**IMPORTANCE OF CULTURAL SENSITIVITY AND GLOBAL HEALTH EXPERIENCES ABROAD IN UNDERGRADUATE OSTEOPATHIC MEDICAL EDUCATION**

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**BACKGROUND**: Medical students, residents, and physicians are encouraged and often required to continue their medical education to possess up-to-date skills and knowledge to best serve their patients. Changes in medicine are not limited to guidelines and therapeutics but also patient populations, with an ever-increasing need for improved cultural competency. Clinical experiences abroad are valuable in prompting reflection and discussion regarding cultural values, perspectives on traditional medicine, patient impressions of osteopathic manipulative therapy, and community education.

**METHODS**: This is a descriptive summary involving experiences from first year osteopathic medical students who traveled with their faculties to 3 international medical missions in Nepal, China and Philippines where students were involved in medical campaigns with primary care baseline assessments, first hand cultural experiences, and osteopathic manipulative therapy (OMT) were performed.

**RESULTS**: Medical campaign success was achieved with understanding social limits in a culture in forms of examination and performing OMT. Students were successful in communicating with the patients with the assistance of a translator as well as an orientation language lesson. Further promote understanding of culture of the country through experience and interaction with the local residence.

**CONCLUSION**: Students should keep an open mind about other therapies and modalities, and how patients of other cultures will perceive OMT. They should also be mindful about the type of traditional medicine these patients may be receiving; particularly, any contradictive or supportive effects these traditional modalities may have with OMT. Key factors towards establishing a successful global health experience includes student orientation with regards to expectations, cultural appropriateness and overcoming language barriers while working with local staff to establish trust and participation. In addition, efforts to develop a key organization to help maintain regular trips, recruit students, as well as foster connections with the host medical facility are critical to establishing sustainability of such a program.

**CONTENT CATEGORY**: Patient Care

**KEYWORDS**: *Cultural sensitivity, Global health, Medical mission, Osteopathic Medicine*