

Working together for a healthier world

InterHealth 

Supporting those in Christian Mission

Specialist travel health provider to people working in the Church and Mission organisations in the UK and Internationally



“Helping to maximise the physical and psychological health of mission partners and volunteers will go a long way in enabling them to fulfil their mission and to reduce the high levels of attrition commonly seen.

Most illness which occurs overseas is either preventable or easily curable”.

Ted Lankester, Director of Healthcare,
InterHealth

Welcome

We are pleased to present to you our credentials and a choice of services tailored to support the needs of those involved in Christian Mission, both overseas and in the UK.

If you have any further questions, please contact our Client Relations Manager, Becky Hill on:

020 7902 9005
becky.hill@interhealth.org.uk

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About InterHealth

Specialist Travel Health Charity

InterHealth is a specialist travel health charity providing medical and psychological health services to organisations working in the missions sector. For twenty years we have served both large and small mission organisations sending individuals across the globe. We have developed a special focus on churches who send mission partners and volunteers direct, or are twinned with an overseas church or programme.

As a centre for international travel medicine our team of 20 health professionals look after individual travellers and staff from over 300 organisations including mission partners, relief and development workers, adventure travellers, gap year students and volunteers. InterHealth is a widely recognised travel health provider for people working in the following sectors:

- International Mission
- International Relief and Development Agencies
- Volunteer, Gap and Expedition Organisations
- Government Organisations
- UK Churches
- UK Charities

Our clients use our services for many groups of people working & volunteering internationally:

- Short-term assignments
- Frequent travellers
- Long-term assignments
- Volunteers and expeditioners
- Programme managers
- UK office based staff

We act as the medical advisor to many of the major international agencies involved in humanitarian work, addressing the needs of people living in poverty across the world. Recruits need to be physically and psychologically fit, resilient and prepared for tough environments and demanding work.

Our medical team has a wealth of international experience and significant expertise in travel medicine and tropical diseases. Several have worked in mission themselves. In addition, their experience consulting for a range of national and international bodies including the World Health Organisation, UNAIDS and the National Travel Health Network and Centre, stands them in good stead to understand the specific concerns of missionaries, volunteers, relief and development workers in the field.

InterHealth also cares for the occupational health of individuals working in the UK charitable sector.

Our approach and team

At InterHealth, we adopt a holistic approach to healthcare, promoting physical, spiritual and psychological wellbeing.

Our multidisciplinary team includes physicians, specialist travel health nurses, a pharmacist, an occupational health team and specialists in psychological health, including a psychiatrist.

Our holistic approach



Introducing the InterHealth team



Dr Ted Lankester

MA MB BChir MRCGP FFTM RCPS (Glas) Ct Th

Director of Health Services

Ted is a founding member of InterHealth from its first registration as a charity in 1989. During the 1980s, Ted engaged in field work, setting up health programmes in mountain villages and refugee camps in the Himalayas. As well as practicing at InterHealth, Ted now co-leads the Community Health Global Network (CHGN), is a regular speaker at international conferences and undertakes consultative work on primary health care and community responses in association with the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Ted is a founding fellow of the Faculty of Travel Medicine at the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow. Previously, Ted served as a Tearfund trustee and board member for 9 years, and as Assistant Editor of Tropical Doctor. Ted was also a council member of Global Connections, a Board Member and Trustee of People in Aid and was until recently, on the Advisory board of NaTHNac, the government body responsible for regulating the healthcare of tourists and travellers. Ted is a Visiting Lecturer at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and University College London.

He has written several books including The Travellers Good Health Guide 2006, the Berlitz Travel Health Pocket Guide 2007, various textbook chapters and Setting up Community Health Programmes, Macmillan 3rd revised Edition 2008.

Supporting those in Christian Mission

Be supported by a specialist travel provider to those in international mission

International projects often take place in countries where serious illness is easier to catch than back home. Malaria, dengue fever and bilharzia are the ones we most frequently see but common preventable illnesses such as diarrhoea, and also psychological stress, cause even more difficulties. We are keen to make sure that your mission personnel are well prepared medically and as fit and healthy as possible. We can support you as you seek to equip your mission partners with the appropriate travel health care and travel supplies, promoting their wellbeing whilst in the field and when they return home.

Our aim is to support churches and mission agencies in their duty of care to those involved in mission, from those on short term mission teams to whole families being posted overseas for long term periods. The success of mission depends significantly on mission partners being in good health, resilient and well prepared for their work. We aim also to help mitigate risks to the health & psychological health of mission partners. This is particularly important when people are working in challenging environments.

Services relevant to mission partners are outlined below:



Travel Clinic, Supplies and Remote Health Support

For all travelling staff

We offer a 30 minute unhurried travel health consultation with an experienced nurse prior to departure overseas. This covers comprehensive travel health malaria and immunisation advice. Our nurses give recommendations on vaccinations and antimalarials tailored to the specific needs of the traveller.

All immunisations are available at InterHealth. We usually recommend that people entitled to care on the UK National Health Service get any vaccinations available free of charge from their GP when time allows.

A wide range of travel health supplies are available on site or by ordering on-line including tablets for malaria prevention and treatment. InterHealth is a World Health Organisation recognised centre for yellow fever vaccination. In addition, international personnel will benefit from access to InterHealth's Travel Health Advice Centre (THAC) and for queries that cannot be answered via THAC, telephone and email advice are available from InterHealth's nurses.

By prior arrangement we can usually arrange group health briefings for mission teams going abroad.

First Aid courses are held regularly at InterHealth, specifically designed for those travelling or working internationally.

To book onto a course please email:

info@interhealth.org.uk

Travel Supplies

A wide range of travel health supplies are available on site or by ordering on-line including tablets for malaria prevention and treatment. InterHealth is a World Health Organisation recognised centre for yellow fever vaccination.

We also recommend that individuals and families going abroad for longer periods of time buy a copy of The Travellers Good Health Guide by Ted Lankester, Sheldon Press 2006. For volunteers or those going on shorter assignments we recommend the more compact Berlitz Travel Health 'Pocket Guide' 2007, also written by Ted Lankester.

The TravelWell Plan

We are focused on making our knowledge and expertise as widely available as possible and the TravelWell Plan has been designed to achieve this goal. Many health problems can be prevented through having the basic knowledge and information at your fingertips.

Our package of remote support services includes the following:

- Free travel consultations with our nursing team
- Free advice on our travel health advice line
- Ongoing support from our medical team
- Access to our out of hours emergency phone line
- Advice and back-up from Psychological Health team where required.
- Access to InterHealth's tailored online Travel Health Advice Centre (THAC)
- Discounts on all our services

Whilst overseas, volunteers and mission partners will have access to our online Travel Health Advice Centre. For more urgent queries, our InterHealth nurses are available via email and through our telephone Advice Line which runs from 2-3pm UK time Monday – Friday. We also have an emergency email and phone line for very urgent queries.

Travel Advice Card

A handy wallet-sized card designed as an instant reference for accessing InterHealth's remote support services. The cards can be picked up during a visit to InterHealth or you can order the cards to be sent directly to you.

To order a batch of cards for your mission partners please email us at thac@interhealth.org.uk

Travel Health Advice Centre (THAC)

THAC is an online resource that provides access to the following tailored advice and information:

- **Tailored Country Reports**
Country specific advice about what antimalarials and essential, recommended and optional reading before your trip.
- **News Bulletins**
Travel alerts and health information
- **About My Health**
Information and advice about pre-existing health conditions and how these can be best managed whilst overseas.
- **Vaccinations**
Advice and information on what you need to prepare for your trip.
- **Medicines & Supplies**
Detailed information about antimalarials recommended, and what first aid kits, medicines and other health supplies are specifically recommended for the travellers destination and type of work.

Short-Term Mission

Preparing your short term mission teams

Every year, more and more Christians, both young and old are volunteering on short-term mission projects, assisting in some of the world's poorest countries.

Many of these individuals go to countries rife with high risks to both health and security. Destination projects may lie in countries suffering from widespread communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. While short term mission is incredibly rewarding, the very nature of development and mission work means that team members will be working very hard and are likely be exposed to challenging sights of injustice, human suffering and deprivation.

Most illness contracted abroad are preventable or easily treated. Pre-trip health preparation greatly reduces the risk of ill health which so often interferes with the enjoyment and effectiveness of the mission team experience. It is also an essential part of the mission agency's duty of care.

Comprehensive care for those on short term mission

We provide a comprehensive travel health programme for short term mission volunteers and their sending organisations which includes services before, during and after their return home, and these are listed below. We have developed this provision based on 20 years of experience in the sector, and through drawing on best practice and evidence worldwide.

Short-Term Mission

Before Departure

Volunteer Health screening

Health screening is based on volunteers completing a paper or electronic based health questionnaire, which is then carefully assessed by an InterHealth specialist. Any medical concerns are considered, and an opinion given to the organisation which either comprises full health clearance or suggests alterations about any tasks and destinations if significant health problems or disability are present. On occasions a medical examination is required either at InterHealth or with the volunteers normal medical provider. We pay particular attention to a history of depression, eating disorders, fatigue and asthma.

Volunteer Health Screening (VHS) is a service recommended for volunteers going overseas on a short term assignment (less than 12 months). There is no lower limit for the duration of their assignment. Our Volunteer Health Screening Service provides a pre-assignment, online health clearance by our specialist Travel Health Clinicians. It enables you to discharge your duty of care to individual volunteers, the rest of the team and the local hosts to minimise the risk of avoidable illness and to promote good health in their volunteers.

VHS involves:

- Assessing a volunteer's medical fitness for their specific placement.
- Identifying any important health concerns for which the sending organisation must be notified.
- Identifying and making recommendations about the management of any pre-existing health conditions which may affect the ability of the volunteer to play a full role in their proposed placement e.g. managing chronic illness while overseas, managing the risk of a recurrence of a past medical problem, issues around medication (supply, storage, drug interaction), handling past/present mental health issues.
- Encouraging volunteers to take with them appropriate travel health supplies to promote their continued health throughout their placement.

In response to the information initially provided by the volunteer, in most cases a decision can be made by our Clinical Team about the volunteer's health fitness for the proposed assignment. If the team member judges that they are not yet in a position to make that assessment further information must be sought from either the volunteer or their GP/hospital specialist.

In the case of a history of mental illness, psychological disturbance or a suspected eating disorder specifically tailored forms are sent to the volunteer for completion. These are reviewed by the InterHealth Psychiatrist for further assessment. Follow-up by telephone or consultation is undertaken if necessary. Occasionally we have to recommend against a volunteer working abroad or suggest deferment. We will usually do this in an inclusive way, discussing issues with the volunteer and the sending organisation.

Short-Term Mission

Whilst overseas and on return

Whilst Overseas

Volunteers are encouraged to take a copy of InterHealth's Berlitz Travel Health Pocket Guide and to access our Travel Health Advice Centre. Together these two resources help to prevent illness and to guide volunteers on the best course of action if illness strikes. If more advice is needed, volunteers are able to email staff at InterHealth, where we aim to answer within 24 hours, or in case of emergency to use our 24/7 emergency phone line.

On return to the UK

We offer a range of services which support your volunteers on their return to the UK. These include a Returners Medical Check-Up and Psychological Health support. Anyone with fever needs to be seen at once and we can usually see them on the same day they phone in. Those who have remained well and have no obvious health issues are encouraged to complete an on-line 'Clean Bill of Health' form.

Returners Medical

A significant number of volunteers will return to the UK with some form of health issue, even when symptoms are not evident. For example, if volunteers have been swimming in lakes in Sub-Saharan Africa, they will have been exposed to fresh water and may be at risk of Bilharzia which often shows no symptoms but needs to be checked for by a blood test. It is often beneficial for volunteers to have a medical on return to the UK. This is especially important for those who have been exposed to risks such as Bilharzia.

The Returners Medical enables us to identify any issues before they become problematic and allows the sending organisation to fulfil their duty of care, ensuring health clearance for volunteers returning to the UK.

Returners medicals involve a 25 minute appointment with a member of our clinical team. It includes key tests such as a full blood count, a stool test for cysts and parasites and can be extended to include a screening for Bilharzia. Some tests (e.g. HIV, Hep C tests) are not included in the price of the medical and so organisations must be warned that screening tests, particularly for tropical diseases, are sometimes requested due to the nature of the individuals' project and the specific country they have visited. These tests are charged separately.

Psychological Health Services

Personal impact reviews are recommended for anyone who has experienced a distressing incident. Our PHS team includes specialists in Trauma Management who offer support to anyone who has been threatened, hurt, attacked or been caught up in disturbing circumstances. They are able to assess whether to recommend ongoing post trauma counselling. The majority of people recover with good support from family, friends and agency with a minimum of professional intervention.

In addition we are experienced in helping individuals and/or groups to work through common readjustment issues faced by volunteers and staff returning home.

Confidential Group Review

Our Psychological Health Services team has developed considerable experience in facilitating groups to review their experience of international assignment or visit. It is particularly relevant for volunteers who have been on placement together and for small groups of agency staff who visit partner agencies or field programmes.

Long-Term Mission

Before Departure

Pre-Assignment Medicals

Pre-Assignment Medicals involve a thorough examination with one of our expert clinicians, many of whom have a wealth of international experience in mission work, global health and travel medicine and so understand the issues and concerns associated with those working in mission across the world. As well as a thorough clinical examination, individuals have the opportunity to talk through any concerns they may have, personal or work related, on a completely confidential basis.

Our Pre-Assignment Medicals last up to 45 minutes. They involve a full review of an individual's medical history placing the emphasis on managing common health problems in the context of the individual's work. A physical examination then follows, including blood pressure check. The medical includes clinically recommended blood tests, such as full blood counts, kidney and liver function tests and blood grouping when not known. These are usually charged in addition should they be deemed necessary by our clinicians.

The focus of a Pre-Assignment medical is to help ensure that individuals are medically fit for the specific roles they are to undertake in a defined part of the world. Sending organisations are provided with a 'Health Clearance' form from our doctor and a full report is sent to the individual, including test results and any health recommendations.

Why the importance of a Pre-Assignment Medical?

We recommend Pre-Assignment Medicals for those working in developing countries, except for the shortest, least risky assignments. This is not just considered good practice, but in our experience can be dangerous to omit. By focussing on health problems either known or discovered at the time of the medical, we can give specific advice and recommendations. This fine-tuning of mission placements can save a great deal of time, money and misery to the benefit of all parties. Occasionally lives can be saved.

Adult Health Screening

An increasing number of mission organisations are decentralising their recruitment to regional offices, or recruiting across borders. Ensuring mission partners recruited between countries are medically fit for their roles can be a difficult task to achieve, especially when the quality of health services accessed in-country may vary.

Our Adult Health Screening Services enable you to ensure that your potential recruits are fit and able to continue their assignment and this minimises the risk that no known underlying health issues will hinder their performance on your programmes. Medicals are conducted by local doctors, clinics or hospitals known to the agency, to InterHealth or to the individual, adhering to InterHealth recommended protocol including recommended tests.

The results of medical assessments are reviewed by an InterHealth clinician and a recommendation made as to whether individuals are unconditionally fit for work, have health problems which need to be taken into account in their placements, or in rare cases are unfit for posting. You are then provided with a 'Health Clearance Declaration' from our clinical team.

Long-Term Mission

Pre-Assignment Psychological Health Clearance

Mission agencies are recruiting staff to work in increasingly challenging and high risk environments, both internationally and in the UK. The individuals you recruit need to be adequately robust psychologically, well prepared and aware of the risks associated with their new positions or assignments. This is can help significantly in protecting and promoting the wellbeing of both the individual/s concerned and those with whom they will work.

At InterHealth, we provide a thorough Psychological Clearance which offers you an independent, professional opinion on the psychological health of your candidate/s. This is focused on their psychological fitness to undertake the specified assignment or to work within the ethos of a particular organisation.

The consultation includes exploration of faith history and spirituality, encouraging candidates to consider how to sustain their prayer and faith life. It is available to individuals and, where appropriate to couples. The Psychological Clearance is a carefully up-dated service which we have previously offered in different forms and is designed to meet the needs of the current generation of missionaries.

A clearance report is emailed or posted to the representative named on the referral form. It includes an opinion on Psychological Health at the time of the appointment and highlights any issues or recommendations relevant to maintaining Psychological Health and/or capability to perform at work or in the field.



Long-Term Mission

On return

Mid and End of Assignment Medicals

With the exception of those abroad for short periods of time, or attending meetings or workshops in good quality hotels, we recommend that mission partners should have a mid or post assignment medical, or Returner's Medical Check-Up depending on the nature and degree of risk they have been exposed to. These medicals are designed to discuss any known health concerns as well as to screen for potential health problems before they cause symptoms.

Recent studies undertaken by our medical team on the worldwide Geosentinel Survey have shown that 37% of individuals finishing international mission and development work present some form of health problem ranging from communicable diseases (eg dengue fever and Bilharzia), psychological health concerns (e.g. cumulative stress and anxiety) or an exacerbation of a pre-existing health condition.

These studies emphasise the importance of effectively screening individuals on completing their assignments in order that issues are identified before they become problematic and that organisations may fulfil their duty of care, as people return to work in the UK or prepare for their next trip. As with Pre-Assignment medicals, Mid and End of Assignment Medicals involve a 45 minute appointment with a member of our clinical team.

Tests are not included in the price of the medical and so please be aware that screening tests, particularly for tropical diseases are commonly sought due to the nature of the individuals' role and the specific country they have visited. These tests are charged additionally.

Mid and Post Assignment Personal Reviews

Our Confidential Review provides individuals with an unhurried, confidential opportunity to review their job role or assignment from a personal perspective. Primarily, individuals will be completing an overseas assignment. A Confidential Review is an opportunity to promote ongoing resilience and good psychological health. Advice and recommendations relevant to the individual's psychological health may be made. The appointment is completely confidential with no report made available to the sending agency.

Alternatively, you can book individuals in for a Psychological Review. This will provide organisations with a brief clearance report. The Confidential Review is usually the consultation of choice as it allows people the freedom to explore personal matters without any concern about a report to their organisation.

Trauma Management

Our Psychological Health Team have specialist training in Trauma Management and can support individuals to begin to come to terms with disturbing experiences and those aspects which are most troubling personally. We are experienced in working with people of different cultures. We will always listen to the ways in which the individual contextualises his or her distress and will work with respect and honour their perspective. Please see page 14 for further information on trauma management services.

Specialist Services

Trauma management

Our psychological health team have considerable experience in supporting both organisations and individuals through disturbing experiences, critical incidents and traumatic events. Our specialist training in trauma management and trauma psychology means that you can be confident that you are receiving the highest standard of support.

Personal Impact Review

Our Personal Impact Review provides a confidential service through which individuals who have either directly experienced a critical incident or traumatic event, or who have been working with those in situations of considerable trauma, can be provided with a safe and secure space to discuss their experiences. Personal Impact Reviews are always followed up with subsequent appointments if necessary, or alternatively via email support.

Telephone back-up for agency staff

In addition to supporting the individuals involved, you can also access advice and back-up support by telephone supporting you to manage incidents which impact on Psychological Health. This may help to allow people to come to terms with things in their own way, promoting their recovery with reduced need for professional psychological interventions.

Short Consultation

These are specifically designed for anyone returning from abroad who have symptoms such as fever or diarrhoea and who need to be seen without delay. They last up to 15 minutes, address a particular health issue and do not include a general examination and screening. We aim to see anyone with a fever or seriously unwell the day they phone in, send off malaria tests with a rapid turn-around time when indicated and keep in touch with the individual until their problem is sorted out.



Our Prices

Volunteer Health Screening (Paper based screening)

For volunteers on assignment up to 12 months. Screening of health form, report to sending agency and follow-up with GP if necessary.

Subscriber price: £24

Standard price: £33

Returners Medical Check-Up (20-25 minutes)

A short medical suitable for those returning from short assignments overseas, giving the opportunity to deal with any specific health issues. Includes standard tests - further tests at additional charge if appropriate.

Subscriber price: £106

Standard price: £143

Returners Medical Check-up Plus (including Bilharzia Screening)

Subscriber price: £132

Standard price: £177

Clean Bill of Health (Paper based Screening)

For returning HQ staff and volunteers. A health questionnaire on return from assignment ensures any health problems are identified & dealt with promptly.

Subscriber price: £18

Standard price: £21

Adult Health Screening

Only available if impossible to visit InterHealth for a medical or if living outside the UK. Local doctor/GP performs medical assessment & provides results to InterHealth to scrutinise. Report to organisation. Excludes charges made by local doctor/GP.

Subscriber price: £67

Standard price: £93

Personal Impact Review

For when individuals have experienced a traumatic or critical incident.

Subscriber price: £115

Standard price: £150

Confidential Review

An opportunity for personal debriefing on return from working in developing countries.

Subscriber price: £78

Standard price: £101

Pre-assignment Adult Medical

Suitable for staff and volunteers going overseas for long assignments. Will include a review of the candidate's job role to help determine fitness for work

Subscriber price: £150

Standard price: £210

Mid-Assignment Adult Medical

Suitable for staff and volunteers who have returned from an overseas assignment and are returning overseas.

Subscriber price: £150

Standard price: £210

End of Assignment Adult Medical

Suitable for staff and volunteers who are not returning overseas.

Subscriber price: £130

Standard price: £182

Short consultation

Suitable for individuals to raise with a doctor single health issues, such as malaria, stomach problems, etc. Same day consultations arranged in emergency situations.

Subscriber price: £77

Standard price: £108

Join InterHealth's TravelWell Plan

You can take advantage of the subscriber prices listed by joining our TravelWell Plan.

The initial joining fee for the first year is £200 for organisations. Access to the THAC travel health guidance website will be included in your subscription package.

Please see our [TravelWell Plan brochure for more information.](#)

Supporting you

If you have any queries about our services or would like to better understand how they might support the health of your mission partners and teams, please don't hesitate to contact our Client Relations Manager, Becky Hill, who will be delighted to assist you.

becky.hill@interhealth.org.uk

020 7902 9005

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How can we help?

www.interhealth.org.uk