

International Healthcare Elective Placements in Low Resource Settings: How can they be optimized to maximize student learning and support sustainable development?

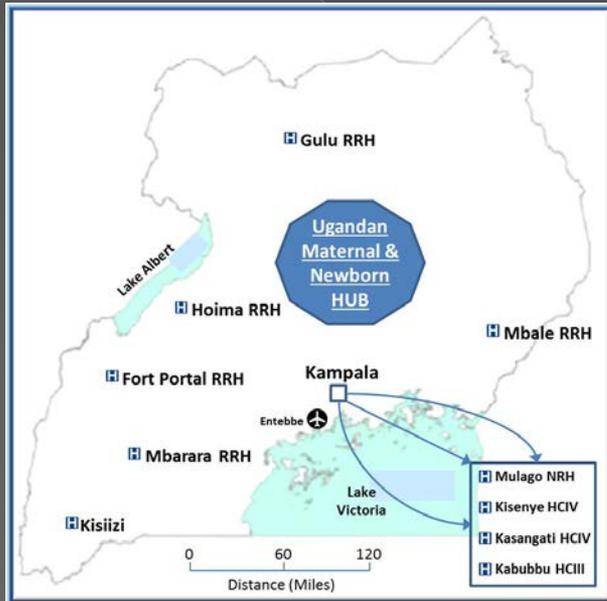
RESULTS OF A PILOT STUDY COMMISSIONED BY HEALTH EDUCATION ENGLAND

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University of
Salford
MANCHESTER



Our Background



- International Development
- Global Health
- Health Partnerships
- Professional Volunteering
 - Capacity Building
 - Knowledge Exchange
 - Sustainable Interventions
 - Health System Strengthening

→ Supervising international elective students???

→→→ Ethical and Sustainable Student Elective Placements & Volunteering

Ethical Considerations in the UK



1. Widening Participation
2. Health and Safety
3. Cost-Efficiency
4. Maximizing Student Learning
5. 'Outsourcing' of education
 - Why not UK placements?
6. Environmental Implications

Ethical Considerations (LMIC)

- Sustainability
- Mutual Benefit
- Limited Resources
- Scale and Scope of student activities
 - "First do no harm"
- Working with children vulnerable people
- Research Ethics / Ethical Approval
- Cultural Differences
- Who knows best???

Project Funded by:



Health Education England

Through the:

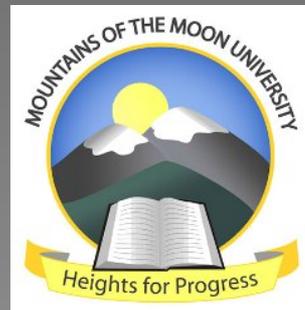


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HEALTH
EXCHANGE**

Learn globally Act locally

In partnership with:

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Project Objectives (1/2)

To **pilot** and **evaluate** 80 HEE funded elective placements in **Uganda** and **India** from the following disciplines:

- Nursing
- Midwifery
- Physiotherapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Podiatry
- Prosthetics & Orthotics
- Social Work / Social Policy
- NHS Healthcare Management Trainees

We also included (separately to HEE and mainly self-funded):

- More of the above
- Medical
- Biochemistry
- Microbiology
- Business / Accountancy

Project Objectives (2/2)

- Test **logistics** and **scalability**
- Identify **core learning outcomes** and compare these to current outcomes associated with home placements
- Undertake a **cost-benefit analysis**
- Assess the impact on the low resource setting to ensure an **ethical and sustainable approach**
- Propose a model to **embed** placements in low resource settings within undergraduate curriculum

Project Implementation

Phase 1 (2015):

- 4 cohorts of students (33 in total) completed elective placements in Fort Portal (Uganda) in June, August, September and November 2015.
- 1 cohort of 19 students completed elective placements in Bengaluru and Kaiwara (India) in November 2015.



Phase 2 (2016):

- The second phase of the project involved the placement of a further 28 students in Fort Portal, Uganda, between March and August 2016

Capturing Learning Outcomes

Weekly Reporting by students:

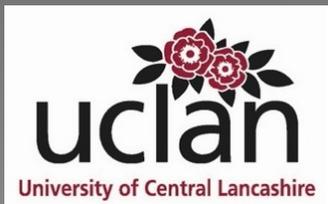
- Self-reported learning and experiences

Interview Schedule:

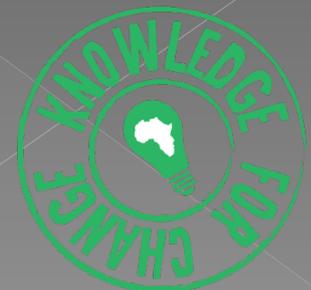
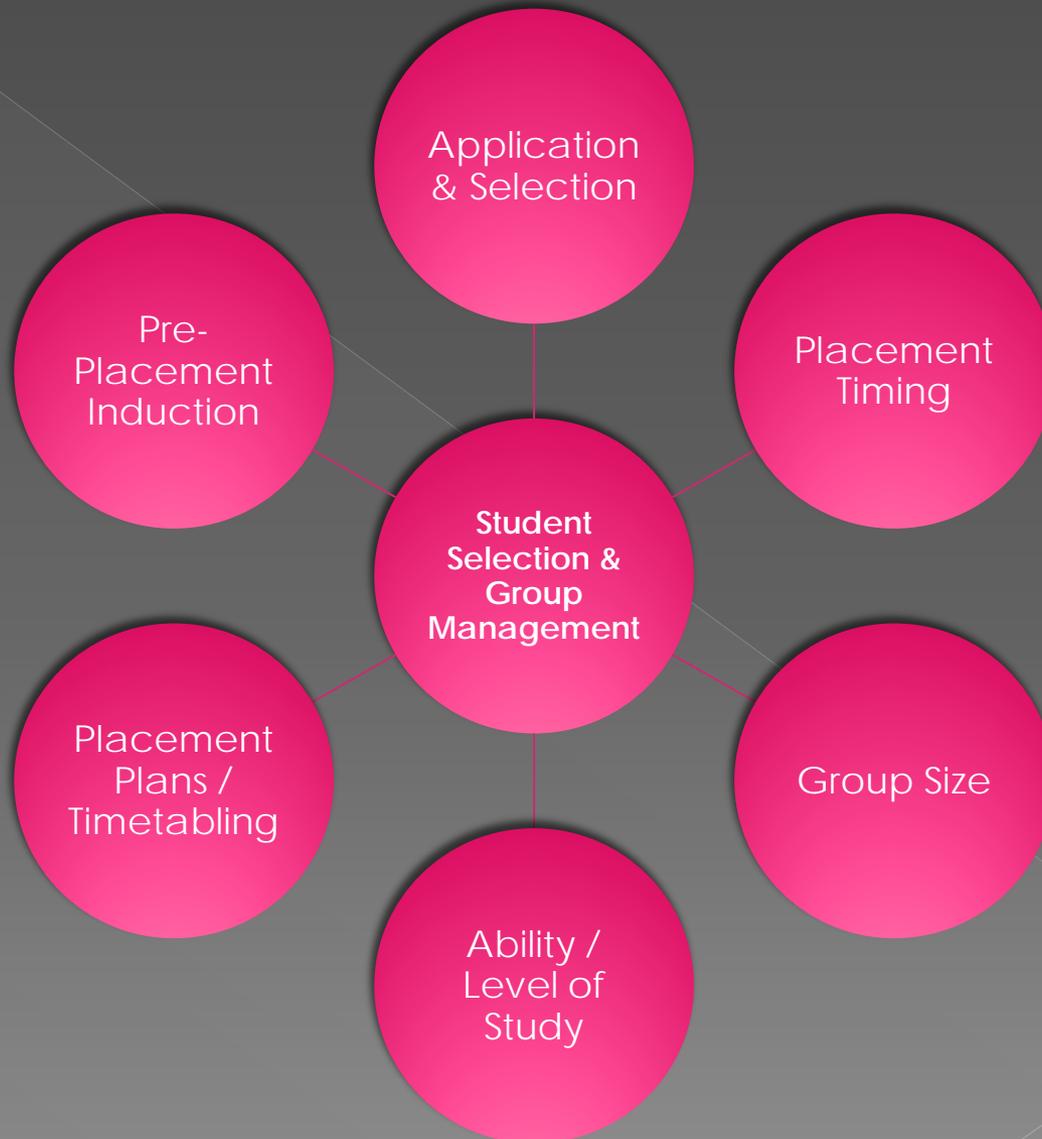
- Pre-, Mid- and Post-Placement Interviews with all students
- Staff from hosting facilities/organisations
- HEI lecturers, programme leaders & placement managers (UK)
- Curricula managers and educational policy makers (UK)

Observations from:

- UK EEP project management & evaluation staff
- UK Post Doctoral Researchers based at Salford University
- UK HEI Placement Managers



Pre-Placement Student Preparation



Student Induction Process

- Expectation Management
 - Logistical Arrangements
 - Teambuilding and Networking
 - Peer-to-peer advice
 - Other general information
-
- ✓ Induction Pack
 - ✓ Guide to local area
 - ✓ Placement Agreements
 - ✓ Risk and Insurance details

The Ugandan Maternal and Newborn HUB
"Supporting Sustainable and Effective Professional
Voluntarism"



Induction Pack

Prepared by James Ackers-Johnson (Project Manager for the Elective Placement Project)
January 2016



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Fort Portal Volunteers Guide 07 June 2015

FORT PORTAL

Guide for Volunteers



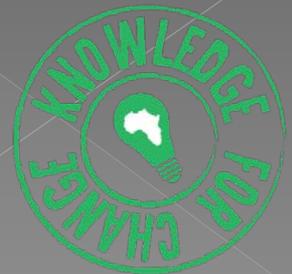
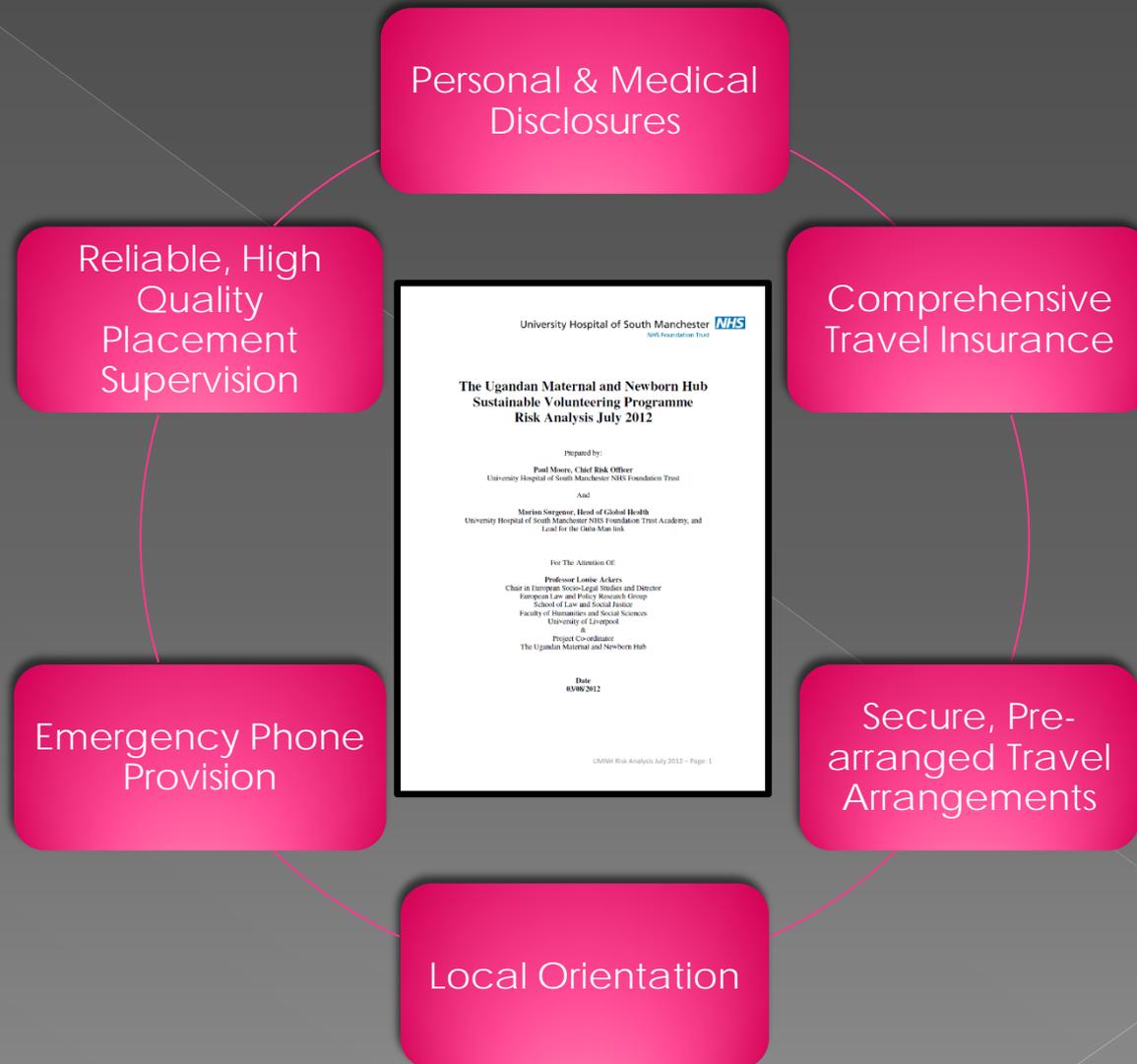
This guide is by no means exhaustive. Rather, it is meant to give you a selection of the best that you can try out and help you settle in a little when you first get here. Use it as your own risk, the authors bear no responsibility for any accidents or illness resulting from the use of this guide.

Fort Portal 'fully awake'. It isn't really the best of its photos but even you've been responsible when in Uganda you'll realize how busy it is...

Andrew Whitely, Lucy Wilson

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Insurance and Risk Mitigation



Placement Supervision

- Placement management in the UK
 - Placement management in the placement location
 - Clinical supervision by close network of local staff
 - Peer-to-peer support on placement and in the wider group
 - **Clinical supervision by UK Professionals ('Anchoring' Volunteers)**
 - The 'Co-presence Principle'
- Regular personal and professional debriefing
- Feedback and placement amendments



Findings – Personal Benefits

- **Placements**

- 'transformational'
- 'motivational'
- 'reinvigorating'
- 'eye-opening'

- **Students**

- Better people; better students and better health care professionals
- Improved confidence and reduced fears and stereotypical assumptions about visiting and/or working in low resource settings
- Greater appreciation of health systems and amenities in the UK
- Significant gains in clinical skills & confidence in using existing skills



“I feel this opportunity has provided me with new and essential skills which are much needed for my nursing career. It has also made me want to volunteer in developing countries in the future as I enjoyed it so much!”

Adult Nursing Student, Edge Hill University

“It has made me realise I am a stronger person than I once thought and I feel that I can cope in situations I have never been exposed to before, in an open minded and professional manner”

Midwifery Student, Liverpool John Moore's University

Findings – Soft/Transferrable Skills

- Social and cultural awareness, leadership, management, team working and decision making (particularly in emergency situations)
- Entrenchment of the UK NHS's core values (the so-called '6 Cs'): "Care, Compassion, Competence, Communication, Courage and Commitment" (DoH, 2012)
- The importance of time keeping and patience
- Awareness of the importance of data collection, record keeping and audit
- Holistic 'systems thinking', valuing healthcare & the UK NHS



"I find it very difficult being in placement on labour ward and not observing any empathy or compassion towards the women. I find myself offering words of encouragement and support when the nurses do not, consoling distressed and crying new borns when they are left unattended in the nursery. This has made me acknowledge my strengths in this area, hence allowing me to utilise this skill more readily"

Midwifery Student, Liverpool John Moore's University

Findings so far – 'Spoking' & Exposures

- Learning from working with people from different disciplines and backgrounds
- Learning from observing different stages of treatment (often falling outside of their specialism)
- Working with limited resources using 'back-to-basics' approaches
- Learning the value of early diagnosis, preventative treatment and data collection/audit.



"Having had limited/no paediatric knowledge or experience with the course and placement provision [during University course]- I have benefited so much in several ways from the short time I have spent here." ... "It has opened my eyes to an avenue of practice I hadn't considered working in but definitely will now."

Occupational Therapy Student, University of Salford

Findings – Clinical Competencies/Explicit Skills

- Gains both in clinical skills and confidence in using existing skills, e.g.:
 - Working innovatively with lower levels of resources
 - Observing patient complications not frequently seen in the UK
 - Malaria, TB, HIV, nutritional deficiencies
 - The results of delays or lack of preventative care (Ruptured Uteri, Diabetic Foot Ulcers etc.)
 - Contextual differences (burns, sepsis etc.)
 - The use of different drugs and treatment plans
 - Teaching and presentational skills



“I have also learned so much theory about diseases and illnesses such as malaria, TB, birth asphyxia and malnutrition that we just don’t get exposed to in the UK”
Children’s Nurse, Edge Hill University

“I also appreciated the level of skill all healthcare workers had in the UK, the importance of critical life sciences in practice and the ability to think quickly and create temporary methods of pain relief”
Prosthetics & Orthotics Student, Salford University

Findings – Career Benefits

Aside from the aforementioned:

- Career changes or affirmations
- Positive C.V building
- Interview strength
- Internationalisation Experience



INT: *“Do you think [the placement] was a positive thing to put on your CV and for your interview? Did you ever talk about it in your interview?”*

RES: *“One interview I went for before I went to India, I didn’t get the job but he told me next time I should apply again once I get back ‘cos I would stand ahead a bit more from everybody else”.*

INT: *“And you did? So, you went for an interview before India and he said no, but after coming back you got the job?”*

RES: *“Yeah. I basically told them all about India and it got me a job.”*

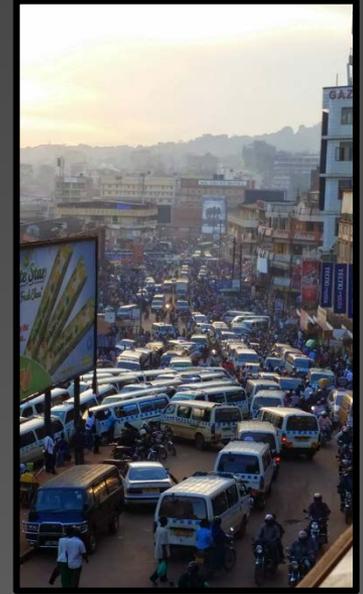
(Post-Placement Interview with Adult Nursing Student, University of Central Lancashire)

Findings – The Fun Stuff

- New life experiences
- New friendships
- New memories

"Simply the best thing I have ever done in my life. I loved every minute!"

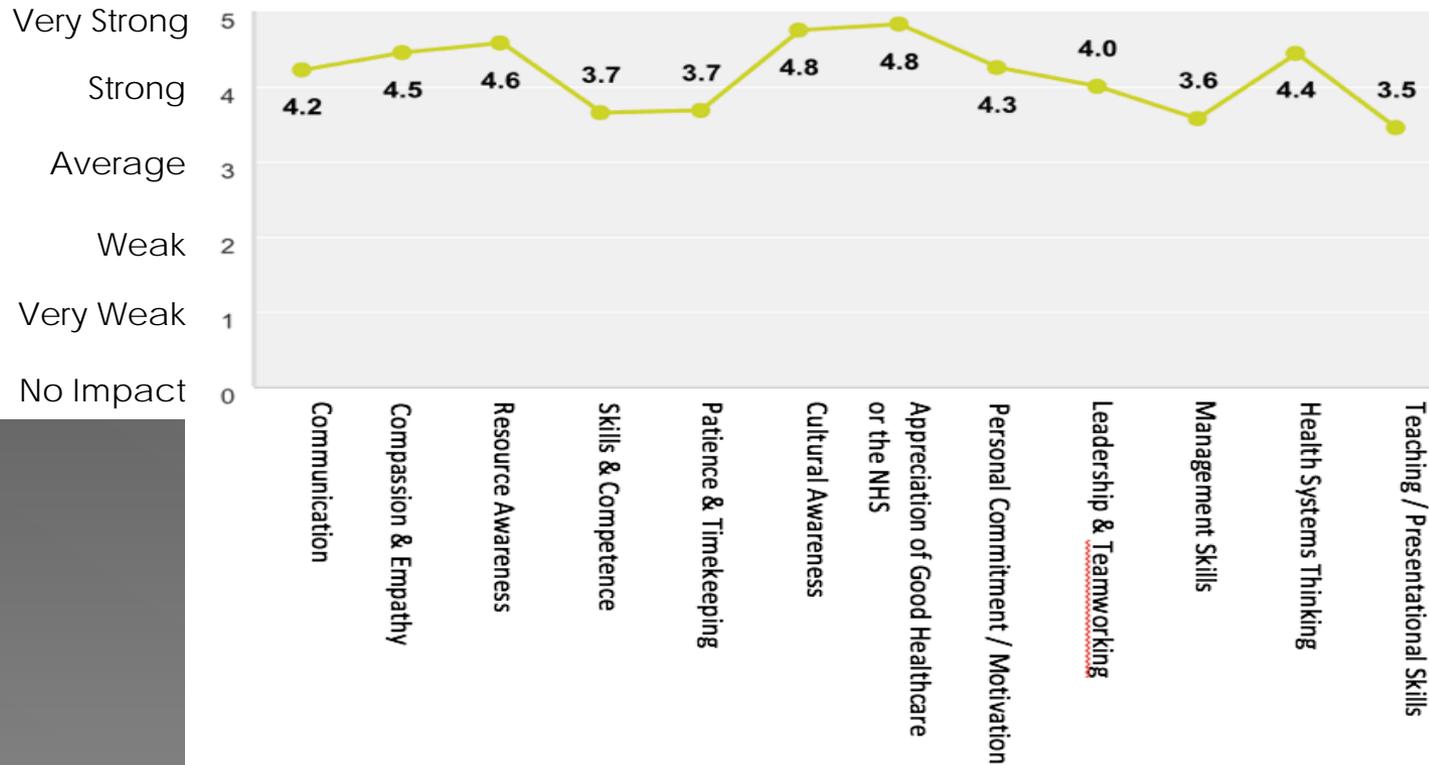
Adult Nurse, Edge Hill University



Findings – Student Survey 1/3

What impact did the placement have on your learning in each of the following areas?

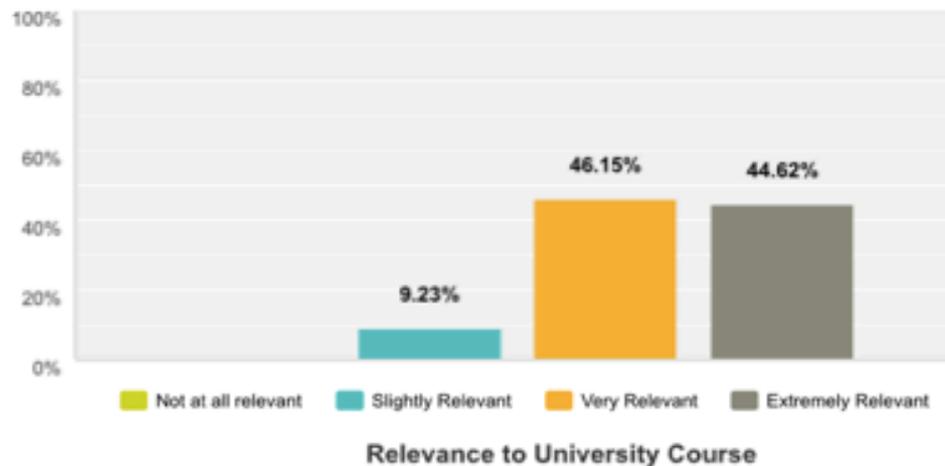
Answered: 65 Skipped: 0



Findings – Student Survey 2/3

How relevant to your University Course was the experience and learning you achieved during your placement?

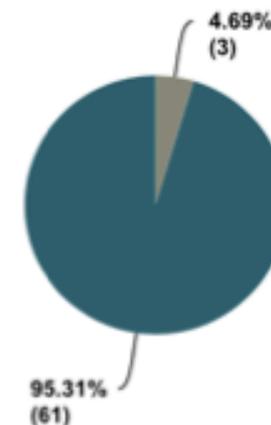
Answered: 65 Skipped: 0



| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Not at all Relevant | 0.00% | 0 |
| Slightly Relevant | 9.23% | 6 |
| Very Relevant | 46.15% | 30 |
| Extremely Relevant | 44.62% | 29 |
| Total | | 65 |

What do you think the impact of completing the placement will be on your future career and employability?

Answered: 64 Skipped: 1

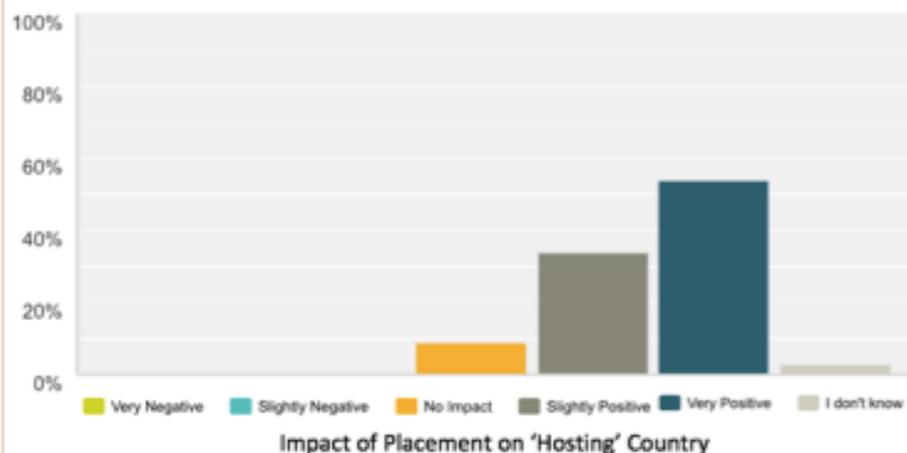


| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Very Negative | 0.00% | 0 |
| Slightly Negative | 0.00% | 0 |
| No Impact | 0.00% | 0 |
| Slightly Positive | 4.69% | 3 |
| Very Positive | 95.31% | 61 |
| Total | | 64 |

Findings – Student Survey 3/3

Overall, what impact do you believe your placement had on the individuals / facilities / organisations / health system in the country within which you were placed?

Answered: 65 Skipped: 0



| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Very Negative | 0.00% | 0 |
| Slightly Negative | 0.00% | 0 |
| No Impact | 9.23% | 6 |
| Slightly Positive | 33.85% | 22 |
| Very Positive | 53.85% | 35 |
| I Don't Know | 3.08% | 2 |
| Total | | 65 |

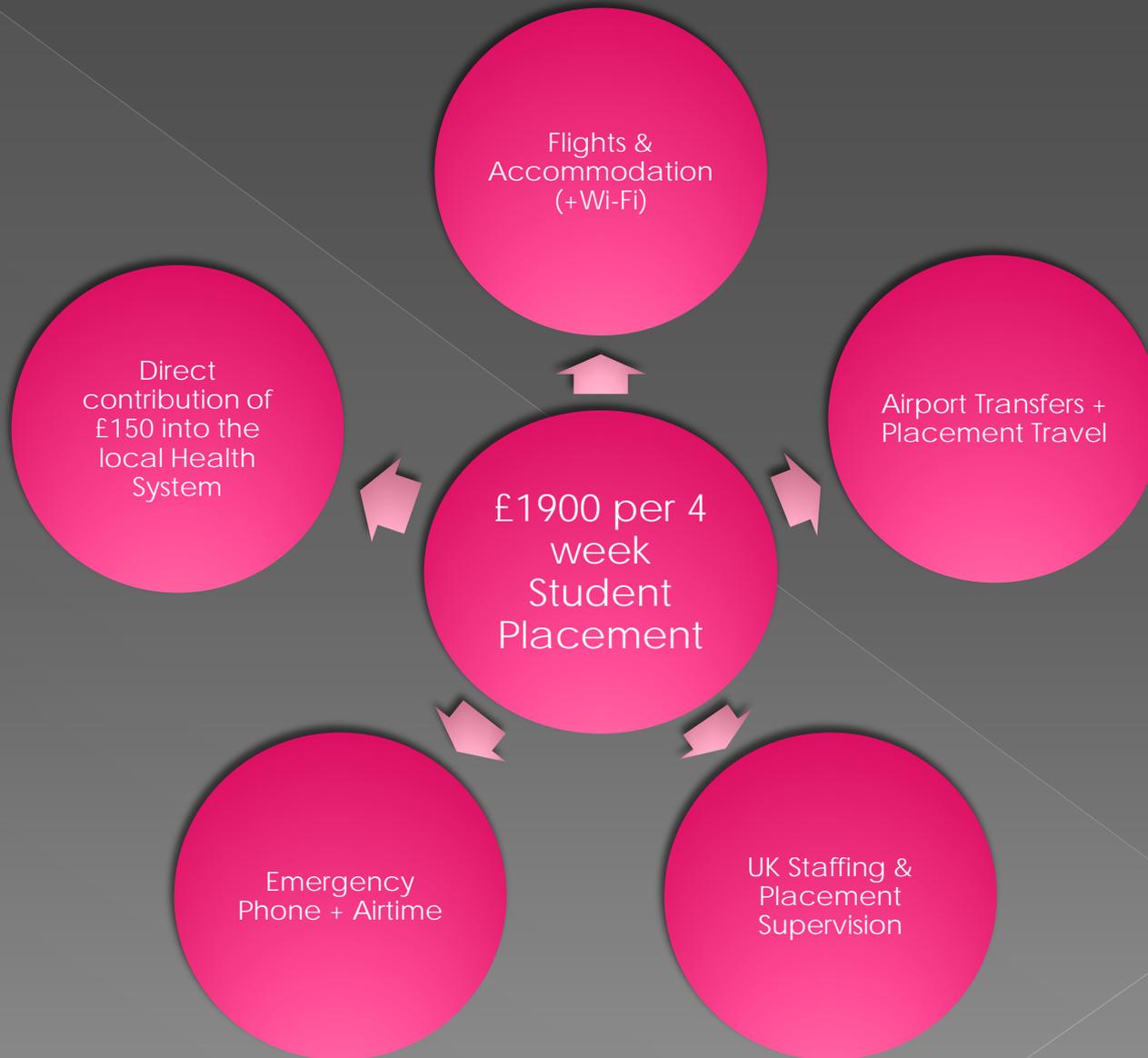
How would you rate your overall placement experience?

Answered: 65 Skipped: 0



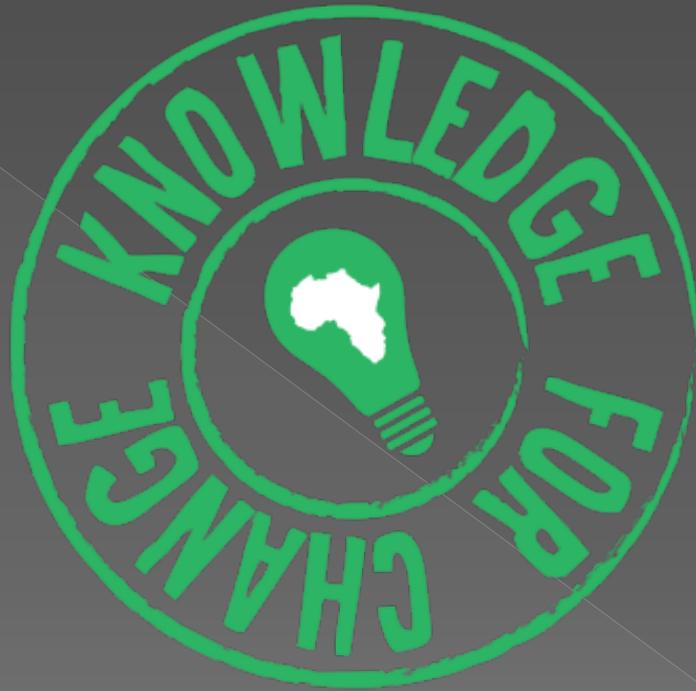
| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|
| Very Poor | 0.00% | 0 |
| Poor | 1.54% | 1 |
| Average | 7.69% | 5 |
| Good | 24.62% | 16 |
| Excellent | 66.15% | 43 |
| Total | | 65 |

Placement Costs (Group of 10 Students)



The Cost as a Barrier?

- Majority of students have been from the North-West and typically from less privileged backgrounds
- All the students asked stated that £1900 represented good value for money for the experience, esp. compared to private organisations
- Over 70% of self-funded students successfully accessed external financial support
- Medical students tend to have greater ability to draw on personal and family resources to fund electives
- Students judged £395 as a fair minimum contribution
 - A small but significant number of students would not be able to afford this unless they had plenty of notice and support with fundraising.



<https://vimeo.com/141910017>

Summary

Key Elements of Placement Structure:

- Exercise effective student selection and group management to improve group dynamics and integration
- Conduct thorough risk assessment and mitigation processes to protect students whilst on placement
- Manage logistical arrangements centrally (as far as possible)
- Provide reliable, effective and accessible supervision to maximise student learning, reduce risk and improve sustainability

Key Learning Outcomes Achieved during International Elective Health Placements:

- Personal growth
- Soft / Transferrable skills
- Clinical / Explicit skills
- Context specific skills (unfamiliar low resource setting)
- Skills learnt through new and unfamiliar 'exposures'

Many of the above skills are more difficult to learn during UK placements...

Recent Publications

Ackers, H.L. and Ackers-Johnson, J. (2016) **"Mobile Professional Voluntarism and International Development: Killing Me Softly?"** Palgrave Macmillan

→ <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1057/978-1-137-55833-6>

Ahmed, A. Ackers-Johnson, J & Ackers H.L. (2017) **"The Ethics of Educational Healthcare Placements in Low and Middle Income Countries: First Do No Harm?"** Palgrave Macmillan

→ <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-319-48363-4>

Ackers, H.L., Ackers-Johnson, J., Chatwin, J. & Tyler, N (2017) **"Healthcare, Frugal Innovation and Professional Voluntarism: A Cost-Benefit Analysis"** Palgrave Macmillan

→ <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-319-48366-5>

Chatwin, J. and Ackers, H.L. (2016) "Organisational barriers to the facilitation of overseas volunteering and training placements in the NHS", BMC Health Services Research

Chatwin, J. and Ackers, H.L. (2016) "Volunteering and overseas placements in the NHS: a survey of current activity" British Medical Journal

Thank You - Any Questions?



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