

**Office of International Medicine Programs
Travel Safety and Security Guidelines
Last Updated: 5/1/2014**

Preparing and Supporting IMP Participants for Travel Abroad

Contents

1. Purpose	2
2. Roles/Responsibilities	3
3. IMP Advising (mainly for students and residents)	3
4. Site Verification.....	4
5. Pre-Departure	4
6. Emergency Evacuation and Medical Insurance Coverage	5
7. High Risk Sites	5
8. Safety and Security Info Session	6
9. Communication While Abroad.....	6
10. Travel While Abroad	7
11. Incident Reporting	7
12. Emergencies While Abroad.....	7

1. Purpose

The Office of International Medicine Programs (IMP) Travel Safety and Security Guidelines is a document that is meant as to guide for the coordination, integration, and accountability of critical functions that directly affect GW SMHS participants traveling abroad which include students, residents, faculty, and staff.

The purpose of these guideline are to outline the approval process for university-supported or university-related international travel and related requirements, thereby promoting such travel while mitigating associated risks. The policy covers important procedures for vetting international sites, advising participants before travel, communicating and supporting them while abroad, as well as following up on incidents after they return.

IMP participants who are traveling abroad, which can include: SMHS, SON, SPHHS, faculty, staff, students and medical residents, should be aware and familiar with these guidelines.

2. Roles/Responsibilities

IMP Executive Director: Will provide high-level advice to any participant traveling abroad and will serve as primary decision-maker and liaison with GW leadership in case of emergency safety or security incident pertaining to those traveling under IMP programs.

IMP Advisors: Will assist participants in the following areas:

- Monitor risks through U.S. Department of State Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC), International SOS (ISOS), and other means to inform the IMP Executive Director and participants
- Work with participants on communication and emergency plans before they depart
- Conduct regular check-ins with participants, especially those in high risk areas
- Assist with administrative and logistical issues with affiliated institutions
- Act as primary contact if issues arise with a participant or a partner institution
- Conduct day to day communication and action if an emergency safety or security incident arises
- Maintain a log of communications, decisions made, and actions taken

Security Consultant: May provide pre-departure briefing/information to participants traveling abroad on IMP programs - to be determined by level of risk to target locations. Provide expertise and consultation in emergency situations.

GW Faculty: Will collaborate with IMP to lead medical missions. IMP will develop a process to approve and train faculty members so they understand IMP safety and security procedures. IMP will also recommend crisis management training so faculty are prepared when emergencies arise while leading a program abroad.

3. IMP Advising (mainly for students and residents)

- IMP staff members educate participants on the various opportunities they have to travel abroad via GW-affiliated sites. We provide them with basic information on these sites including admissions, points of contact, travel logistics, housing, cost estimates, safety/security, etc. We also pass on previous participant experiences via reflection papers and introduce them to those participants if they have additional questions.
- IMP does not encourage participants to choose non-GW affiliated sites. However, IMP will make an exception if they successfully submit a separate application.
- IMP provides pre-departure information, organizes mandatory pre-departure lectures, and requires that all participants complete the GW Passport application process before being approved to leave the country.
- A component of the GW Passport application is to submit an emergency and communication plan which approved by both IMP and the University.
- IMP will also encourage participants to conduct their own research on the regions they are interested in, and prepare for their travel by staying abreast with the latest news and other sources related to international travel.

4. Site Verification

Affiliated GW sites: Participants can choose from over thirty GW-affiliated sites. IMP Advisors assist participants in applying to internships and clinical rotations at these sites. Once the participant is confirmed with an affiliated site, the site will provide IMP with a written statement confirming the participant has been accepted to participate at the site. The site will also help set up in-country travel, accommodation, and continuous support for the participant. All affiliated sites will receive a copy of these guidelines.

Non-Affiliated Sites: If a participant requests a program in a non-affiliated site, he/she will have to submit a separate application for approval. IMP will review the application and may require additional information to be obtained before authorizing travel.

Vetting Application for Non-Affiliated Site

If a participant requests a non-affiliated site for their summer internship, he/she will have to submit a separate application for approval. Completed applications must be approved by the IMP Executive Director in order for the participant to travel abroad.

Please gather the following documents into one packet and submit to IMP. Application includes the following:

- Site Name
- Site Contact Information: Website, address, phone number, email
- Mentor Information: Bio and CV
- Site Report: Background of site; source of accreditation; proof that site is legally operating in its country; capacity; internship description; program fees, payment methods; past participant testimonials, references from other institutions; affiliations with other U.S. medical schools
- Site Support: Internship coordination and on-site support; accommodations; in-country transportation; safety and security protocols (emergency procedures and transportation criteria)
- Medical or safety concerns of the site and specific region
- Letter of Acceptance from Site Mentor: specific information regarding the project, supervision structure, and the participant's responsibilities

5. Pre-Departure

No matter if they are going to an affiliated or non-affiliated site, all IMP participants must obtain approval from their school's dean and the IMP Executive Director to travel abroad by completing any applications requested by the host site and the GW Passport online application. This online application must include the GW International Travel Policy/Consent, Acknowledgement of Risk and Release, completed IMP Communication and Security Plan and copy of their ISOS Registration Confirmation

IMP will also advise participants to fulfill these steps:

- Register for Smart Traveler Enrollment Programs (STEP) via the U.S. State Department
- Review the DOS website for any updates on the country the will be traveling too
- Secure personal health insurance prior to travel
- Register for ISOS Emergency Evacuation Insurance prior to July 1st. After this date, participants will automatically be enrolled in the new GW provider under HTH Emergency Evacuation and Medical Insurance plan
- Attain student or faculty contacts to gather helpful first-hand information about the site

6. Emergency Evacuation and Medical Insurance Coverage

ISOS: Currently, ISOS Emergency Evacuation Insurance is a service provided to GW faculty, students and staff who are traveling abroad on GW related business, i.e. conferences, clinical rotations, medical missions, summer internships, or volunteer projects. In a case of an emergency or health concern abroad, ISOS will assist one of the above mentioned in: a medical crisis, hostile environments, natural disaster. Before leaving the country, participants must register with ISOS in order for the account to activate. They must upload a copy of their ISOS Registration Confirmation to the GW Passport.

HTH Worldwide: After July 1st, 2014, GW's primary international evacuation insurance provider will switch over to another organization called HTH Worldwide. All participants traveling abroad will automatically be enrolled in the new HTH Emergency Evacuation and Medical insurance plan. As for medical insurance, if a participant has enrolled in Summit Medical Insurance that coverage will continue throughout their trip. If a participant elects for medical coverage after July 1st, they will be prompted to register via the HTH link provided in the Study Abroad Passport application system

7. High Risk Sites

IMP follows GW's International Travel Approval Policy's criteria on High Risk Destinations. The official policy document can be found here:

(<http://my.gwu.edu/files/policies/InternationalTravelApprovalFINAL.pdf>).

For participants planning to travel to sites deemed by the university as high risk destinations, their IMP Communication and Security Plan will be submitted to the GW International Programs Office for final review. Participants will not be permitted to travel until their plan has been approved.

IMP will also provide additional training and preparation prior to their departure. IMP staff is responsible for maintaining accountability of all participants while traveling abroad in our

programs. IMP advisors will discuss communication requirements and travel precautions with all participants, and it is important for participants of high risk sites to closely follow these guidelines so that IMP can report on their whereabouts with reasonable accuracy and certainty.

8. Travel Safety and Security Info Session

Security consultant will provide a pre-departure briefing/information to participants traveling abroad on GW programs prior to departure. Potential topics may include:

- Responsibility and Personal Security
- Minimizing Risk
- Risk Categories
- Security/Safety Good Practices
- Individual Preparation
- Emergency Evacuations
- Managing Stress in a Hostile Environment
- Personal conduct
- And other safety and security information

9. Communication While Abroad

All participants must check in with an IMP staff member upon arrival to their destination. For those participants who are travelling to high risk destinations, they must check in with IMP once a week during their time abroad based on the risk level of the site. Communication from a participant can come from one of the following sources:

- Phone Call to IMP Office
- Email
- Text message

If a participant is unable to reach IMP, we ask that he/she communicates via the designated person on the emergency contact form.

IMP participants must contact GW's international evacuation insurance provider (which is currently ISOS or (HTH Worldwide after July 1, 2014) immediately if there are any issues/concerns. After reporting the incident to the provider, they should also check in with IMP. All participants will be provided an IMP Advisor's cell phone number. It is imperative that the IMP office be contacted for any itinerary modification, housing change, transportation change so that we are aware of your general information.

10. Travel While Abroad

Traveling-off site/weekend travel: Any participant who wishes to travel beyond the designated site area must obtain advance authorization and communicate this information to their site mentor and IMP staff two weeks in advance of original departure dates in order to have adequate amount of time to approve the travel request. We ask for this notification to also provide adequate travel advice and to ensure that you are still covered by your emergency evacuation insurance.

Transportation at night: IMP does not allow participants to travel in the evening hours, outside of the site location city at night beyond 25 miles, particularly at night and via night buses. Safety is the main concern and it best that travel is done during the daylight hours and you should include the details of their reliable transportation in the travel request. Check for reliable transportation and only travel in vehicles with safety belts.

11. Incident Reporting

IMP participants are required to inform IMP of any safety or security incident as soon as is practical, but in no case later than 24 hours after the event. These types of incidents include the following: bodily injury, illness, physical assault, theft/robbery, motor vehicle accident, missing/separated person/s, sexual harassment/assault, natural disaster, disease outbreak, political/civil unrest and/or acts of terrorism. IMP staff will document all communication and key events for a full internal incident report. Participants will have to complete an incident report when the incident has completed.

12. Emergencies While Abroad

In the event of an emergency, then the participant should immediately contact the emergency evacuation insurance provider and then IMP.

Present until July 1, 2014 - International SOS: Should a participant need the services of the ISOS. They can contact them by the sources listed:

- By Phone: 1-215-942-8226 (Philadelphia, PA); 44-20-8762-8008 (London, England) or 65-6338-7800 (Singapore).
- Website: www.internationalsos.com
- Participants should keep a copy of their ISOS card on their person at all times in case they do not have the original card provided by IMP
- In case of an emergency, the ISOS can offer the following services to participants who are registered:
 - Arrange medical transportation or care
 - Coordinate medical fees, when approved

- Monitor a participant's condition and advise
- Evacuate a participant to a center of medical excellence if local care is inadequate
- Provide help to participants if their safety is at risk
- Contact family members

After July 1, 2014 - HTH Worldwide (HTH): Should a participant need the services of HTH. They can contact them by the sources listed:

- By Phone: 1.888.350.2002 (Radnor, PA); 1.888.243.2358 or 1.610.254.8769 (Outside the US/Study Abroad Plans)
- Website: <https://www.hthstudents.com/>
- Participants should keep a copy of their HTH card on their person at all times in case they do not have the original card provided by IMP
- In case of an emergency, HTH can offer the following services to participants who are registered will have access to:
 - HTH Physician Community
 - City Health Profiles
 - Security Profiles
 - HTH Drug Translation Guide
 - HT Medical Phrase and Terms/Translation Guide
 - Contact family members

IMP Staff: Participants should also contact IMP and provide as much information as possible about the incident. We will support ISOS efforts, and also provide assistance if the incident is not in the realm of the emergency evacuation insurance provider's services.

De-Briefing: Once the incident is reported, IMP will assist the participant in completing the incident report form. There may be follow up questions and further requests for more information.