



## **EWH Guide to Risk Management**

The safety of all participants throughout the duration of their time on an Engineering World Health Institute is the primary priority of all program staff. In this document, we intend to address the following topics as they relate to EWH strategies for risk management:

1. On-the-Ground Staff
2. 24-hour Emergency Phone Number
3. Insurance
  - a. Emergency medical and evacuation (Cultural Insurance Services International)
  - b. Liability (Chubb International Advantage, Commercial Insurance Policy)
  - c. General health insurance
4. Health and Access to Healthcare
5. Travel and Transportation
6. In-Country Communication and Information Sharing
7. Housing
8. Participant Acclimation
9. Hospital Placements
10. Extreme Weather, Geological Events, and Civil Unrest
11. Program Terms & Conditions



## **On-the-Ground Staff**

EWH maintains at least two on-the-ground staff at each Institute. These staff may be:

- Trusted and vetted in-country partners;
- Contracted staff (On-the-Ground-Coordinators/OTGCs or Teaching Assistants/TAs); or
- Full-time EWH staff

In addition to providing technical instruction, these on-the-ground staff provide personal assistance as needed for emotional, interpersonal, or medical issues. They are in consistent communication with the EWH home office and relay any major issues immediately via email or phone. They also contact appropriate university personnel in case of emergency, as applicable. Contracted staff receive thorough training and preparation before beginning their assignment.

## **24-hour Emergency Phone Number**

Each on-the-ground staff member and participant has access to the EWH emergency hotline, which is open 24/7 and is answered in the US by either the CEO or full-time staff. The EWH home office has all participant information on file, ready to access at a moment's notice. In the event of a serious emergency involving a participant who is affiliated with one of EWH's university partners, EWH informs and consults with the university partner immediately.

If, due to any unforeseen circumstance, the participant is not able to reach the 24-hour emergency hotline, CISI (the emergency medical and evacuation insurance EWH and partnering universities carry) provides a phone number for participants to call in case of emergency. All participants receive a physical "contact card" for them to carry on their person throughout the program, which lists all key phone numbers.

All participants are required to provide EWH with an emergency contact in their home country.

## **Insurance**

EWH carries several forms of insurance. Below is a summary; copies of full policies are available upon request.

- A. Emergency medical and evacuation insurance. This is provided for every participant and staff member. When we partner with a university that provides similar insurance to their students, we do not provide this insurance. Our policy is purchased from Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI). This insurance covers medical evacuation to an individual's home country, as well as evacuation in the event of



severe danger posed by geological or weather events (i.e. hurricane, earthquake, etc.).

- B. Liability insurance. EWH holds a variety of liability insurance policies, including:
- a. Commercial General Liability
  - b. Automobile Liability
  - c. Foreign Liability
  - d. Umbrella Liability
  - e. Product Liability

Full copies of all policies are available upon request.

- C. General health insurance. EWH requires participants to show evidence that they carry general health insurance. Participants are responsible for payment for any services received in-country. Typically, these charges are very low.

## **Health and Access to Healthcare**

### *Prior to departure*

Each participant is required to submit a physician or PA-signed medical form affirming their medical clearance to participate in the program. Participants must also affirm that they carry their own health insurance and that they understand that any medical costs incurred in-country are their own financial responsibility. EWH advises each participant to consult their physician and CDC recommendations concerning vaccinations and malaria medication. Participants are also advised to bring with them an adequate supply of any prescription drugs and to alert staff to any special needs.

There are three vaccinations/tests required for participation in any Institute program:

1. Full series of COVID-19 vaccinations
2. Tetanus shot/booster (within 10 years)
3. Negative TB skin test (within 1 year)

### *In-country*

EWH provides each participant with a basic medical kit containing over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol, bandaids, insect repellent, sunscreen, hand sanitizer, etc. Gloves and masks for work in the hospitals are also provided. During orientation, participants are advised about procedures to protect against water- or food-borne parasites. They are instructed, if they consume alcohol, to do so responsibly and to obey local laws.



As this is a hospital-based program, participants have ready access to basic and urgent healthcare facilities. On-the-ground staff and local partners are knowledgeable about the most advanced, typically private, hospitals in the area, and will accompany the participant to these facilities as needed. In addition, the emergency medical and evacuation insurance EWH and partnering universities carry provides for medical consultation with physicians outside the country.

## **Travel and Transportation**

### *International transportation*

Participants, or their university, are responsible for their own international transportation. Program staff coordinate a window for arrival time, and then meet participants at the airport and travel with them to their accommodation. Should a participant's flight get delayed, they should contact their On-the-Ground-Coordinators (OTGCs), who will then meet them at their new arrival time. OTGCs keep full-time staff apprised of all arrivals.

### *Local transportation*

During orientation, participants receive safety information regarding local transportation, including:

- Instructions/directions for daily travel routes
- Customs and protocols when using public transportation
- Local customs for pedestrian and vehicle traffic

EWH tries to make arrangements in all countries so that accommodation and class/hospital locations are within walking distance. However, this is not always realistic. In most countries in which we work, participants either walk or take public transportation. In some locations, some participants take Ubers or other local taxi or car services. Participants are advised never to travel alone or after dark.

Participants are forbidden from using motorcycles, as either drivers or passengers. This prohibition is included in the Terms & Conditions document and reinforced during orientation on the ground. Violating this is grounds for immediate dismissal at the participant's expense.

### *Intra-city travel*

EWH, or our local partners, contract with reputable local transportation services when participants travel from one city to another. This includes airport transfers.



## **In-Country Communication and Information Sharing**

EWH provides each participant with either a local SIM card to use in their smartphone, OR a basic call/text cell phone equipped with a local SIM card. Each phone will have sufficient pre-paid time for emergency calls to the OTGCs. Participants are required to keep this phone charged and loaded with sufficient minutes for these circumstances. OTGCs record all local phone numbers to share with the EWH office. Information about how to contact the participant's nearest home-country embassy is included in the pre-departure materials and/or orientation.

Full-time EWH staff subscribe to the International SOS information service that issues advisories about medical, natural disaster, crime, or civil unrest situations that may arise anywhere in the world. Any such warnings, as they pertain to our program countries, are immediately conveyed to our OTGCs and, through them, to participants. Our local partners are also well-informed about the goings-on in their home countries and relay pertinent information to the EWH office as needed.

## **Housing**

Due to circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, EWH has paused the use of homestays as accommodation for Institute participants. Currently, all participants are housed in either rental homes or budget hotels. All accommodations are vetted by our local partners. All homes/bedrooms will have the capacity to be locked from both the inside and outside. OTGCs are generally housed nearby to participants, but often not in the same accommodation. Homes must have phone service and/or WiFi available.

Should we resume the use of homestays as an accommodation option, all potential homestays will be visited prior to participants' arrival. Program staff will evaluate the residence for basic comfort (hygiene, safe location, ability to prepare meals with dietary restrictions, etc.).

## **Participant Acclimation**

Participants receive information in written form prior to their travel in two EWH documents designed for their particular program country. The "Welcome Packet" and "Go Packet" contain information about everything from what clothing to pack, to out-of-pocket expenses, to instructions for exiting the airport. These packets are designed to set adequate participant expectations to the extent possible, while bearing in mind that it's important to be flexible when traveling in low-resource areas. Once in-country, EWH staff and/or local partners conduct extensive orientation sessions concerning general safety, work expectations, local customs, transportation, health considerations, and food and water safety. Participants are also made aware of social concerns for women, LGBTQ and gender non-conforming



participants, and minorities in the region, including potential street harassment based on sex, perceived LGBTQ status, race, or religion.

OTGCs and local partners are well-equipped to help participants adapt to life in a new country. Should any major issues arise regarding participant adjustment to the program, full-time Institute staff will become involved.

### **Hospital Placements**

Our local partners coordinate initial partnerships with hospitals and ensure that the hospital is willing and ready to welcome EWH Institute participants. Once participants arrive, local partners and OTGCs will address any issues in-person during their visits to the hospitals throughout participants' placements, or as necessary.

Safety in the hospital, particularly while doing repair work, is a significant part of the curriculum delivered during the training (or in the case of Campus to Country programs: during the semester-long course). Before transitioning from training to hospital placements, program staff will provide participants with important contacts and other information pertinent to their specific hospital placement.

During orientation and throughout the program, program staff discuss workplace culture in local hospitals, such as the appropriate way to introduce yourself, potential wait times when meeting with hospital administrative staff, how to navigate feeling “out of place,” etc. Participants generally do not interact with patients. Their interactions occur with technicians, nurses, and doctors.

### **Extreme Weather, Geological Events, and Civil Unrest**

As described above, EWH subscribes to an International SOS service that alerts us to possible dangers posed by weather, geological events, and civil unrest. EWH also consults the US State Department Travel Advisories on a regular basis, especially immediately before arrival in program countries. OTGCs advise participants of any places/events to be avoided, any instance of needing to shelter in place, etc.

In an extreme case, our emergency medical and evacuation insurance allows for evacuation of the group in the event of a crisis.



**Program Terms & Conditions**

Each participant must sign a Terms and Conditions document, which is comprehensive in informing participants about their expected behaviors and indemnifying EWH.

Please feel free to contact [summerinstitute@ewh.org](mailto:summerinstitute@ewh.org)  
with any remaining questions or concerns.