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# Emergency Medicine Curriculum Development for Africa

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Imagine rushing your infant with pneumonia or a friend injured in an automobile crash to a hospital only to find the most junior medical graduates staffing the casualty ward with little expertise and no supervision. This was the reality in most of the world until relatively recently—in fact, Emergency Medicine was only officially recognized as a specialty in the United States in 1979. The African Federation of Emergency Medicine is working to change that reality on the continent. The field of practice based on the knowledge and skills required for the prevention, diagnosis and management of acute and aspects of illness and injury in patients of all ages has been recognized for only a few years in most of Africa. During the 2012-2013 year, Dr. DeVos worked with the African Federation for Emergency Medicine to develop model curriculum for the training of specialist Emergency Medicine physicians.

The residency training program for doctors at the Emergency Medical Department at Muhimbili National Hospital in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania is amongst the first on the continent. Dr. DeVos developed a month-long curriculum for Emergency Psychiatry to be utilized by trainees at Muhimbili and later the lessons will be adapted for use more broadly in

the AFEM core curriculum bank. Utilizing lectures, journal clubs, quizzes, vignettes and case simulations, faculty from across the continent and the world are working to improve the available resources for EM education. Similarly, the African Federation for Emergency Medicine will release a handbook for practitioners in emergency centers across the continent. International and African faculty partnered to develop the first book of its kind especially for the African provider. Dr. DeVos collaborated with emergency physicians from South Africa to edit the psychiatry section of the book and authored several chapters.

Further, Dr. DeVos continued to work in the development of skilled ambulance transport for emergencies when she served as an organizer for the Pre-Hospital Leadership Workshop satellite to the First African Congress on Emergency Medicine



in Accra, Ghana in 2012. Emergency physicians and EMS experts from the United States and South Africa partnered to offer senior medics from the Ghana National Ambulance Service a day of training and career development. Dr. DeVos also presented two lectures to African and International nurse, medic and physician delegates to the main congress on low-cost, high-yield approaches to thoracic and head trauma.

As demographics and burdens of disease change, the work of providers of emergency care in Africa will continue to evolve. The first generation of African emergency physicians and acute care providers will address non-communicable diseases and injury in addition to infectious diseases. Dr. DeVos plans to continue to engage UF residents and faculty along with African partners to support these efforts as the first locally trained Emergency specialists set out to in their own practices and training programs.

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