

## Senior Registrar and Intern Supervisor- Emergency Medicine Honiara, Solomon Islands

*AVI has negotiated this assignment in good faith with the Partner Organisation, and the information contained was correct at the time of acceptance of the request.*

*However, while AVI takes responsibility for matters under our direct control, all assignments and arrangements are subject to change due to the inherent low levels of predictability in developing country environments. This assignment may be amended or withdrawn to reflect changes in circumstances.*

### GENERAL DETAILS

<b>Assignment Title</b>	Senior Registrar and Intern Supervisor – with specialisation in Emergency Medicine
<b>Host Organisation</b>	Ministry of Health and Medical Services
<b>Duration of Assignment</b>	4-6 months
<b>Start Date</b>	August 2019
<b>AVI Assignment Code</b>	n/a
<b>Australian Partner Organisations</b>	ACEM

## PARTNER ORGANISATION OVERVIEW

The Solomon Islands Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS) is responsible for the management and delivery of the health and medical services for the population of Solomon Islands.

MHMS consists of the following units: Health Improvement, Health Care, Health Policy and Planning, and Administration and Management; hospital services fall under Health Care.

Of the nine provinces in Solomon Islands, eight have a public hospital. There are also four private hospitals in the provinces, owned and operated through various church organisations. Provincial health services include a network of health centres, aid posts and village health workers, with location broadly determined by the size and distribution of the population and the need to provide access to care. The quality of service provision may be impaired by poor availability of pharmaceuticals and other resources in outlying facilities, including a doctor- and health worker-to-population ratio that is among the lowest in the Pacific.

Communicable diseases like malaria, other parasitic diseases and tuberculosis (TB) remain prevalent, although malaria incidence is gradually declining. Non-communicable diseases (NCD) like diabetes and hypertension and the prevalence of NCD risk factors are rising rapidly. Most women now give birth with the assistance of a skilled attendant, but one in 10 children is malnourished, infant and under-5 mortality are declining only slowly, and the country is unlikely to meet its MDG targets for child survival. There have been large outbreaks of measles and dengue fever over the last two years.

The National Referral Hospital (NRH) is the main hospital in Solomon Islands. Its principal activities are:

- Provision of secondary and tertiary clinical care for people living in Solomon Islands
- Provision of clinical training attachment for residents, paramedics and nurses
- Provision of specialist clinical services and support to the provinces
- Ensuring patient care is of high quality
- Evaluating and facilitating overseas referral to St Vincent Hospital, Sydney, for patients needing more highly specialised treatment (according to MHMS off-shore referral guidelines and eligibility criteria).

Solomon Islands is in a unique situation of having sent a significant number of students to train in medicine at universities around the world. The majority of these foreign trained medical graduates (FTMG) have attended universities in Cuba, with others studying in Fiji and Taiwan. As a result of the increased numbers of FTMGs, much larger annual cohorts of new medical officers (up to 25 per year) will be returning to Solomon Islands over the next five years; due to overlaps between cohorts, there may be 50 or more junior doctors undertaking pre-registration training in the Solomon Islands health system at any one time.

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The large numbers of returning graduates are expected to place substantial pressure on an already stretched Solomon Islands health system. There is currently very limited capacity for senior medical staff within Solomon Islands hospitals to provide adequate supervision while also attending to the clinical case load. Without adequate supervision, medical graduates may not develop the necessary skills and knowledge to perform effectively as doctors, which would represent a major missed opportunity for the sector to address medical shortages throughout the health system. There are also concerns about how well the clinical knowledge and skills of the FTMGs trained in Cuba align with the practicalities of working in Solomon Islands health system.

To help address the increased complexity and demand for pre-registration training, Solomon Islands has developed a two-stage internship comprising: 1) a special pre-internship Bridging Program for FTMGs trained outside the Pacific and/or in a language other than English; and 2) a revised and updated two-year Solomon Islands Internship Training Program (SIITP), which all new medical graduates must complete in order to gain registration as a medical practitioner. The two programs operate under the oversight of a MHMS Medical Training Committee.

An Emergency Department rotation is included in the SIITP and all Bridging Interns participate in lectures and short course relevant to emergency medicine.

## **ASSIGNMENT OVERVIEW**

This role is part of the Solomon Islands Graduate Internship Supervision and Support Project (SIGISSP)– a project funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) through the Australian aid program in the Solomon Islands:

<https://www.avi.org.au/work-with-avi/case-studies/solomon-islands-graduate-internship-and-supervision-support-project/>

The position includes responsibilities within the Emergency Department, as well as the hospital-wide Bridging Program.

The MHMS has acknowledged concerns about its capacity to provide adequate supervision for FTMGs as they return to Solomon Islands and has requested DFAT assistance to provide supplementary supervisory capacity until there are enough local supervisors to manage the programs. The SIGISSP supports the MHMS to deliver the Bridging Program (for FTMGs) and the SIITP (for medical graduates from Fiji).

Australian registrar intern supervisors are recruited through strategic Australian Organisations (AOs), partnerships including the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine. SIGISSP also provides for an Emergency Consultant Advisor, and Emergency Nurse Advisor, a Clinical Education Advisor and an Internship Training Program Co-ordinator.

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There are important differences between this position and that of the Emergency Consultant Advisor, which is aimed at a higher level of capacity development support for the ED and the NRH Medical Training Committee. The consultant role is focussed on ensuring that the ED can provide an effective training environment, through essential mentoring, leadership and management support of the local EM leaders, supporting the newly implemented Solomon Islands Triage Scale, improving patient flow, addressing access block, facilitating research and upskilling staff with specific emergency care training and supervision skills.

The Senior Emergency Medicine Registrar and Intern Supervisor role is more specifically focussed on clinical supervision, particularly of interns rotating through the Department. The volunteer will work alongside local registrars in the Department to support junior doctors, contribute to departmental education and participate in audit and research activities. This role also includes responsibilities to deliver teaching sessions to participants in the Bridging Program.

ACEM have an existing relationship with NRH and were contracted by DFAT to provide a detailed assessment and recommendations for the ED in 2014. The College will make the results of this assessment available directly to successful applicants.

Please note that the standard of care possible in the NRH ED is not usually comparable with the Australian setting. Significant adjustment is required for medical professionals from well-resourced settings to operate effectively in the Solomon Islands environment.

This role will suit an ACEM Advanced Trainee who has an interest in clinical education, and is committed to building junior doctors' clinical knowledge and skills. Ideally, candidates should have a firm grasp of the principles of adult learning, and experience in clinical supervision.

#### **ASSIGNMENT OBJECTIVES:**

- Provide clinical supervision and support for interns undertaking their Emergency Medicine rotation
- Contribute to the delivery of teaching sessions for participants in the NRH Bridging Program
- Support senior ED staff to develop and implement quality improvement initiatives to provide clinical supervision and support for Solomon Islands medical graduates completing their bridging course and internship
- To ensure the **inclusion of all people** directly affected by the volunteer assignment in the course of your work with the host organisation and host community, including implementing strategies that relate to:

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- promoting gender equality and empowering women,
- disability inclusion, and
- child safeguarding.

## DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VOLUNTEER

In consultation with their line manager and relevant stakeholders, Australian volunteers complete a work plan in the first three (3) months of their assignment. The duties below are an indication of the type of work that may be involved in meeting the Assignment Objectives:

- Supervise and support interns during their ED rotation
- Role model best practice clinical care for patients
- Participate in the assessment of interns undertaking their ED rotation
- Develop teaching modules for interns rotating through the ED
- Participate in departmental teaching, audit and research activities
- Assist in annual competency training and assessment for ED staff
- Assist in the development of clinical guidelines for the ED
- Support quality improvement initiatives within the ED
- Assist with the delivery of others elements of the Bridging Program, including daily lectures and short courses

## Selection Criteria

### Qualifications, Essential Skills & Experience

- MBBS (Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery)
- PGY 5 and above (ie; to have completed 4 years post-graduation)
- Registered advanced trainee in EM with the ACEM
- Completed Provisional Training and Advanced Training Stage 1 in EM with the ACEM
- At least 2 years' experience as an emergency registrar, including some paediatric EM experience
- Completed anaesthetics or ICU rotation
- Demonstrated experience supervising, supporting and mentoring undergraduates/post-graduate doctors and nurses

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### **Desirable Skills & Experience**

- Awareness of and sensitivity to cross-cultural settings
- Patience, tolerance and flexibility
- Ability to cope with cultural isolation and a different standard of living
- A preparedness to work with limited resources within a challenging environment
- Commitment to gender equality, child protection and disability inclusion

### **ASSIGNMENT INFORMATION**

#### **Line Manager**

Department Director –Emergency Medicine

#### **Staff Supervision**

Supervising interns and trainees

#### **Working Relationships**

Registrars, interns, bridging interns and other Ministry of Health and Medical Services and National Referral Hospital staff

#### **Hours & Days of Employment**

From 8 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday. The expectation is that the Australian volunteer will work the equivalent of a 5-day week to a maximum of 40 hours per week.

### **Leave Entitlements**

Same conditions and terms as local colleagues apply, including national holidays. However, as a minimum, volunteers will accrue 1 week of leave for each 3 months of work.

### **Other Conditions**

Some out of hours work may be required.

### **Language Skills and Level Required**

Volunteer must be willing to learn Solomon Islands Pijin. Medium level Pijin language skills required for workplace.

### **Language Support**

AVI provides language support during the in-country orientation period. Most often, additional resources for further development later in the assignment will be available if required.

## **LIVING AS A VOLUNTEER**

The people of Solomon Islands are warm and friendly, many living a lifestyle almost unchanged for hundreds of years. It is a fascinating country with more than 70 living languages spoken and incredible marine and terrestrial biodiversity. The third largest archipelago in South Pacific, Solomon Islands comprises 992 islands.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, Solomon Islands was divided by ethnic tension and violence. In 2003, the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) was deployed to help the Solomon Islands Government restore law and order. The mission, called 'Helpem Fren', was successful in restoring security across the country enabling people to go about their lives free from the fear of violence and intimidation.

The influence of Christianity has had a greater impact on society and people than other institutions. Missionaries managed to curb ancestor worship to some extent but non-Christian beliefs still persist and coexist with Christian concepts. The churches play a very strong role in communal life, especially in rural areas. Virtually every village has a church building or leader and prayer or church services are held once or twice a day, and 95% of the population are professed Christians.

The volunteer will be living in Honiara, located on the island of Guadalcanal. It has a vibrant and fast growing population and has been the capital of Solomon Islands since World War II. Honiara is known as a melting pot of the over 70 language groups that comprise the archipelago; the country features a predominately Melanesian population with minority groups of Polynesians, Micronesians, Asian and Europeans.

Honiara has a population of around 100 000. Overall, the country's population is young, with 50% being under the age of fifteen. Honiara is also home to the country's government buildings, commercial

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centre and a sea port. There is a National Museum, Art Gallery, markets, botanic gardens and beaches. Public transportation runs along the main road and up into many residential areas. Honiara's climate is warm and tropical, with a wetter season from November to April.

#### **Shopping options:**

The local market is great for fresh fruits and vegetables. Supermarkets in Honiara also stock other limited goods; canned, frozen, etc. However goods are expensive and not available all the time.

#### **Social and recreational:**

- Multi-purpose gym (Honiara); Circuit classes, Yoga classes
- Pacific Casino Gym (Honiara)
- Heritage Park Hotel gym (Honiara)
- Swimming at various Hotel pools and beaches, pay for access to them all
- Tri Club meet at Kakabona beach 6am on Tuesdays and Thursdays
- Diving and snorkelling (lots of places)<http://mundadive.com/home.htm>
- Hiking and bush walking (lots of places)
- HHH (Hash House Harriers) meet Monday nights between 5-6pm at various locations in Honiara
- Join a sports club – soccer, basketball, volleyball, netball, futsal, rugby.

#### **ALLOWANCES & SUPPORT**

These allowance levels are based on the Cost of Living in the host country location. Allowances will be reviewed periodically and may increase or decrease. Volunteers will be given notice of any change to the allowance level.

##### **Living Allowance**

AUD \$1250.00 per month

##### **Accommodation Allowance**

AUD \$1000.00 per month

## Housing

Housing will not be provided by the employer. Housing in Honiara is expensive, many volunteers share. AVI will assist the volunteer to find suitable accommodation during the in country orientation program. Most houses are semi furnished, screened and have access to electricity and water.

## Other Allowances & Support

All volunteers receive the following:

- Pre-departure Briefing in Melbourne
- In-country Orientation on arrival
- Pre-departure vaccination expenses
- Visa expenses
- Pastoral care, assignment monitoring and security guidance
- Return airfare to country of assignment
- Psychological and medical advice and support services
- Re-entry support services
- Settling in allowance (assignments longer than 6 months)
- Re-settlement allowance (assignments longer than 6 months).

## PREPARING YOUR APPLICATION

Please begin by writing your responses to the following four (4) questions, in a document headed -

### Response to Selection Criteria

- a) Why do I feel that volunteering internationally is the right thing for me to be doing at this time in my life? (up to half a page)
- b) What are the biggest personal adjustments I'm likely to have to make to be accepted as a useful colleague and engaged community member in this assignment? (up to half a page)
- c) The program is committed to ensuring the inclusion of all people directly affected by the volunteer assignment, such as the host organisation and host community. What is your personal experience and/or understanding of [social inclusion](#)?
- d) How do I match the Qualifications, Essential Skills & Experience? Write a brief summary of your most relevant experiences, results and achievements responding to each of the selection criteria in Section 5.

### Personal Circumstances Constraints

We are NOT able to accept applications from people with the following personal circumstances due to security, cultural, legal or visa restrictions in this location:

- Same sex partners who wish to accompany applicants as part of the program may face issues in applying for and being issued with a visa
- Applicants with partners to whom they are not legally married and who wish to accompany applicants as part of the program may face issues in applying for and being issued with a visa
- Applicants with a criminal record where a criminal conviction may be relevant to the inherent requirements of the assignment. (Note: this is standard for all assignments.)

To find out more details about preparing your application, please visit:

<https://www.australianvolunteers.com/4-steps-to-volunteer/preparing-to-volunteer/>

To find out more details about the personal competencies required to be a volunteer, please visit:

<https://www.australianvolunteers.com/4-steps-to-volunteer/preparing-to-volunteer/>

## HOW TO APPLY

All applications must be submitted online. If you haven't already done so, you will need to register on our website prior to applying.

Once completed, please visit <https://www.avi.org.au/> log in, select the assignment you are interested in and follow the prompts at the end of the page.

AVI encourages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to apply for this assignment.