

# 2016 Nicaragua Social Medicine Course and Rotation Prospectus

## *Rudolph Virchow on Social Medicine*

“If medicine is to fulfill her great task, then she must enter the political and social life. Do we not always find diseases of the populace traceable to defects in society? Physicians are the natural attorneys of the poor, and social questions fall to a great degree in their jurisdiction.”

## Rotation Overview and Goals

The annual *Nicaraguan Social Medicine Course and Rotation* (January 10 – February 19, 2016) will have classroom, health facility, and community-based components. Atención Primaria en Salud (APS) Nicaragua, a Nicaragua-based non-governmental organization composed of community health workers and the coordinating organization for the course, has been offering educational opportunities to North American students for more than 15 years, but in 2013 began offering the *Nicaragua Social Medicine Course and Rotation* as a formal Global Health Clinical Elective in partnership with University of Washington School of Medicine. Other collaborating and supporting partners include: 1) National Autonomous University of Nicaragua, Managua, School of Medicine; 2) Nicaraguan Ministry of Health; 3) University of Miami School of Medicine; and 5) many other partner individuals, organizations, and institutions.

Our hope is that your participation will help to launch you onto a career path to serve and advocate for the economically poor, attacking the vast problem of health inequities, both locally and globally, through:

- Seeing the wisdom in making a lifelong commitment to a specific country or geographic region outside the United States;
- Influencing systemic changes in health systems to provide more equitable and effective care, with a particular focus on strengthening public health systems;
- Appreciate the impact of public-private and public-non-governmental partnerships in the alleviation of health inequities;
- An appreciation of the power of community organizing to strike at the social roots of disease;
- Learning to deliver and manage comprehensive community-based primary health care programs, even in the poorest and most remote places;
- Exposure to implementation science (operational research) as a type of research that can lead to improved healthcare services in impoverished communities;
- More than anything, to serve as a catalyst for social change that leads to the eradication of the root causes of ill health, first among them, epidemic severe economic poverty.

On behalf of our incredible team of APS community health workers and other partners, we are looking forward to learning with you and from you during your rotation.

*Bienvenido a Nicaragua!*

The general layout of the elective is as follows:

- Part I: Nicaragua Social Medicine Course (1 week)
- Part II: Health Facility Rotations (4 weeks)
- Part III: Rural Field Experience (1 week)
- Part IV (Optional): Intensive Spanish Language Coursework

All participants will participate in the week long Nicaraguan Social Medicine Course, taught by both N. American and Nicaraguan faculty. For the clinical component of the elective, each participant will spend dedicated time in one or more health facilities with a dedicated clinical supervisor(s). If possible, preferences for one of the following tracks will be offered:

- *Health Systems and Community-Oriented Primary Care Track*, a combination of both ambulatory and community-based experiences;
- *Internal Medicine and Infectious Disease Track (+/- Emergency Medicine)*, including both hospital and ambulatory-based experiences;
- *Maternal & Child Health Track*, including both hospital and ambulatory-based experiences;

Each participant (in groups of two or more) will also accompany a rural-based community health worker affiliated with APS and the Nicaraguan Ministry of Health for ~1 week. Here, they will have the opportunity to learn in-depth about the role of the community health worker in the delivery of preventive and curative primary health care services in a rural context, as well as how they collaborate with the formal public health system.

Those who wish to improve their Spanish will have the opportunity to engage in language training for most of the elective. The cost of this training is not covered in the usual course fee.

#### Rotation Objectives

- To provide a structured global health immersion experience for health professional students with dedicated supervision, teaching in clinical and social medicine, and public health concepts;
- To promote international solidarity and partnership in generating solutions to the root causes of ill health;
- To appreciate the efforts of one local non-governmental organization (Atención Primaria en Salud) in strengthening the capacity of the Nicaraguan public health system to deliver community-oriented primary health care;
- To appreciate the beauty of the Nicaraguan people and culture through an intimate home stay with either an urban- and/or rural-based community health worker;
- To evaluate and address the social determinants of health and disease;
- Acquire skills in advocacy, leadership, and operational management of global health programs;
- To facilitate the development of a clinical approach to disease and illness using a biopsychosocial model;
- To observe clinical care of patients with a wide range of health problems in both inpatient and outpatient settings of a resource-limited public health system;

- To gain exposure to 2 examples of implementation science that have been conducted in a resource-limited setting (*Managua Cardiovascular Health Initiative* and *One Test, One Woman, Save Two Lives*);
- To gain an appreciation of the shifting burden of non-communicable disease;
- To appreciate both the great challenge and satisfaction of putting your tool-kit to use in the service of the economically poor;
- To master language fluency to practice clinical medicine and carry out research in a Spanish-speaking country.

#### Nicaragua Social Medicine Course Curriculum\*

- Introduction and Orientation | Course Prospectus and Country Guide Review
- Nicaraguan History & Realpolitik
- Nicaragua Health System 101 & District 6, Managua
- Global Primary Health Care and the Community Health Worker Model
- Global Health, Equity, and Social Medicine
- A.P.S. Nicaragua Overview
- Tools for Quality Improvement
- A Febrile Illness in Managua
- An Emerging Epidemic - Chinkugunya
- Development Basics and Role of the NGO in Resource Poor Settings - Views from Mozambique and Nicaragua
- Global Health Delivery Case Study: BRAC
- Community Outreach and Patient Empowerment (COPE) Program Overview
- Una Prueba, Una Mujer: Dos Vidas Salvadas
- The Double Burden: Non-Communicable Disease Epidemic

\*Specific modules to be finalized prior to arrival in Managua.

#### Course Objectives

- To better understand the history and politics of Nicaragua;
- To appreciate the roots and historical evolution of Global Primary Health Care;
- To gain knowledge of the evolving Nicaraguan Health Care System, past and present;
- To gain an appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of the community health worker as a key to comprehensive community-based primary health care;
- To foster critical analysis of global health interventions and of the role of non-governmental organizations in resource-poor settings, with a particular focus from the recipients point of view, and with the paradigm of “social service v social change;”
- Understand the traditional application of value stream mapping and how it can be applied to improve quality of care within health system processes;
- Gain an appreciation of the history, theory, and modern application of implementation science;
- To gain knowledge of the social determinants of disease through a focus on the endemic disease of Dengue;
- Obtain in-depth knowledge about the specific health problems affecting Nicaragua and Mesoamerica, with a focus on Dengue and Chinkugunya.

#### Core Course Instructors

\*Licenciada Fabiola Thomas, Farmaceutico y Director, Atención Primaria en Salud Nicaragua

\*Dr. Jonathan Colasanti, Assistant Professor, Infectious Disease, Emory University, Miembro, Junta de Consejo APS

\*Hannah Sehn, Supervisor del Programa, Community Outreach and Empowerment Program (COPE), Nacion Navajo, Nueva Mexico EEUU, Miembro, Junta de Consejo APS

\*Karina Lifschitz MPH MIA, Consejera Salud Publica, CDC Atlanta, Junta de Consejo APS

\*Dr. Christopher Dodd, Instructor Clinico, Department of Global Health, University of Washington EEUU, Miembro, Junta de Consejo APS

#### Primary Clinical Mentors

\*APS Community Health Workers

\*Dr. Carlos Quant, Infectologo y Jefe, Departamento de Infectologia y Epidemiologia, Hospital Manolo Morales

\*TBA

#### Dates, Cost, and Applications

The dates for the 2016 course are Monday, January 10 – Friday, February 19, 2016. Participants are requested to arrive in Managua at least 1 day prior to the start of the course. The total student costs for the course will be ~ \$1,600 (including room – check-in no earlier than Friday January 9th, clinical mentorship fees, phone, course administration fee to APS, airport pick-up and drop-off), but does not include round-trip travel to Managua, board, and transportation costs while in Managua.

For further information please contact Dr. Christopher Dodd directly at [chris@doddinternational.com](mailto:chris@doddinternational.com).