

ROCKET SHIP

HEALTH | DEVELOPMENT | SUSTAINABILITY

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION

Role: Senior Medical Officer - Emergency Department (ED SMO)

Location(s): Vila Central Hospital, Port Vila

Time/duration: 1 month minimum

Start Date: June/ July 2019

Assignment summary:

The primary responsibilities for the volunteer ED SMO will be to provide high-quality clinical care to patients in the ED. In addition, the volunteer may be requested to assist with peer support and workplace-based training to nursing and junior medical staff, as well as advice regarding opportunities to improve the systems and standards of care for the department.

Background information:

Rocketship Pacific Ltd – an international health non-profit organisation dedicated to strengthening primary healthcare systems in Pacific island countries – has been requested by the Vanuatu Ministry of Health (MoH) to provide short-term support to the Emergency Departments in Vanuatu's two referral hospitals during a period of increased patient presentations, morbidity and mortality (largely due to an influenza epidemic) which has put a significant strain on the capacity of the emergency medical workforce.

VCH is the national referral hospital for Vanuatu. It is a 152-bed facility whose specialty services include general medicine, general surgery, anaesthetics, paediatrics, obstetrics and gynaecology. In 2015, approximately 20 000 patients were seen in the ED and GOPD, with monthly average patient numbers between 500 and 700, two-thirds of whom were adults.

VCH currently has a single consultant emergency physician on the roster, the ED has suffered from a lack of long-term, qualified medical practitioners able to provide an adequate level of acute care for patients and clinical support to the nursing staff who are typically responsible for the day-to-day running of the department.

Role requirements:

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The required profile for the ED SMO is that of a rural hospital specialist (e.g. Fellow of the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine, with Advanced Skills Training in emergency medicine and/or anaesthetics preferred), emergency physician (e.g. Fellow of the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine) or senior ED registrar (e.g. Advanced Trainee of the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine). Volunteers will be required to provide evidence of currency of clinical practice and compliance with the continuing professional development requirements of their respective specialty college(s).

Advanced Trainees of the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine must meet the following criteria:

- Qualification in MBBS (Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery)
- Registered advance trainee in Emergency Medicine with ACEM. The trainee should have completed Provisional Training and Advance Training Stage 1 with ACEM
- Demonstrated experience as an emergency registrar (ideally at least 2 years) including some pediatric EM experience
- Proven evidence of completed anaesthetics or ICU rotation
- Demonstrated experience in teaching, supporting, mentoring and supervising junior staff or students.

Responsibilities:

The volunteer ED SMO will work alongside the medical and nursing staff in the ED to provide clinical care, peer support and systems improvements in the department. Specifically, in addition to patient care, the volunteer will:

- provide workplace-based training to nursing and junior medical staff on clinical management and operational protocols, and may be required to review standard procedures for management of common acute conditions (e.g. severe asthma, trauma and acute coronary syndromes) and improve first response procedures (e.g. in-hospital arrests); and
- provide a written report at the end of each placement detailing the volunteer's main activities, key findings and recommendations for ongoing improvements in the department.
- report to locally employed ED Director Vincent Atua

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Practical considerations:

- Volunteers will have their travel and accommodation costs covered by the programme (either paid in advance or reimbursed).
- Volunteers will undertake a pre-departure briefing, orientation upon arrival and debriefing around the time of departure.
- Medical indemnity in Vanuatu will be covered by the MoH, however volunteers are strongly encouraged to negotiate special overseas cover with their usual indemnity provider.
- Volunteers will be expected to arrange their own comprehensive personal travel insurance.
- Volunteers will comply with all relevant Rocketship and MoH policies.