

TASKS

This position has a range of responsibilities and key tasks as follows:

Task
<p>Ophthalmology Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide consultations and testing to communities in rural and remote locations • Provide optical consultations to residents of facilities run by in-country hosts • Perform cataract operations with the assistance of local staff at local eye hospitals • Conduct post operative checks • Consult with the assistance of a translator and/or local partner • Record treatment data • Refer to specialised medical services where available and appropriate • Liaise with other health care team members providing optical opinion and advice where necessary and appropriate • Provide own equipment as outlined in pre departure information • Implement policy, as directed by the Team leader, to encourage community participation in aspects of the treatment process. This includes educating and training locals in appropriate skill sets that are sustainable in the absence of the Equal Health Team.
<p>Community Involvement and Socialisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in excursions with residents and staff of partner organisations where planned • Socialise with residents and staff of partner organisations after clinical work where possible • Participate in entertainment skits where such activities are provided • Attend concerts, plays and ceremonies organised by in country hosts • Attend formal dinners, functions and ceremonies planned and attended by in country hosts
<p>Public Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in identifying general public health issues and solutions • Assist in implementing public health treatment such as de lousing and other duties under supervision of medical staff
<p>Team Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend compulsory de briefing sessions at the end of each day • Attend compulsory briefings held at the beginning of each day

Task
<p>Logistics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist the optical dispenser with recording of daily statistics • Assist with sorting and managing of optical stock • Assist in carrying optical bags and equipment on a daily basis • Set up work environment on a daily basis • Conduct final stock take and sorting of equipment • Assist all team members as reasonably directed by team leader
<p>Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete post evaluation questionnaire on the final day of camp • Attend compulsory final optical debriefing • Attend compulsory final team debriefing
<p>Other Duties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other duties as directed by the Team Leader

Hours of Work

Volunteers work approximately 10 – 12 hour days. Due to the challenges of the working conditions, volunteers will have schedule work free days.

Position Accountability

Volunteers have a high degree of autonomy and are required to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times and adhere to the Equal Health Code of Ethics. The position reports directly to the team leader.

Key Responsibilities

Volunteers work towards the achievement of Equal Health's mission and objectives through the above range of tasks.

Working conditions

During each Equal Health camp in Tamil Nadu the optical teams, made up of optometrists and optical dispensers, send around sixty people from the villages to the Rajan Eye Hospital in Madras for cataract surgery - www.rajaneye.com. These people are referred by the optometrist to the ophthalmologist for pre surgery

consultation. Referral to the RNH Eye Hospital in Trichy is also available for patients from Southern Tamil Nadu.

The cataract surgery is likely to take place on a rotation of one day recruitment followed by a day of surgery. The ophthalmologists at the Rajan Eye Hospital, led by Dr Mohan Rajan, and the RNH Eye Hospital, led by Dr Devaki, volunteer their time and provide the hospital facilities at no charge. The hospitals are state of the art by Indian standards and most of the surgery is performed by way of phaco emulsification. Equal Health ophthalmologists work along side local staff sharing skills and knowledge.

While working in the villages the aid you provide includes ophthalmic care, post operative consultations and perhaps some eye testing. On some of the days you will be working with the entire team and on other days you will be operating. Each morning after breakfast the group receives a briefing, confirming the day's activities. Optical teams endeavour to complete eye testing on all of the residents of host organisations..

Each optical team usually made up of one optometrist, an optical dispenser and an interpreter, is equipped with a ret bar and an adequate set of flippers for performing retinoscopy. The equipment also includes three and six metre illiterate eye charts and near cards in Tamil and picture format. You will need to bring your own ophthalmoscope and retinoscope with you.

All of the spectacles that are handed out are new, and fitted with matching pairs of spherical lenses made of hard coated CR39. The powers range from +/- 0.50 to +/- 6.00 and plus lenticular lenses from +8.00 to +15.00. You will see many aphakic patients, some of whom don't have spectacles, and may never have had spectacles. It is rare to see bilateral aphakic patients; most have a pearly white cataract in the other eye. It's common to deliver spectacles to aphakic people that may not have seen for up to ten years or more.

Lubricating drops are administered to patients that are unable to be helped with spectacles. This is to gratify those that may have been waiting for several hours to be seen and it lessens the risk of rioting!