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**UTCOMLS PETITION FOR APPROVAL OF DISASTER MISSION**

*To be completed by faculty leader and returned to Deb Krohn, UTCOMLS Global Health Program Advisor, for distribution, review, and formal approval by The University of Toledo Global Health Committee.*

The Global Health Program has been actively engaged in medical mission activities as well as domestic and international disaster response missions[[1]](#footnote-1) since the program’s inception. We continue to encourage faculty, resident, and student participation in our sponsored programs offered within The University of Toledo College of Medicine and Life Sciences. Disaster missions, in particular, are a key part of our efforts in providing healthcare assistance in emergency response situations. When responding to disasters, we must realize that external medical healthcare providers (outside of immediate disaster response teams assigned in the region) are NOT always in the best interest of effective disaster management. Additional healthcare providers can unintentionally overwhelm disaster teams/sites with already limited resources. It is critical that voluntary disaster response teams not become more of a burden to the local government/military organizing these efforts.

When responding to a disaster[[2]](#footnote-2) any voluntary teams must be self-sufficient and fully self-sustainable. Specifically, this means each voluntary team must provide their own food, shelter, medical equipment, water, waste management, communications network, medical/surgical supplies, pharmaceuticals, and, oftentimes, their own water and power supply to manage a disaster mission, not only for disaster victims, but also for all members of the disaster team. Each member of the voluntary disaster team must have a specific role in executing an appropriate disaster response, including safety management, logistics management, and medical care and/or communication support. This being the case, undergraduate students and medical students must have a clearly defined role in participating in a disaster response team to provide a benefit to a disaster-affected region/population.

Please thoroughly address all required questions below and return your completed application to Deb Krohn, Global Health Program Advisor. Upon receipt of your completed application, Deb will forward all documentation to the UT Global Health Committee for application review. Upon formal disaster mission approval, all students/residents accompanying you on your approved disaster mission must complete all required UTCOMLS Global Health paperwork[[3]](#footnote-3) prior to departure. Please contact Deb Krohn or Dr. Kris Brickman with any additional questions/concerns.

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*UTCOMLS faculty leader must submit the following disaster mission documentation to Deb Krohn, UTCOMLS Global Health Program Advisor, for pre-approval by the UT Global Health Committee prior to departure.*

**Proposed disaster location:**

**Proposed travel dates:**

**Name, title, and contact information of UTCOMLS faculty applicant:**

**Names, academic programs, and UT Rocket email addresses of student participants:**

**Names, departments, and email addresses of resident participants:**

UTCOMLS faculty leader must comprehensively address subjects below in order to approve UTCOMLS student and/or resident participation in a disaster response mission.

1. **Food/Water:** Often safe drinking water is unavailable and food is scarce in a disaster situation. It is critical that you do not consume already limited resources of an area that has been overcome by a disaster. That said, all teams (including students and residents) must have a safe water source and adequate food supply throughout the duration of their travels. Please explain how food and water supply will be arranged and facilitated.
2. **Accommodations/Shelter:** Functional hotel rooms while responding to a disaster event will likely be unavailable (unless accommodations have been coordinated and arranged ahead of time with a local resource on-site). All accommodations/shelters must be: 1) provided and transported by the group and/or 2) otherwise prearranged through local contacts. Accommodations must clearly be spelled out prior to committing to disaster response. Please outline your accommodations/shelter plans.
3. **Safety:** Security/security forces will likely not be available to you at a disaster site. There must be some provisions to provide appropriate safety for all team members. This also includes their overall healthcare and required medications and treatment that may be needed while working on a disaster mission. Please outline the plan developed for appropriate safety and security for all team members (including residents and students) that will attend this disaster response.
4. **Medical/Surgical Resources:** Healthcare facilities that you can move into and resources of the local government/community will unlikely be readily available. Therefore (unless it has already been determined that medical and surgical resources, including medical/surgical equipment, pharmaceutical supplies, and appropriate healthcare personnel, are available for your utilization at the facility) the team must provide all medical/surgical equipment, supplies, medications, maintenance, and sanitation provisions to manage a disaster healthcare clinic operation. Please outline your plan for medical supplies, surgical equipment, medications/pharmaceuticals, support equipment, sanitation, maintenance, and storage of this disaster medical team.

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1. **Vaccinations:** Understand that if you are traveling to another country, there will often be pre-departure vaccination requirements/recommendations by the CDC[[4]](#footnote-4) before arriving at the site. In addition, there are also basic immunizations necessary for all team members including Tetanus and Hepatitis vaccinations prior to departure. Please outline compliance with all team members in meeting vaccination requirements for your disaster location. Also, identify any potential team health concerns.
2. **Transportation:** As outlined above, you must assume that there is no available transportation within the region in which you are servicing throughout your mission. First, there may not be any vehicles available that are not already being utilized. Second, there may not be personnel to transport you from point A to point B. Third (and most important) in the event of a disaster, the infrastructure of the country may have been damaged and the roads unusable. Damage to transportation routes and the ability to move throughout the region will likely be very limited. Please outline how you plan to safely move your disaster team to and from entry points to the medical operation sites you will be utilizing.
3. **Power Supply:** Understandably, power supply may be limited in the event of a local disaster. Therefore, please outline your plan to manage your team realizing that available local power may not be there for you to operate equipment, supplies, lights, and machines.
4. **Communications:** In a disaster event (as well as medical relief) there are often limitations in communication networks to provide communication from the team/facility to outside government/healthcare facilities as well as communications among team members. In addition, language barriers can also provide communication issues. These must be accounted for to provide an effective disaster response. Therefore, it is necessary that there are appropriate communications set up for team members as well as communications from the disaster response teams to outside agencies. Please outline a plan when dealing with limited communications.
5. **Strategic Goals and Objectives:** To provide effective disaster response and medical relief to a location in need, there must be clear strategic goals outlined for the team in which to improve the overall healthcare provided to the community served. The overarching goal should be to provide sustainable improvements to the local healthcare environment. Said goals and objectives can be attained though training and education, by providing healthcare to the local community, by improving the resources available in the community served, and/or by repairing damage sustained by the local disaster. Please outline strategic goals and objectives intended for this mission and address resource sustainability.

**Application submitted by:**

**Signature of faculty applicant: Date:**

*\*All information supplied on and attached to this form is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge.\**

**Date sent to Deb Krohn, Global Health Program Advisor, for review:**

1. Disasters consist of either a natural event, man-made disaster, or disease outbreak that overcomes the resources of a local region. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Hurricane, earthquake, bioterrorist event, disease outbreak, etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. All students/residents participating in approved disaster mission must complete all required Global Health Forms [formal participation request, student/resident waiver, required vaccinations, emergency contact information, copy of passport, proof of CISI foreign travel insurance (for students) US Department of State STEP enrollment, and UT CISP Travel Registry] and turn them into Deborah Krohn prior to departure. Additionally, any fourth year medical student requesting to earn academic credit for his/her participation in approved disaster mission must petition the UTCOMLS Clinical Curriculum Committee for formal approval. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Refer to [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) *Travelers’ Health* for required/recommended vaccinations in the destination in which you are traveling. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)