

electives

resources from CMF



Vicky Lavy is CMF Head of International Ministries

Vicky Lavy explains how CMF can help with your elective

What a gift: six weeks to go anywhere in the world, experience a different culture, see things from another perspective and learn new medicine. It's called an elective, and every student gets one. Lots of students take the opportunity to go to a Less Developed Country and discover how the rest of the world lives; as global citizens, it's important to see what life is like for 85% of the world's population. As global Christians, it's great to meet brothers and sisters across the world and to see how God is at work in many ways in different places. For some, it's an experience that changes the way they live and shapes their future.

where do I start?

Choosing where to go and what to do can seem a bit daunting but do not fear, CMF has some great resources to help. This year we've published *The Electives Handbook* which contains loads of practical information and advice about choosing, planning, and getting ready for your elective. It also looks at some of the challenges of living in a different culture and seeing poverty on your doorstep, and it includes some ethical questions for you to chew over. It was written by medical students Rachel Perry and Emma Pedlar, who've been volunteering in the International Department this year, with a bit of help from me.

On the CMF website you will find online databases of hospitals and organisations offering elective placements, as well as a list of funding sources (an elective is a great gift, but unfortunately it's not a free gift...) We have a growing library of elective reports to browse through as you think about where you might go.

spreading the word

Both the handbook and these databases should be useful for those outside CMF so do let your friends know about them. Our database focusses on Christian hospitals because that's our field, but many of these are happy to accept non-Christians who are comfortable with the Christian ethos of the organisation.

Lots of students are interested in Global Health and everyone has an elective, so why not put on an event in your medical school and invite your friends? In our 2012 electives survey, 34% of students said they had not had any help from their medical school in preparing for electives, so running an event is a good way to

bless your classmates. As well as the nuts and bolts of elective preparation, it can be a chance to look at some of the challenges in Global Health, and to learn about the difference that Christian doctors are making around the world. CMF will be very happy to provide speakers and resources to support you. Here are some of the ways different groups have done it:

Here at Liverpool many students are interested in doing electives overseas, so we had an interactive and informative evening with supper that was open to CMF and our non-Christian friends. We heard from students who've done it before, we heard about good practice and not being nuisances, we explored God's heart for the poor, and we had our eyes opened to the possibilities and scope for involvement in global health. It was a great evening and everyone went away challenged and envisioned!

Emily Casebow, Fifth year student

The Sheffield CMF students wanted to run a Global Health event as a way of reaching out to non-Christians who would never come to an evangelistic talk. They were amazed when 50 people turned up on a cold evening to hear two inspiring missionaries home on leave, who talked about what they do and why they do it. I also did a short slot on electives and how CMF can help.

Vicky Lavy

The Global Health Forum at St Georges ran an afternoon event for the whole year which included speakers from the medical school. A Christian student suggested inviting someone from CMF, so I went along and gave a general talk about planning and preparing for electives and we had a stall in the 'electives fair' afterwards.

Vicky Lavy

During our recent Oxford CMF meeting we had a talk on electives. We wanted to hear about what to expect from an elective, how we could prepare in advance, and the pros and cons of working in a resource poor country. It was really useful to talk through some of the ethical issues that could arise, such as acting outside our competence and seeing bad practice. It has made me very excited for my future elective!

Josh Peppiatt, Third year student

The CMF group at Imperial College decided to put on an electives event during their pathology block, when the whole year was in college. It happened after the last lecture of the day and they provided some refreshments to keep everyone going on a hot summer afternoon. Lots of non-Christians turned up and found it useful. Past students gave short presentations and I gave a brief talk as well.

Vicky Lavy