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Information document for International Health Elective Division of Emergency Medicine, Stellenbosch University Cape Town, South Africa

The Division of Emergency Medicine, Stellenbosch University welcome all international undergraduate medical students and postgraduate doctors who wish to do a medical elective in Cape Town.

The competition for placements is intense. The registration process may take up to **12 months** to complete, please enquire well in advance about available elective places.

If you are an **undergraduate student**, then please contact Mrs Nicky Blows (nblows@sun.ac.za) at the International Office after reading this document.

If you are a **postgraduate student**, please apply on the Division of Emergency Medicine's [website](#) after reading this document.

We look forward to welcome you in Cape Town.



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WHO'S ELIGIBLE FOR AN INTERNATIONAL HEALTH ELECTIVE?

Undergraduates

- Any undergraduate student wishing to gain more experience in **trauma** and/or **emergency medicine**.
- Students must be in their **final training year** at the time the elective starts.
- The duration of the elective is a **minimum of four (4) weeks** up to a **maximum of eight (8) weeks**.

Postgraduates

- Any postgraduate student in the field of **Emergency Medicine** or a combination of **Emergency Medicine and Family Medicine**.
- Students must be at least in their **third** year of postgraduate training
- The elective period must be a **minimum of four (4) weeks** and a **maximum of twelve (12) weeks**.

As of March 2021, Stellenbosch University does not allow doctors to register for an elective if they are not busy with specialist or sub-specialist training at the time of the elective.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

All prospective electives must **first reserve their elective period** (dates) and the hospital of choice (see below).

If you are an **undergraduate student**, then contact Mrs Nicky Blows (nblows@sun.ac.za) at the Tygerberg International Office, based at the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences of Stellenbosch University. She will liaise with the Elective Liaison Officer of the division regarding availability and will provide more information on the relevant documentation regarding: i) Registration with Stellenbosch University, ii) Applicable fees, and iii) Visas. More information on the application process for the university can be found on the [website](#) of the Tygerberg International Office.

If you are a **postgraduate student**, then apply via the online application form (available on the Division of Emergency Medicine's [website](#)). The Elective Liaison Officer will confirm your reservation or suggest alternatives if your preferred choice has already been reserved by another elective candidate. Once your elective placement is confirmed by the division, the Tygerberg International Office, based at the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences of Stellenbosch University, will contact you to activate the formal application process as all elective students must be registered with Stellenbosch University as an affiliated student. This is very important as Stellenbosch University needs to confirm your placement as well. All relevant documentation regarding: i) Registration with Stellenbosch University, ii) Applicable fees, and iii) Visas will be sent to you. The Tygerberg International Office will also process your temporary registration (national medical licensure) application with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA), which you require to legally examine and manage patients during your stay. More information on the application process for the university can be found on their [website](#). The administrator officer for postgraduate International Elective Students is Mrs Zaibo Krieger (kriegerz@sun.ac.za).

Electives are encouraged to bring their own scrubs for use during their clinical shifts (white coats are rarely worn). Alternatively, scrubs can also be purchased from the Tygerberg Student Council [shop](#) on the grounds of Tygerberg Medical School.

Finally, on arrival, all electives **must first complete** their registration process in person; and collect their student cards from the Tygerberg International Office, Faculty of Health Sciences, Tygerberg Medical School, Stellenbosch University. This must be on a **Monday**. Thereafter you can go to your base hospital where you will be orientated towards your elective placement.

UNDERGRADUATE ELECTIVE STUDENTS

Undergraduate elective students must be in their **final year** at the time of the elective. The elective period can range between a **minimum of four (4) weeks** and a **maximum of eight (8) weeks**. Please note that undergraduate elective applications require a **minimum of 11 months** to process so students are advised to apply well in advance.

Undergraduate elective students may choose between Tygerberg Hospital or Khayelitsha Hospital for their placements. Tygerberg Hospital is a tertiary-level referral hospital and the elective can only be done in the trauma unit. This will be a trauma-only elective in the front room of the trauma unit and students will not be allowed to go to theatre with patients. Khayelitsha Hospital has an integrated Emergency Centre that see trauma, medical, paediatric, surgical, obstetric and gynaecology emergencies (see below for more information).

We encourage you to be directly involved with patient care whilst being supervised by the senior doctors on your shift. We expect that you extract a comprehensive clinical history and conduct detailed patient examinations on all the patients you are asked to assess. You will be directly supervised to perform multiple emergency procedures including: suturing of lacerations, basic orthopaedic plastering techniques, venepuncture, intercostal drain insertion and removal, lumbar punctures and advanced trauma and cardiac life support techniques, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

POST-GRADUATE ELECTIVE DOCTORS

Postgraduate elective doctors must be at least in their **third year** of postgraduate training at the time of the elective. We only accept doctors within the field of **Emergency Medicine** or where postgraduate training is a combination of **Emergency Medicine and Family Medicine**. The elective period must be a **minimum of four (4) weeks** and a **maximum of twelve (12) weeks**. Please note that postgraduate applications require a **minimum of 11 months** to process.

Postgraduate elective doctors may choose between Tygerberg Hospital, Khayelitsha Hospital or Mitchell's Plain Hospital for their placements. Tygerberg Hospital is a tertiary-level referral hospital and the elective can only be done in the trauma unit. This will be a trauma-only elective managing patients in the front room; doctors wishing to get theatre experience should arrange a separate elective through the Divisions of Surgery or Anaesthesiology. Khayelitsha Hospital and Mitchell's Plain Hospital have integrated emergency centres that see trauma, medical, paediatric, surgical, obstetric and gynaecology emergencies. Elective doctors will be expected to perform at a postgraduate doctor level clinically, including initiation of treatment and appropriate management of their patients (see below for more information).

Doctors are welcome to attend and participate in their base hospital's academic programmes as well as the formal weekly postgraduate teaching sessions for local postgraduate emergency medicine trainees. Please enquire through your base hospital's elective coordinator.

DRESS CODE

White coats are rarely worn in South Africa. Students are advised to wear scrubs during their clinical shifts. Scrubs can also be purchased from the Tygerberg Student Council [shop](#) on the grounds of Tygerberg Medical School.

ACCOMMODATION

Basic accommodation is provided for international undergraduate elective students, subject to availability, at the [International Students' Lodge](#). The lodge is situated on the grounds of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, which is next to Tygerberg Hospital Academic Hospital complex. Here's a video from an elective student showcasing the accommodation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6AOm0QRMSY>. Further information regarding accommodation, costs and availability may be obtained from the Tygerberg International Office.

Stellenbosch University does not provide accommodation for international postgraduate elective students and students are responsible to arrange for their own accommodation.

ELECTIVE HOSPITALS

1. Tygerberg Hospital

(<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Tygerberg+Hospital/@-33.9114686,18.6116853,17z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x1dcc5a813fffff:0x4cde6646516a6939!8m2!3d-33.9106305!4d18.6129475>)



Tygerberg Hospital is located 25 kilometres outside the city centre (CBD, Downtown) and 11 kilometres from the Cape Town International Airport. The trauma unit is one of two tertiary-level trauma centres in Cape Town. The unit sees approximately 11 000 trauma patients of high acuity per year. A full tertiary specialist support service is available which includes neurosurgery, plastic surgery, maxillo-facial surgery, cardiothoracic surgery, urology, ENT, ophthalmology and orthopaedics.

Electives will be allocated to a team and follow the revolving on-call roster. This will include dayshifts (08h00 – 18h00) and night shifts (18h00 – 08h00), as well as some weekends. It will be expected of you to work a **maximum of 40 hours per week** (including office and after hours). Groups of students wishing to work together might not be possible.

The [International Students' Lodge](#) is walking distance and an ideal place for undergraduate elective students.

Physical Address: Francie van Zijl Drive Parow, Cape Town, South Africa.

Official website: http://www.westerncape.gov.za/your_gov/153

Emergency Medicine Physician in Trauma Unit: Dr Hennie Lategan

2. Khayelitsha Hospital

(<http://maps.google.com/maps?ll=-34.051887,18.667849&z=15&t=m&hl=en-US>)



If you wish to experience true Emergency Medicine or think that you may have the potential to be an Emergency Physician, this is the place for you!!

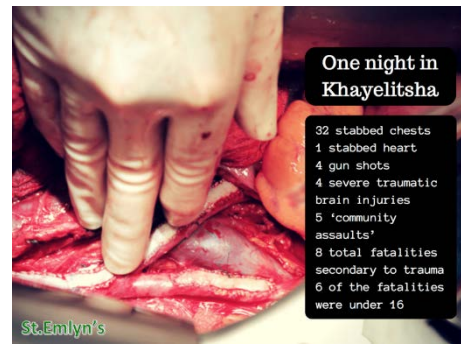
The 300-bed district-level hospital provides support to the surrounding primary healthcare facilities. Khayelitsha hospital has a large emergency centre due to the high incidence of trauma within the drainage area. Inpatient services include surgical, medical, paediatric, orthopaedics and obstetrics. The emergency centre manage about 4000 patients a month, of which 50% are high acuity. About 30% are trauma-related. The unit is managed by two permanent emergency physicians (consultant/attending) and they are assisted by two visiting emergency physicians.

Elective students and doctors will be linked to a team and will follow the monthly revolving roster. There are on average four doctors per shift. The shifts include dayshift (08h00 – 17h00), an overlap shift (13h00 - 21h00) and nightshift (20h00 - 09h00). Weekend shifts are 13-hour shifts (08h00 – 21h00 or 20h00 – 09h00). It will be expected of you to work a **maximum of 40 hours per week** (including office and after hours). Groups of students wishing to work together might not be possible.

The Khayelitsha experience is phenomenal and one can expect to see anything, from community-based cases in the minor's area to tertiary-based care and interventions in the resuscitation area. All tertiary level care patients are referred to Tygerberg Hospital after proper stabilisation. The patients are diverse, severely ill or injured and have multiple social challenges. There is also a very high prevalence of HIV and tuberculosis (TB).

Not yet convinced...

- Coping in chaos: Saturday night at Khayelitsha Hospital - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mOGLIUW8Dbs0> (they now do have a CT scanner and 2 surgeons)
- Battison AW, Wade KS. The resident experience in Cape Town, South Africa. BCMJ 2016; 58(5):250-252. <https://bcmj.org/premise/resident-experience-cape-town-south-africa>
- Lessons from South Africa. <https://www.pondermed.com/uncategorised/lessons-from-south-africa/#comments>



Please note that students must have their **own transport** to drive to Khayelitsha Hospital. Local taxi's are not recommended and it is rare to find ride-hailing services (e.g. Uber) willing to go to Khayelitsha.

Physical address: Corner of Steve Biko and Walter Sisulu Road, Khayelitsha, Cape Town

Emergency Medicine Physicians: Dr Elaine Erasmus, Dr Crispin Kibamba, Dr Luke Bush

3. Mitchell's Plain Hospital

(<https://www.google.co.za/maps/place/Mitchells+Plain+Hospital/@-34.0217108,18.6114945,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x1dcc4fecf7ddd545:0x1af19cd8be88633b!8m2!3d-34.0217153!4d18.6136832?hl=en-GB>)

In-patient services available at the hospital include surgery, anaesthesia, orthopaedics, medical, paediatrics, obstetrics, gynaecology and psychiatry.

A large Emergency Centre sub-divided in different treatment areas, including minors, resuscitation, majors and paediatrics. There are 4 local 'board certified' Emergency Physicians (consultant/attending), 14 medical officers and 3-4 Emergency Medicine registrars/residents. We see about 4500 patients a month, most of very high acuity (>50%). We see a large variety of cases, living in a mixed community



where the pathology varies from STEMIs (which you will learn to manage without a cath lab!) to pericardial effusions, mental health & substance use issues, infectious diseases (HIV & TB), a variety of paediatric complaints, gynaecology and a huge burden of penetrating trauma. The patients are diverse, severely ill, injured with multiple social challenges. The combination provides a wonderful opportunity for you to learn and grow. Non-emergent patients are seen at the 24-hour community health centre just down the road.

There is great opportunity to grow your ultrasound skills with all of the specialists in the unit being qualified instructors. Due to long waiting lists at the tertiary ICUs there is a large amount of critical care patients "boarding" in the emergency centre resuscitation room being cared for by the Emergency Medicine team whilst awaiting an ICU bed in a different facility. This leads our junior doctors to become increasingly proficient in a variety of critical care skills including ventilation, arterial lines & CVPs.

The daily resuscitation round at 8am handover provides excellent bedside teaching. Every Thursday at 07:30 there is "small group style teaching". Multiple research projects are currently in progress which elective students can join in via communication with our research lead Dr Clint Hendrikse (only once elective period is confirmed).

Roster/shifts are rotational, you will be added as a permanent team member onto a South African doctor's shift roster. You will therefore get the full experience and get to know your team mates well! The team comprises of 4 people, an EM registrar, 1 medical officer and 2 community service medical officers (the one year after internship). The foreign elective student works as a 5th team member. We allow 2 students per shift. After hours the consultant is at home however available 24 hours via cell &

comes in to the hospital when required. The shifts are Day: 08:00-17:00, Evening: 14:00 to 22:00 and Night 22:00 to 10:00. Weekend Shifts are 08:00-21:00 & 20:00-10:00. Dress Code: wear your own scrubs from home.

We have a high prevalence of TB & HIV. Post-Exposure Prophylaxis is available at the hospital 24 hours a day in case of bodily fluid exposure. N95 Masks for TB Prevention are available and we encourage they are worn 24/7.

More about our unit:

- <http://stemlynsblog.org/mitchells-plain-badem-and-my-utmost-respect-st-emlyns/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ijh5mZC-Rl>
- <http://www.stemlynsblog.org/south-africa-as-a-medical-student-elective-claire-bromley/>

Physical address: 8 AZ Berman Ave, Mitchells Plain, Cape Town, South Africa.

Contact number: +27842092856, www.facebook.com/plain.em

Emergency Medicine Physicians: Dr Kat Evans, Dr Clint Hendrikse, Dr Candice Van Koningsbruggen, Dr Martin De Man

FACTS ABOUT CAPE TOWN

Population

- The metro area of Cape Town has a population of ~4.6 million.

Climate

- The Cape boasts typical Mediterranean climate - warm summers and mild wet winters.
- Summer temperatures range between 15 °C (59 °F) and 27 °C (80.6 °F).
- Winter temperature ranges between 7 °C (44.6 °F) and 18 °C (64.4 °F).

Water

- The regions superior water supply infrastructure guarantees some of the best drinking tap water in the world. Bottled spring water is widely available if required.

Time

- South African Time is set at GMT +2. There are no time zone differences within South Africa and there is no daylight saving in summer.

Language

- English is widely spoken and understood, and is the official language of Government and Business. Most South Africans are bilingual; Afrikaans and Xhosa are two other languages spoken by residents of the Western Cape.

Visas

- Visas are issued by the South African missions abroad and must be affixed in the applicant's passport before departing for South Africa.
- Visas are not issued on arrival at South African ports on entry.
- Many nationalities do not require a visa to enter South Africa, it is best to confirm with your travel agent if it is enquired.

Currency

- Foreign currency can be exchanged at commercial banks and at various Bureau de Change. The Rand (ZAR) is the official currency of South Africa.

Banks

- Monday to Friday banks are open between 9am and 3pm. On Saturdays opening hours are between 9am and 11am.

Driving

- An international driver's license is required when driving in South Africa. Driving is on the left side and speed limits are set in kilometres/hour. Most vehicles use manual transmissions.

Transport

- Cape Town lacks a reliable public transport system. Electives requiring to travel to the various hospitals may need to resort to car rental. Ride-hailing services (e.g. Uber) to Khayelitsha Hospital is also limited.

Electricity

- 240 volts AC. For small appliances, a plug adaptor may be required for three pin sockets.