

About Ghana

Population: 30,832,019

Language: English, Akan, Twi

Average Annual Income: \$2,320 USD (1 USD = 10.84 Cedis)

Life expectancy as of 2021: 66.1 years

Leading causes of death (per 100,000) : Stroke (73.1), Tuberculosis (48.6)



Background

International Health Care Volunteers organizes an annual medical mission to Ghana.

Dr. James Aikins and Dr. Charletta Ayers lead International Health Care Volunteers (IHCV), an organization that runs annual medical missions to Ghana to care for the Ghanaian population across multiple specialties.

- This year's mission comprised two teams—one based in Kumasi and the other in Cape Coast, where Dr. Aikins is originally from.
- The goals were to provide medical and surgical care while also promoting sustainable educational practices through resident training, particularly in surgical disciplines.
- Global health partnerships like these play a vital role in advancing equitable healthcare delivery and medical education.
- In Ghana, where diagnostic and surgical resources remain limited, collaborative initiatives between visiting trainees and local clinicians strengthen capacity while fostering cross-cultural learning.

Goals for Study Abroad

- Gain firsthand perspective on healthcare delivery in a resource-limited setting
- Explore sustainable global health engagement opportunities
- Adapt to new clinical environments to enhance both clinical care and educational exchange through working with local Ghanaian residents
- Promote education and sustainable practices in both surgery and medicine



Highlights



Our visit to the orphanage



Pediatrics Team at CCTH

Trip Summary

OBGYN (Gynecology & Gynecological Oncology)

- Played a role in 8 surgical cases
- Chief complaints including dysmenorrhea, infertility, flank pain, ovarian cyst, endometriosis, and fibroids.
- Assisted with minimally invasive gynecologic curriculum: laparoscopic simulation workshop, journal club

Internal Medicine

- Assisted central line insertion for patient with hepatic encephalopathy
- Rounded with CCTH team: saw adults avg age of 30 with severe ESRD, stroke, hepatitis B, malaria

Pediatrics

- Rounded with CCTH Team: saw severe malnourishment, congenital heart defects, malaria, severe sickle cell crisis with frontal bossing, collodion baby
- Visited state hospital where nurses are running the whole unit



Conclusions/Future Direction

- This experience illuminated the universality of medical knowledge and the profound impact of resource limitations on patient care.
- It reinforced the value of sustainable, bidirectional global health partnerships that combine direct service with education to build long-term capacity.
- Engaging in this mission deepened my appreciation for equitable healthcare access and the collective power of global collaboration to improve outcomes across resource settings.

References/Acknowledgments

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1. United Nations Ghana. UN Ghana Annual Results Report 2024. Accra (GH): United Nations Ghana; 2025 Apr 1. Available from: <https://ghana.un.org/en/291919-un-ghana-annual-results-report-2024>