

NEWS RELEASE

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Purdue College of Pharmacy creates new global health residency

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. — Through Purdue University's new global health residency program, pharmacy graduates are improving health care in Kenya, a country faced with scarce medical resources and a surplus of need from widespread disease including AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and diabetes.

In addition to the firsthand experience in delivering care to patients, postgraduate trainee Isabel Hagedorn is helping to prepare the next generation of Kenyan pharmacists and physicians as part of a cross-cultural health-care team. Hagedorn, of Ferdinand, Ind., earned her doctor of pharmacy degree in 2009 from Purdue.

Craig Svensson, dean of the College of Pharmacy, said he believes the one-year residency program in Eldoret, Kenya, is the first in which pharmacy residents are sited full time outside of the United States.

"Through this program Kenyan and American health-care professionals work together in developing, providing and evaluating health-care delivery in the resource-challenged environment of rural Kenya," Svensson said. "This is a remarkable opportunity to be a part of developing solutions for one of the great global challenges of our day - delivering efficient, affordable and sustainable care across the global community."

Although the residency is new, Purdue's College of Pharmacy has had a presence in Kenya since 2003 in collaboration with the Academic Model Providing Access to Healthcare, or AMPATH, and the Indiana University-Kenya Partnership. In 2004, the college began an eight-week advanced pharmacy practice experience for students, now overseen by two on-site Purdue faculty members.

Ellen Schellhase, the Purdue Kenya Program coordinator, said the effort has grown over the past seven years from a volunteer program for faculty and an opportunity for student experience to a clinical effort embedded in the environment. Purdue assists in offering services in more than 50 rural sites and recently began a diabetes management program, an anticoagulation program and a pharmaco-vigilance program to monitor adverse effects from medications. In addition, a program has been established to provide a variety of services and education programs for street children. Participation from Kenyan health-care counterparts in the program has grown from one pharmacist to two adjunct clinical faculty and five clinical pharmacists.

"Delivering quality health care in Kenya has a unique set of challenges," Schellhase said. "Some examples are the long distances patients travel to reach medical clinics, frequent power outages and the lack of a reliable supply of medicines."

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Abbott Laboratories, a global health-care company, provided a \$60,000 grant to initiate the new residency program that includes one Purdue graduate and three graduates from the University of Nairobi Pharmacy School. The residents began work in July.

In addition to Schellhase, the leadership team includes Sonak Pastakia, Purdue Kenya Program team leader, and residency directors Monica Miller and Rakhi Karwa.

Post-graduate training is becoming mandatory for all pharmacists aiming to work directly with patients.

The residency offers one-month rotations through all different aspects of care, including working at the mother-baby hospital, the adult medicine ward of the hospital, outpatient clinics and drug education outreach programs, in addition to completion of a research project.

This year's residents are Purdue's Hagedorn, and Mercy Maina, Simon Manyara and William Ogallo from the University of Nairobi.

Hagedorn participated in the Kenya pharmacy practice experience as a student and jumped at the opportunity to return to the country for postgraduate training.

"I think the greatest benefit of this program is the chance to work with my Kenyan counterparts and see the passion they have for improving the health care in their country," she said. "The opportunity to practice pharmacy in an international setting is unique and you have to be creative in solving problems. I'm not sure where my career will take me, but I know the experiences I will have this coming year will prepare me to be creative and think outside the box when working on any project."

The University of Nairobi Pharmacy School is the only pharmacy school in Kenya and offers a bachelor's degree in pharmacy. Purdue's residency program provides an opportunity to further develop graduates' potential, expand their clinical skills and learn about research practices, Schellhase said.

"It is exciting to help develop clinical pharmacists with a unique set of skills that can help move patient care in Kenya forward," she said. "It is incredibly rewarding to know that even if our program ended tomorrow, its impact would carry on through the knowledge that has been shared and the infrastructure that has been put in place. It would have been easy to say it would be too challenging or that there were too many barriers, but because of the passion of our Kenyan counterparts these programs have flourished."

Donations can be made to Purdue's programs in Kenya at
<http://www.pharmacy.purdue.edu/advancement/development/giveonline.php>

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