



Orthopaedics/Hand Ghana *Project Description*

GOALS:

1. To provide assistance to Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital (KATH) faculty to increase the number and quality of trained orthopaedic, plastics, trauma, and hand surgery physicians in Ghana.
2. To assist in the acquisition of teaching/training materials.
3. To develop a sustainable training project that will produce both practicing surgeons and orthopaedic faculty.

**PROJECT
DIRECTOR:**

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Donald Lalonde, MD (hand surgery)

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Please note: Potential volunteers should not contact Project Director until they have submitted a CV and Supplemental Volunteer Information and contacted a recruiter at the Washington office.

**LOCAL
CONTACT:**Dr. Ralph Kumah (trauma/orthopedics)
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Dr. Oheneba Owusu Danso
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LENGTH OF ASSIGNMENT: 1 - 4 weeks (longer stays preferred)**VOLUNTEER QUALIFICATIONS:** Volunteers should be board certified/eligible. Volunteers need an active license to practice medicine unless they are retired.

Volunteers should have trauma, pediatric orthopaedic, and/or plastic surgery, and/or hand surgery experience. Other critical specialties will be needed in the future. Prior academic experience would be helpful but is not required. Residents should be accompanied by a willing mentor, or arrangements made through Project Director for one of the senior KATH consultants to fill this role.

Registration for each volunteer is done through Dr. Baffour Awuah, the Medical Director of Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital. (Fax: 233 322 024 654 or e-mail: bawuah1960@yahoo.com). Please copy Felicia Gyau agbenorwufelicia@gmail.com Dr. Peter Konadu peterkonadu60@yahoo.de

(and Dr. Awuah's administrative manager Akwasi Afriyie (afriyiekwasi@gmail.com) if you send the documents as an e-mail attachment. Mr. Afriyie can assist with any questions. Volunteers should complete the Medical and Dental Council of Ghana (MDCG) application form (available from OO-HVO) but do NOT need to pay the requested fee. This application form should be sent at least one month prior to a volunteers' assignment and be supported by the following:

- Notarized copy of medical school diploma
- Notarized copy of certificate of training in orthopaedics (e.g. ABOS certificate)
- Copy of current Medical License
- Passport photo (to accompany MDCG application)
- Copy of current CV
- Two brief reference letters, including e-mail contact information, from individuals familiar with your clinical activities (These can be sent directly to Dr. Awuah, fax or e-mail above.)

NOTE: Volunteers do not need to pay the \$400 registration fee.

PROJECT: Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital (KATH) is a 1000+ bed, older, general hospital organized into four main inpatient blocks housing Medicine, Pediatrics, Ob-Gyn, and Surgery. The hospital has a website <http://www.kathhsp.org/>. In May of 2009, a new Accident and Emergency Center opened. It is adjacent to the old hospital and is a state of the art facility equipped with a triage area, minor and major treatment facilities, a resuscitation ward, 3 sub-acute wards for men, women, and children, an intensive care unit, four operating rooms, and a helipad. Additionally there is office space, conference rooms, classrooms, and the Trauma / Orthopaedic Library dedicated to the memory of Lowell D.(Hap) Lutter MD, whose personal library was donated to KATH.

The Hospital and the Trauma/Orthopaedic Service are extremely busy. Kumasi receives referrals from much of the country and has a high volume of trauma patients. Close to 200 orthopaedic in-patients are typically present. About 70 are housed in the Trauma Center and 130 in the main hospital orthopaedic wards. Ninety five percent have trauma related problems, often with multiple injuries.

As of January, 2012, Dr. Peter Konadu is the Chief of the Trauma/Orthopaedics Service. Dr. Ralph Kumah, the previous Director, remains on the staff and is the local contact for the HVO orthopaedic/hand project. He is actively involved with clinical care and the Trauma/Orthopaedics Residency. Dr. Kumah is trained in both traumatology and orthopaedics. Dr. Konadu and Dr. Dominic Awariah, the other attending surgeon, are both primarily trauma surgeons, trained in the German model. Trauma/Orthopaedics has three clinical services, each led by one of these surgeons, with another 6 consultants. Dr. Oheneba Owusu Danso, the chief of Plastic Surgery, was also trained in Germany.

There are now (October 2013) 13 trauma & orthopaedic residents in the KATH programs, with the majority rotating on other services. Additionally there are 6 general surgical residents and 7 house officers (two-year rotating interns) at one time. Medical students rotate through in one month blocks; 14 fourth year and 14 sixth year students at a time.

Schedules are organized so that each service has 1 major and 1 minor OR day, one clinic, and one day of ward-rounds each week

The major burden of disease is trauma-related and the care required for these patients displaces most elective cases. Multi-trauma patients are numerous with many long bone and articular fractures, often open. There are a number of pelvic and acetabular injuries, most managed without surgery. There is a backlog of elective and sub-acute cases, which become repeatedly postponed.

These include general pediatric issues and adult reconstructive problems. A small number of primary total hip and total knee arthroplasties are done regularly. Knee arthroscopy is about to begin. Tumor patients often seem to arrive too late for definitive care. There is a Ponseti clubfoot program run through the Physical Therapy department.

The Orthopaedic Resident Training program has grown significantly in the past two years. The first 3 years of Trauma/Orthopaedic residency training for College Membership remains under General Surgery. It is anticipated that Senior Residency training, the final 3 years leading to College Fellowship, may be approved in the next year. The 2 current trainees at this level are finishing the Fellowships in Accra, and planning to return to the KATH consulting staff. There are 4 to 6 first year orthopaedic residents. The Plastic Resident Training program is also growing.

A new Orthopaedic Teaching Library was recently dedicated to the memory of Lowell "Hap" Lutter, MD, of St. Paul, MN. The library has computers, high-speed internet, and an extensive and growing collection of digital resources, many provided by the AAOS and OTA. It is staffed by the research coordinator. Together with other collaborators, The Institute for Global Orthopaedics and Traumatology, from the University of California San Francisco, and the University of Utah Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, have significantly supported research and educational activities at KATH.

Please bring up-to-date books, videos, or other digital teaching material with you, including copies of any presentations that you give. Hand and upper extremity presentations, as well as those on pediatric and non-trauma general orthopaedic topics are welcome during morning Trauma/Orthopaedic conferences, which begin with a review of the previous day's admissions. Plastic surgeons are welcome there to talk about hand surgery daily. There is a weekly morning plastic surgery round as well. You may be invited to give a "grand rounds" presentation to the hospital where as many as 100 may show up on Wednesday morning, 45 minutes with 15 for questions is suggested.

As of 2013 HVO began sending hand surgery volunteers to KATH. At KATH there is one designated hand surgeon, Dr. Osman Saani who was initially trained in orthopaedic trauma and then completed a hand fellowship in Turkey. Dr. Saani is in the OR on Mondays and in clinic on Tuesdays. Almost all the hand surgery at KATH is trauma. The surgical pace in the OR is often slow because of long turnovers, late starts, etc. Dr. Lalonde assisted Dr. Saani in performing his first wide awake hand surgery case. Wide awake hand surgery is a topic of great interest to Dr. Saani and other physicians there. Both Dr. Saani and Dr. Owusu-Danso have done some wide awake hand surgery cases on their own since Dr. Lalonde's visit in Nov 2012.

While Dr. Saani is the only designated orthopaedic hand surgeon, most of the plastic surgeons perform hand surgery. Hand surgery volunteers work with both the orthopaedic trauma and plastics departments. Volunteers will teach in both the operating room and in clinic. When there is no hand surgery on the list, volunteers can share knowledge while scrubbing in orthopedics or plastic surgery cases.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Ghana is situated in the heart of west Africa five to ten degrees north of the Equator. It has a stable, democratically elected government and a population of more than 25 million. Accra, situated on the southern coast, is the largest city with four million people followed by Kumasi with two million. The official language is English and it is widely spoken amidst many local languages.

The health care system, including post-graduate medical education, is organized under the Ministry of Health. Life expectancy is 56 years for men/58 for women and the infant mortality rate (one year and younger) is 51/1000. The HIV rate is about 2% of the adult population as reported by WHO. There is a system of health insurance initiated by the government, which requires the purchase of a 'health card'. Seventy percent of the population is covered by this plan; others pay for care or are treated without charge. Since the institution of this plan several years ago the volume of patients presenting for care in Kumasi has greatly increased.

EQUIPMENT/SUPPLIES: The operating area has a 12 bed recovery unit and each theater has an individual scrub area and instrument room. There are two functional C-arms in the OR and a third in the first floor cast room. The radiology is digital and there is a working CT Scan. There is no MRI. Cost of radiographs limits their use, especially for poorer patients.

Instruments and implants are somewhat limited, but in the process of improvement. External fixators are satisfactory, along with a fairly representative collection of older AO-style plates. IM nails have recently become available for femur and tibia, including flexible nails for pediatric fractures. There are cannulated screws (too big for scaphoid), compression hip screws, proximal femoral nails, and total hip and knee prostheses have recently arrived. More modern hardware, such as locking and peri-articular plates is not available Hip hemiarthroplasties are not well represented, and knee arthroscopy is in its infancy. Plaster of Paris and traction equipment are available and used Scrub suits are provided, but volunteers should bring their own dedicated OR shoes (Crocs or equivalent are very acceptable). Lockers are very limited. You should also bring a white lab coat for when you leave the OR.

HOUSING: The hospital provides a new guesthouse for volunteers, located in a walled compound, with round the clock guard, one mile from the hospital. Transportation to/from the hospital will be provided. There is a kitchen with stove and refrigerator, a living/dining area, and 8 air-conditioned bedrooms with private bathrooms, including hot water for showers. A housekeeper helps with cleaning, including laundry, for which a small payment is customary. This guest house is shared with other visiting volunteers. You should bring your own bed linens. Restaurants are available, and taxicabs are plentiful.

There are hotels in the area, which could serve as an alternative should the number of volunteers exceed available housing.

ATTENTION: In many cases, an accompanying spouse, companion or family member (age 18 and older) is interested in participating in a volunteer capacity. In general, HVO is able to facilitate such assignments, especially for those with health care training. However, it would be up to the individual to be pro-active in developing a volunteer assignment. Many times, a role for these volunteers is not defined until after arrival at the site.

In order for an assignment to be under the auspices of HVO, a spouse, companion or family member will be required to become a member of HVO and sign a release form prior to their assignment.

Site Suitable for Spouse/Companion?

YES NO

Site Suitable for Children?

YES NO

LANGUAGE: English

PASSPORT & VISAS: A visa is required. The consular division of the Ghanaian Embassy is located at 3512 International Drive NW, Washington DC 20008; (202) 244-2594. Volunteers may get a tourist visa. On the visa indicate Dr. Ralph Kumah as your contact person (e-mail address is above) and the address for the hospital is PO Box 1934 Kumasi, Ghana. Volunteers must have a passport valid for 6 months after their departure date. Please obtain your Visa at least a month before traveling.

US EMBASSY INFORMATION: The US Embassy is located at No. 24, Fourth Circular Road, Cantonments, Accra. Telephone: (233) 30-2741-000; After Hours Emergency: (233) 30-2741-775; Fax: (233) 21-741-389. We recommend that you register with the US Department of State prior to your departure (See HVO's *Practical Information for your Trip*).

CLOTHING/CLIMATE: Ghana's proximity to the equator results in two seasons - wet and dry. During the dry season, from December-February and July-August, temperatures during the daytime are in the 80s-90s and in the 70s in the evening. The wet season is from April-June temperatures range in the 80s. The eastern coastal belt is warm and comparatively dry; the southwest corner has the highest humidity and rainfall, while the north is frequently hot and dry.

Volunteers are expected to dress in a professional manner while fulfilling their assignment duties at the project site. Professional attire does not include shorts, short skirts, sleeveless tops, flip flops or other casual attire not appropriate in a professional setting.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Ghana, including the Kumasi region, is a safe place to travel and move about. There are flights between Accra and Kumasi, with access to other major cities, although not always directly from Kumasi. The Palace Museum in Kumasi is a good place to begin exploring the rich culture of the Ashanti region. There is a large outdoor market and a culture center to purchase artistic and contemporary items. Weekend trips to nearby scenic areas can be arranged.

There are daily direct Delta Airlines flights between JFK and Accra currently (late 2013). Alternatively, several other airlines have connections through European hubs. Kumasi is located about 250 km inland from Accra and is reachable by road [a 4-5 hour drive], generally by bus, or by air. Four local airlines presently offer several 45 minute flights per day. The airlines are Antrak <http://www.antrakair.com/travelinformation.aspx> or Citylink <http://www.flycitylink.com/booking> Starbow <http://www.flystarbow.com/> and Fly540 Africa <http://www.fly540africa.com/> While reservations may be possible using these websites, paying before you arrive remains difficult, so that your reservation might be less secure, but the number of daily flights presently permits adjustments as necessary. Prices are listed on the web sites, and usually can be paid most easily in cash – either US dollars or Ghana cedis. Overweight penalties may apply. On your way home, try not to choose the last flight from Kumasi to Accra, just in case it is canceled. The hospital has a website <http://www.kathhsp.org>.

US debit cards (VISA) work at several of the Kumasi banks, allowing withdrawals in local currency. Banks are readily located in the Adum district, a fairly short walk or taxi ride from the hospital.

ORIENTATION MATERIALS: All volunteers have access to the *HVO KnowNET*, where the majority of the essential orientation materials are stored. The *HVO KnowNET* - linked at the top of the [HVO website](#) - contains a variety of useful background materials including: how to obtain a

visa; hints and suggestions from previous volunteers to a site; copies of volunteer talks/ lectures; curriculum information; trip reports from previous volunteers, etc. To receive access to the *HVO KnowNET*, contact HVO Member Services at membership@hvousa.org.

HVO MEMBERSHIP: All volunteers with confirmed assignments must be members of HVO. The costs associated with developing a meaningful volunteer opportunity, as well as recruiting, briefing and placing a volunteer exceed \$900. Dues help defray these costs and provide essential funding for HVO ensuring that we will be able to continue placing volunteers – today, tomorrow and next year. Dues are \$150 for physicians and dentists; \$70 for nurses and allied health professionals; and \$40 for those in training. To join, visit our secure website (<http://www.hvousa.org/waystogive.shtml>) or call the office.

For more information about HVO projects, please visit our website at www.hvousa.org
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