

FAQ for Mission Volunteers Ghana 2014

Q: What's the best place to get Travel Health Insurance?

A: We cannot comment on what is the BEST place but two frequently used resources are:
Posted on our website is a document with many sources.
1. Insurance Services of America 800-647-4589 or www.missionaryhealth.com
2. Travel Guard by Chartis.

Q: What hotel will we be staying in?

A: Accra (First night) Hotel TBA. You will be met by a team member and transported to the hotel in Accra where you will stay overnight and on Sunday March 30th take a team bus to Kumasi. (This is a 5-6 hour drive).

Kumasi (March 30-April 12) The Golden Tulip Hotel, Rain Tree St. Kumasi, Ghana, West Africa
Phone: +233-32 2083777 +233 24 434 0220-1 (Google Golden Tulip Hotel Kumasi Ghana to view amenities.) Hotel fees will be paid from March 30-April 11 nights. Check out on April 12 unless you make further arrangements at your own fee. A single bus will leave to go back to Accra on Saturday, April 11. Any early or late departures will require you to provide your own transport to Accra either by car or airline.

Q: Is there any sightseeing available?

A: Yes, this would have to take place before or after the mission. We will not book excursions, but recommend you contact a travel agent for assistance and advice.

There are animal reserves in northern Ghana. A park and animal reserve in southwestern Ghana – close to Cape Town (Ghana). A fun canopy walk on rope and plank walkways 100 feet above the ground. Awesome experience! Seaside resorts on the western coast of Ghana. Picturesque. Slave castles on the coast of Ghana –Amazing history, informative tours. Market places in Accra with wonderful African artistry including baskets, woodcarvings, paintings, clothe, art and jewelry, etc.

Q: How much money do I need to bring and what currency?

A: For one meal per day for our entire stay, including incidentals, we recommend at least \$300. Bring small currency for purchases. You may make currency exchanges at any Forex exchange. The most widely accepted exchange is the dollar and pound. The official currency is the cedi. VISA is the most widely accepted credit card. Fraud is prevalent so be careful.

Q: Will we have difficulty communicating with local hospital staff?

A: English is the official language of Ghana. This will not be a problem in communicating with hospital staff. Patients may use other tribal languages, which local staff will assist with.

Q: What supplies do I need to bring for the mission?

A: You may be asked by leadership to carry supplies from the U.S. to assist the mission. i.e. perfusion or nursing items. You will be provided documents that verify clearance by the Ministry of Health. For your own use, please bring a stethoscope if you use one, a box of gloves and hand gel. If there are any resources you prefer for medication look up or procedures you are welcome to bring it.

Q: Is there Internet access at the hotel and hospital?

A: We will have Internet access at the hotel. Availability of Internet in the Hospital is inconsistent.

Q: How do I receive a donation receipt from CardioStart for my mission expenses?

A: Download the Expense Report document on the Volunteer Documents page on the website. Complete form and submit receipts to CardioStart's Finance Manager, Charlotte Kozlin. She can be reached for questions and submissions at: charlotte.kozlin@cardiostart.org and 813-304-2163.

Q: What shots should I have?

A: Immunizations (Mayo Clinic Travel Clinic Recommendations) Please see your local Travel Medicine Clinic or health department.

Yellow Fever: Required for entry to Ghana, with proof of immunization documented by International Certificate of Vaccination. Vaccine must be given at least 10 days before entry into Ghana, and is protective for 10 years. Revaccination required every 10 years.

Hepatitis A: Recommended, with first dose given at least 2 months before departure, and second dose given 6 months after first dose.

Adult Polio Booster: Recommended once in adult lifetime, if standard course of childhood polio immunization previously completed.

Malaria Prophylaxis: Mefloquine (Lariam) 250 mg once weekly for 2 weeks before departure, 250 mg once weekly while in Ghana, and 250 mg once weekly for 4 weeks after return to U.S.

Malarone one tablet daily. Start two days before travel, throughout your stay in Ghana and continue 2 for one week after return. Doxycycline usually 100mg starting 1 – 2 days prior to departure to malarious area, continuing through duration of the trip and for four weeks after departure.

Typhoid Vaccine: Recommended 2 weeks -1 month before departure, particularly for “adventurous eaters” or those venturing off the usual tourist routes.

Meningococcal Vaccine: Recommended 2 weeks -1 month before departure, since travel will occur in June, at the end of the dry season, when epidemics are most likely to occur.

Hepatitis B Vaccine: Recommended for health care workers.

Tetanus Booster: Recommended every 10 years.

Cholera Vaccine: Not required.

Q: What should I pack for the mission?

A: Scrubs and your hospital shoes. Bring OR hats and foot covers if you can, as they are required for OR visits.

- One nicer outfit for any ceremonies/dinners. Skirt or dress pants.
- Lightweight modest clothing as the average temperature in April is 75-90 degrees. It is the start of the rainy season so bring an umbrella.
- Pajama's/sleepwear as you will be room sharing with a same gender teammate.
- Lots of underwear. Females- feminine supplies.
- Mosquito spray, sunscreen, hat, travel clock, sunglasses. Medications, electrical adaptors (electricity is 220-240 volt, 50 Cycle (Hz)). Sweater/jacket or raincoat. Sandals, swimsuit and towel. Washcloths if you use them. Camera and charger/spare digital card. Flashlight. Your favorite treats or snacks (granola, trail mix, candy, jerky, bars. Meals mostly consist of chicken, rice and vegetables).

Q: How do I answer questions on the VISA application?

A: When applying for your VISA, use the “tourist” choice. You may apply for a short-term visa or for a couple of years. This is your choice and cost. You will need to post your hotel as noted above.

Local contacts:

Prof. Ohene Adjei

KATH (Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital) PO Box 1934 or 1 Bantama High Street
Kumasi-Ashanti REgion KumasiGhana - West Africa

Phone number: 011-03220-40912

Email: oadjei@kathhsp.org

Baffour Awuah MD

E-mail: bawuah1960@yahoo.com

Dr. Bernard Nkum, Consultant Cardiologist at KATH Tel: +33 51 50319

Cell: +233 20901 7647

Q: Who will be the U.S. in-country contact if my family needs to contact me?

A: Janine Henson, RN, CardioStart VP
26912 Meadow Ridge Dr. Elko, MN 55020
H: (952) 461-1440
C: (503) 926-4232
Email: (W) janine.henson@cardiostart.org
(H) jhenson5@me.com

Q: What is different in their culture that I should be aware of?

A: Caution about hand-waving gestures, use of left hand

- Avoid the use of your left hand when eating (particularly when there are common dishes for the table), waving, giving and accepting items. This becomes more important the further north you travel because the percentage of Muslims in cities increases as you move north. If you are waving ‘hello’ to someone simply wave your hand back and forth, and not by closing your hand. Waving by closing your hand means ‘come here’.

Water; avoidance of water washed products

- Avoid eating fruit or vegetables that don’t have a thick peel or outer layer because many of them have been washed with local water. Mango’s, pineapple, and banana’s are best if they are peeled and not washed with local water. Apples are generally fine to eat if you wash them with bottled or purified water.

Personal interactions

- For those accustomed to personal proximics in Eastern, Western, and Latin American cultures might be very surprised by how close Ghanaians get to each other and to you.
- Ghanains will approach very close to you when speaking, and may attempt to hold your hand. Do not take offense, as this is normal. You will often see Ghanaian men and boys walking while holding hands. Do not assume that this has any implications for their sexual orientation.
- Personal greetings vary depending on the ethnic group. One standard is the finger-clicking handshake with which you will likely become very familiar.
- If giving gifts, they should be given with the right hand. They are not necessary when visiting for dinner, and the thought is more important than the cost. They may not be opened when received, but this is not meant as an offense. If you would like, bringing small gifts for the staff you will work with is a nice gesture. Items from your country, medical giveaways like flashlights, trinkets.

- It's generally a good idea to avoid direct eye contact for extended periods, as it is sometimes considered impolite.