GAP MEDICS
Launching medical careers

MEDICAL WORK EXPERIENCE OVERSEAS
FOR 16-25 YEAR OLDS
Gap Medics is a specialist company dedicated to providing structured medical work experience programmes in exciting locations overseas. Students aged 16 and over join us from across the globe on short-term hospital placements, where they can learn what being a doctor is really like. Drawing on our experience of placing thousands of students in healthcare settings since 2005, we provide comprehensive support to each of our students, ensuring that their time abroad is safe, educational and enjoyable.
If you want to know what being a doctor is really like, our medical work experience placements in Thailand, Tanzania, Poland and Croatia are the perfect way to find out. Whether you are looking to gain valuable medical work experience to put on your UCAS application or an in-depth insight into working in a hospital, there is no better way to learn more about medicine than shadowing clinical experts carrying out their day-to-day duties.

Competition to get into medical school is fierce. Make sure your application stands out from the crowd with our short-term medical placements, which will take you on a journey through healthcare in the developing world. You will shadow experienced doctors in surgery and on the wards, giving you a deeper understanding of international healthcare, which is sure to impress admissions officers at interview.

The time you spend observing procedures under the guidance of knowledgeable healthcare professionals will really help you to decide whether a career in medicine is right for you, before embarking on years of study. You will have the opportunity to work in several different departments, depending on your interests. From paediatrics to surgery, there is something for everyone!

Get out of your comfort zone and have the adventure of a lifetime. We combine beneficial and unrivalled experience in an international healthcare setting with the unique opportunity to immerse yourself in another culture, where you can meet friends from around the world. Broaden your medical experiences and take your first steps towards your future career!
The core of any Gap Medics placement is the opportunity to shadow doctors and other healthcare professionals on the front-line of patient care. You will spend each week in a different department, mentored by an expert in that particular field. Popular departments include: internal medicine, obstetrics and gynaecology, surgery and paediatrics.

You’ll spend at least 23 hours per week shadowing doctors and observing procedures each day. On top of this, there will be opportunities to attend departmental meetings to discuss patients’ progress. If you are keen to see more, ask! Hospitals are a hive of activity between dusk and dawn, so try hard to impress your mentors and they might even invite you back for a night shift.

Working in a hospital overseas will really help you to deepen your understanding of global medicine. You will see cases that you would never have the opportunity to observe at home. Malaria, dengue fever, tuberculosis and typhoid are just a few examples of what you can witness. As well as learning about tropical medicine, shadowing in the surgical or obstetrics departments will help to highlight the disparities in clinical healthcare around the globe.

To ensure that all of our students have a valuable and educational experience on placement, we choose our partner hospitals and departments carefully. Our head office and in-country teams research potential partners extensively, and we only approach facilities that meet strict specifications for quality. Our partner hospitals do not go unrewarded for their part in the programme – as well as benefitting from the cultural exchange that our programmes offer, they also receive a percentage of our fee for each student.
Before you travel, we will provide you with extensive information on which departments you will be working in, and who your mentors will be. Each mentor is carefully selected for his or her teaching skills, as well as their enthusiasm for, and commitment to the programme. You will shadow your mentor alongside a few other students. Groups are kept small to ensure that you have plenty of opportunities to ask questions.

Your mentor will guide you through each step of your hospital journey, taking the time to explain each case to you in as much detail as possible. Your questions are an important part of the teaching and learning experience, and our mentors welcome them, so don’t be afraid to ask about a case, condition or treatment.

In order to help you understand what you see in the hospital each day in more depth, you will also have the opportunity to attend Global Health Tutorials run by experienced medical and public health professionals. Designed exclusively for Gap Medics, these sessions focus on issues relevant to medicine in the region where you are working. The majority of the tutorials look specifically at cultural, social and economic factors. Topics include a variety of issues; you could learn about malaria in rural Tanzania or alternative medicine in Thailand.

Our mentors have genuine enthusiasm and motivation to give each of our students the best possible interactive learning experience. This grows from the strong personal relationships our UK and overseas staff form with them, and the reward that sharing their medical skill set with international students brings. In order to ensure that everyone benefits from the programme, we pay our mentors directly for each of their students.
Ensuring that you have a worthwhile and enjoyable experience is our top priority. To make sure that you get this, we provide accommodation in our own private houses, complete with tropical gardens, large social areas and supportive staff who will create a real family atmosphere. Our houses are the perfect place to relax, eat, sleep, study and make friends from around the world!

No matter which destination you choose, you will share a room with four or five other students. Bedrooms are simple yet comfortable, with bunk beds, mosquito nets, en-suite showers and western toilets. In keeping with our ethical policies, we use locally sourced materials to build and furnish our houses. The development of each house channels tens of thousands of pounds into the local economy through small, eco-friendly industries.

Safety and security are of paramount importance to us. We select the towns where we run our programmes due to their friendly, welcoming feel and the areas where our houses are located are known for their safety. Each house has security guards at the gates at all times to ensure that only Gap Medics staff and students have access, giving total peace of mind to both you and your parents.

There is a member of our staff team on duty day and night to help you with anything you might need. They are also pretty handy for organising on-site activities. Fancy a game of volleyball, a traditional barbecue or an in-house football tournament? Our staff use the fantastic facilities at their disposal to make sure every second of your free time as memorable as possible.
Mealtimes are central to the friendly, family feel of our houses. High-quality, nutritious food is cooked up by our in-house caterers and served in our large, social dining areas. To cater to all tastes, a mixture of local and international dishes are served.

Depending on where you are staying, you’ll get to try some delicious regional specialities. In Tanzania, the chef’s plantain stews are popular, whilst green curry and pad Thai always go down well in Thailand! If you have any specific dietary requirements, our caterers will do their best to meet them.

Barbeques are a Gap Medics tradition. A real event at all of our houses, it’s a great opportunity to mix with other students and let your hair down whilst the chef grills up a storm!

If you are interested in cooking, our staff are always happy to have an extra pair of hands in the kitchen. What better way to learn about the region’s cuisine than an impromptu cooking lesson with a local? If you are really keen, you can even visit the market with our caterer to choose ingredients.

Monitoring the impact our programmes have on the environment is important to us; for this reason, all of the ingredients we use are local and seasonal. We also do our best to minimise environmentally damaging waste; anything that’s biodegradable is turned into compost.
Our overseas staff teams are a central part of your Gap Medics experience. From the moment you arrive, our friendly, enthusiastic and supportive team will make you feel right at home. Our staff will pick you up from the airport and accompany you to the Gap Medics house. Once you’ve settled in, they will ensure that you are equipped with all the local knowledge you need before you start your placement.

All of our houses have a programme manager, at least one placement coordinator, a caterer, a housekeeper, a female night manager and several security guards. From helping you find your way around the hospital, to preparing fresh, tasty food for you, they will ensure that you feel a part of one big family from the moment you arrive!

If you are planning to explore the local area whilst you are away, or even travel further afield, our local staff are the best people to ask for advice. Whether you want to visit a local craft market or escape to the beach for the weekend, they will guide you every step of the way.

All of our programme managers are hired and trained extensively by our UK operations team, to ensure that they deliver an experience that matches your expectations. We require that all of our overseas staff speak excellent English; they will also be happy to teach you a few words of their local language if you ask!
EXPERIENCE THE REAL AFRICA FROM THE MOUNTAINS OF TANZANIA

Peruse the traditional markets of Tanzania, where you can have dresses and trousers tailor-made by local craftspeople. If you’re up for an adventure, there are guides in town who can lead you on a mountain trek. If you decide to join us for the Safari Weekend adventure, you will meet a local tribe and spot lions, giraffes and zebras in their natural habitat!

MOROGORO, TANZANIA

Year-round, join us in Morgoro – set in the mountainous southern highlands of Tanzania, it is a perfect example of an East African town. Packed dala-dalas (minibuses) pass friendly market sellers carrying their colourful wares above their heads. Surrounded by vast national parks, this bustling town is well known for its arts and craft markets, where you can barter with locals for vibrant textiles and tribal paintings.

KILIMANJARO, TANZANIA

Moshi is the base for our seasonal programme in Kilimanjaro. The town has a diverse feel, with cafés and shops aplenty. You can visit the nearby crater lake, or take a dip in the hot springs. You could even climb Mt Kilimanjaro after your placement!

THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE WAS BRILLIANT AND I MADE SUCH GOOD FRIENDS. I’VE LEARNED MORE THAN I EVER THOUGHT I WOULD.
DISCOVER VIBRANT TRIBAL CULTURES IN THE MAJESTIC RUHA VALLEY

Surrounded by incredible views of the safari country below, Iringa is the perfect place to immerse yourself in the rural East African way of life. Go horseback riding through the wilderness, spot the ‘big five’ at Ruaha National Park or head to the Masaai market for locally made crafts and jewels.

IRINGA, TANZANIA

The laid back vibe of this small, friendly town makes it a great place to relax and watch the world go by. Head to Hasty Tasty’s for a slice of the best banana bread in town, or grab a coffee from Neema Crafts, a café and craft house run by the local disabled community.

For those with a wild side, you will have the opportunity to spend the weekend on safari: come face to face with leopards, rhinos and more. You’ll stay overnight high up in a hilltop lodge, with dramatic views of the savannah beneath you. To see Iringa from a different angle, visit a local farm where you can take a horseback ride through the hills and get a feel for life in rural Tanzania.

EXTREMELY VALUABLE FOR SO MANY REASONS… THE PRIVILEGE OF SEEING AND LEARNING A LOT, MEDICALLY AND CULTURALLY.
WHERE ANCIENT CULTURE MEETS COSMOPOLITAN CITY LIFE

Catch a ride in a tuk-tuk and tour the cityscape of Phitsanulok, which is often speckled by street food vendors and night markets. The city’s ornate temples draw the attention of visitors from around the world, and the Nan River, which runs through Phitsanulok, plays host to houseboats and dragon boat races. If you’re looking to travel a bit further afield, you can catch a train or short internal flight to the Historic Town of Sukhothai, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site!

PHITSANULOK, THAILAND

Come with us on an enlightening journey to Thailand, where ancient cultures meld with modern civilisation. Our base in Thailand can be found in the historic city of Phitsanulok. Located in the Lower Northern Thailand region, Phitsanulok dates back over many hundreds of years and serves as a bastion of Thai culture and tradition, where adventure awaits each and every Gap Medics student.

Health professionals in Phitsanulok are eager to teach students about universal healthcare in Thailand. Our Thai partner hospitals have access to advanced technology and resources, making them fantastic facilities for observation. With a variety of specialty departments to explore, Phitsanulok is also an excellent destination for students to hone in on their interests.

“This experience was so helpful! It gave me a much better idea about what I want to specialise in.”

Elephant Trekking, Chiang Mai
WARSAW, POLAND
Fun, lively and safe, Warsaw is a great place to hang out. With the main attractions all in walking distance, it’s easy to explore. Why not take a stroll down wide, tree-lined streets and check out some awesome historic monuments, before heading to one of the city’s contemporary malls, complete with the latest trends, global brands and free Wifi!

If you’re looking for adventure, there’s horse riding, hiking, and indoor skiing aplenty! Just make sure you leave some time to soak up the lively evening atmosphere from a plaza café.

What are you waiting for? Start your journey today!

THE HEART OF EUROPE WHERE HISTORY AND ADVENTURE COMBINE
Just two hours from the UK and with flights from £40, the dynamic city of Warsaw, situated in the centre of Poland, offers culture, convenience and a real community vibe. Grab a hot chocolate in the beautiful old town, hang out at one of the city’s many parks, and in the winter, enjoy the Christmas market and ice rink!
Pula is located beneath seven hills, on the southern tip of Croatia’s Istrian peninsula. Turquoise sea, rugged beaches and pavement cafes make this an idyllic location, with spectacular Roman ruins adding to its charm. Friendly locals and a laid-back beach town vibe make Pula a sure-fire hit with visitors!

Although it has a plethora of ancient attractions, Pula has its feet firmly in the present. Enjoy a variety of leisure activities: visit boutiques, cafes and restaurants, and try your hand at snorkelling or scuba diving.

Pula is the perfect place to explore with the new friends you will make on placement. Two large music festivals take place here every year, within the ruins of the ancient amphitheatre. Complete with big-name artists, this could be the perfect start or end to your trip. In the summer, take the ferry over to Venice to soak up some Italian culture.

With flights from the UK to Pula starting at around £100, make this your next adventure!
From the moment you register, you will gain access to our comprehensive pre-departure support service. Travelling overseas can seem daunting at first, but we are here to ensure that getting ready for your trip is stress-free.

You will be assigned a ‘desk officer’ to look out for you throughout the preparation process. Experts on your chosen destination, they are happy to answer your questions. Whether you are unsure about booking flights or want to find out about weekend activities, our desk officers are only ever a phone call or an email away!

In order to make planning your trip as stress-free as possible, we have designed My Gap Medics - a comprehensive system to help you get prepared. Complete with your own personal to-do list, you will always be sure to know what to do next. From booking insurance to uploading your flight details, My Gap Medics will keep you on track with every detail!

To make sure you are informed on exactly what you will be up to whilst your on placement, you will be able to see details of your accommodation, in-country support staff, hospital departments, mentors and even photos of your housemates.

Only 44 days to go!
SAFETY & SUPPORT

We send thousands of students overseas every year. Our service is designed to ensure that you have a safe, educational and unforgettable trip.

We select our host countries for their safety and positive attitude towards visitors. Programmes are located in small towns and friendly cities, with low crime levels. You will stay at our very own private Gap Medics houses, which provide a safe, secure and friendly environment.

Each house has spacious social areas, large gardens and shared bedrooms. Walled gardens add extra privacy and add to the secure feel of the accommodation. Security staff are also on duty at the gates to our houses at all times, to make sure you feel relaxed and at ease during your stay with us.

Our overseas staff teams are on hand round the clock, arranging social activities and cooking up delicious meals. If you need anything, they are always happy to help. Overnight, we employ a female night manager to be on duty at the house, should you need any help or support after hours.

The staff at our head office are in constant contact with our overseas programme managers by phone and email. Programme managers also regularly update your individual profile, so we have the latest information on how you are doing! Our emergency contact telephone number is monitored 24 hours a day if parents need to get in contact with us at any time.

SAFE DESTINATIONS
SECURE ACCOMMODATION
SUPPORTIVE STAFF TEAMS
FEMALE NIGHT MANAGER
CONTACT WITH HEAD OFFICE

RUNNING OUR OWN EXCLUSIVE GAP MEDICS HOUSES MEANS THAT WE ARE ABLE TO ENSURE THAT EVERY STUDENT HAS A SAFE, SECURE AND COMFORTABLE STAY WHILST ON PLACEMENT WITH US.
STUDENT PROFILE

HOW DID YOU FIND THE SUPPORT YOU RECEIVED FROM THE IN-COUNTRY STAFF TEAM?
Gilbert, Clarence, Diana, Jessica and Nina were great - I loved them all so much! They spent lots of time with us, and really helped us to get the most out of the experience. They weren’t just in charge – they were like our family: Diana (the caterer) was an amazing cook and kept us well-fed with pancakes and stews, and Programme Manager Gilbert kept us busy with Swahili lessons, swimming, football and volleyball! The staff even made the bus journey to and from the airport fun!

HOW DID YOU FIND THE EXPERIENCE OF SHADOWING DOCTORS IN A HOSPITAL?
It was amazing - I learned so much about the issues doctors and patients face in Tanzania. I spent time in several different departments, including internal medicine, where I saw cases of malaria, HIV and other diseases that are prevalent in this part of Africa. I also shadowed doctors in the surgery department, where I was struck by how different the facilities in the operating theatre were compared to back home. I observed several operations including two appendectomies, with the surgeon explaining each step of the procedure.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR HOSPITAL MENTORS
Doctor Alex and Doctor Hadija really stood out to me. Dr Alex spent a great deal of time with us, talking about the biology behind specific cases, such as hypoxia – this really extended my knowledge. I spent time with Dr Hadija on the internal medicine wards. After speaking with the patient, she would give us a detailed explanation of their symptoms and progress. Because of mentors like this, I was able not only to see cases, but also to really understand them. I quickly felt able to begin applying what I had learned to what I was observing.

WHAT WAS LIFE AT THE GAP MEDICS HOUSE LIKE?
The house was really nice - I loved the outdoor kitchen as it allowed us to enjoy the tropical climate. The shared bedrooms meant that you made friends with new people from all over the world; as we were all interested in medicine and had similar ambitions, we all bonded really quickly.

ALIX WRIGHTON
PRE-MEDICINE PROGRAMME
MOROGORO, TANZANIA
TRAVELLED JULY 2014

“THE PEOPLE WERE AMAZING: THE STAFF, THE MENTORS & THE OTHER STUDENTS MADE IT AN UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE!”