


**MEETING ABSTRACTS****Team Well-Being and Challenges of Deploying an EMT Halfway Around the World**

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**Background/Introduction:** UK-Med, as part of our UK EMT project, deployed a team to respond to the overwhelming surge in COVID-19 cases in Papua New Guinea in late 2021. Such deployment was associated with several risks, including natural hazards; earthquakes; societal crisis; tribal fighting and civil unrest; and health risks such as extreme temperatures and poor sanitation infrastructure presented further hazards to personnel safety.

**Objectives:** To share lessons learned on enhancing the well-being of an EMT in a challenging context such as PNG.

**Method/Description:** Satisfaction survey, bilateral meetings, in addition to weekly meetings with the headquarters held throughout the deployment.

**Results/Outcomes:** All deployed team members felt exhausted early in the deployment, including an early lack of clarity on the deployment location which eventually ended up being Mount Hagen, a very risky area only accessible by plane. Utilizing emotional and social support, diversity acceptance within the team, and coherent coordination between team members the deployment delivered upon all agreed objectives. Local staff were integrated and a successful workplan was well-received and evaluated as making a real difference to the staff and patients, with a request for an extension of activities received from the Provincial Health Authority.

**Conclusion:** Considerations for staff well-being need to counter-balance the need for strict security protocols. Solid feedback mechanisms should be designed and implemented at an early stage of deployments to avoid any adverse effect on the team's well-being. Deployment of an assessment team should strengthen coordination, ensuring required needs are being responded to and operational planning is location/context specific.

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