trends

The nature of threats is likely to change over time and it is important to understand why in order to fully assess the partnership's vulnerability to them.

3. Assess vulnerability

While threats are external factors, vulnerability is about exposure to, or the likelihood of encountering a threat. It can be managed internally and as vulnerability is reduced, so too is the risk. Within this step, look at factors affecting exposure to threats and identify those which are priorities. It is also important to identify your risk tolerance, which risks are acceptable and which need to be actively managed. In order to do the latter, it is common to assign each threat a rating from 1 to 5 pertaining to both its probability and potential impact. Multiplying these ratings together will give an overall Risk Rating out of a total possible 25. The higher the rating, the higher the priority.

4. Identify ways of reducing vulnerability

Reduced vulnerability will be achieved through the development of appropriate risk management strategies, policies and procedures. These should include measures to reduce the likelihood of threats materialising and to reduce the impact of those that do, as well as to transfer or share risk, or avoid it altogether. In all cases, measures should be put in place at both the organisational and individual level as appropriate.

Such strategies might include, but are not limited to, insurance, training, written procedure and checklists.

5. Assess whether the remaining level of risk is acceptable

While risk can never be completely eliminated, it is important for it to be proportional to the expected gains of the partnership. Having completed steps 1 to 4 and adopted appropriate risk management strategies, the partnership should be satisfied that the level of risk remaining is acceptable.

Source: THET Health Partnership Scheme Duty of Care Toolkit



Risk and Security Resources

There are several ways to look for information about crime and security risks in the country you will be working in:

- [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) gives a good overview of the security risks in different countries in their section on foreign travel advice. www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice
- Websites of local embassies provide details about security issues.
- The [WHO 2013 Global Status Report on Road Safety](#) gives information on accident statistics around the world.

Once in country it is important to know what to do in an emergency so make sure you know the contact details of the local emergency services (if available) or have someone you can contact if you need to. In advance of your journey, contact the local embassy in country to find out how you can register as soon as you arrive as they can provide help and assistance if you need it.

It is crucial to remain aware and alert to your new surroundings. Make sure you are familiar with local customs especially if you are in a country that is very different to where you are from.



Section 5 – On Your Return



On your return home, it can take time to readjust. Here are some things that can help:

- Keep in touch with the people you met while working overseas, especially in your host community. This is good for your emotional resilience and it is also good to build long term partnerships, your hosts will miss you just as much as you miss them!
- Share your experiences with friends, family and other NHS Board Champions
- Share the work you were involved in on the [Health Partnership Mapping Template](#) so that others can learn from your experience
- It may be a stipulation of your leave or funding that you write a report, try and do this in collaboration with your international partners.

Share your experience and knowledge

On return from your overseas work, you can share your experience and knowledge in the following ways:

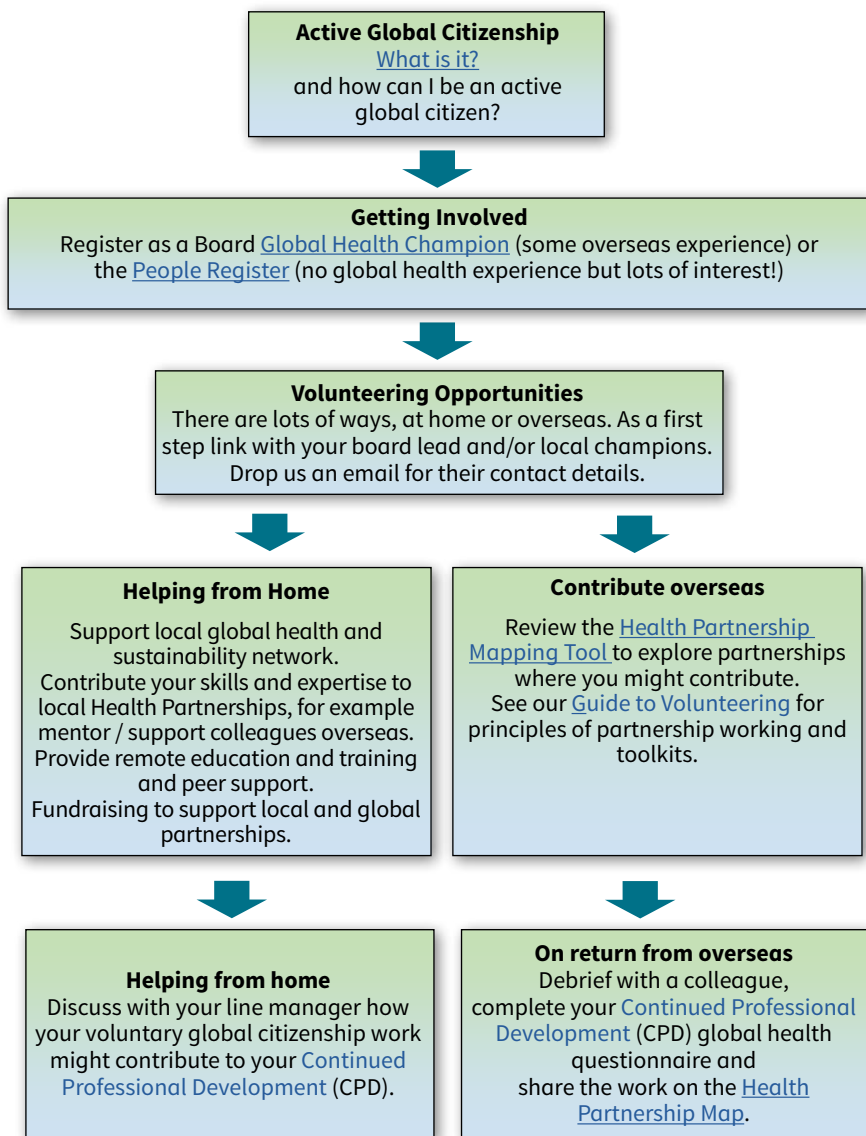
- Complete the [Health Partnership Mapping Template](#) so you can share your experience and learning with others at www.scottishglobalhealth.org
- Sign up as an NHS Board Champion to link up with other Board Champions at www.scottishglobalhealth.org
- Write a blog or an article for your local NHS Board intranet (ideally ask your hosts to review before publication)
- Share your experience through presentations for your colleagues and the Global Health Champions Networks
- Recognise that it can take time to readjust –talking and networking with other Board Champions can help
- Keep in touch with your partner colleagues.

Keep thinking globally and acting locally

- Reflect on your time overseas on your return to the NHS. How will your experience shape your future and possibly the future of others?
- Help to build the evidence for personal and organisational benefit from participating in global health work by completing the Organisational Benefit 360-degree questionnaire (coming soon)



Algorithm for Getting Involved in Global Citizenship



Annex A

Logistic Reports

The following is an outline of what you should expect to see in a country specific Logistic Report

Top Tips

General Information

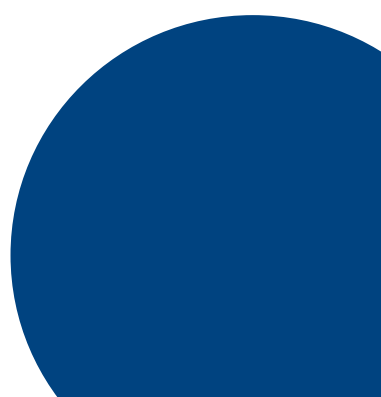
Travel Information
(including Visas, money,
Phones and tech)
Weather
Culture and Language
Social Behaviour and Business
Etiquette
Health (including Vaccinations)
and Insurance
Clothing (Kit List)
Water and Food
Transport
Accommodation

Country Profile

Economy
Geography
History
Politics
Crime
Drug Culture and Penalties
Police/Law Enforcement
Human Rights
Death Penalty
International Relations
UK Relations

Safety and Security

Terrorism
Current Political Situation
Crime
Local Travel
Natural Disasters
Other Safety Issues



Annex B

Other Useful Resources

Health Partnerships

Duty of Care Toolkit (THET)

<https://www.thet.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/HPS-Duty-of-Care-Toolkit-Final.pdf>

Procurement in Health Partnerships (THET)

<https://www.thet.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/HPS-Procurement-Toolkit.pdf>

Safeguarding

<https://www.intdevalliance.scot/how-we-help/safeguarding/scotlands-global-role> (Scotland's International Development Alliance)

Volunteering Guides

Guidance for UK doctors volunteering abroad
(Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists)

Thinking of Working Abroad (Royal College of General Practitioners)

Getting Involved in International Volunteering

<https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/career/going-abroad/volunteering-abroad/what-to-consider>

Living and Working in Humanitarian Contexts

An ethical toolkit for doctors and other health professionals living and working in humanitarian contexts. <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/employment/ethics/doctors-working-in-conflicts-and-emergencies>

Debriefing Guides

Debriefing Aid Workers and Missionaries: A Comprehensive Manual (CHS Alliance)



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Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA
PPDAS590210 (10/19)