



## Professors in Residence

Accordia Global Health Foundation is a non-profit organization committed to overcoming the burden of infectious disease in Africa by building healthcare capacity and strengthening academic medical institutions. Our programs are designed to provide existing health professionals with new skills and knowledge to address the infectious disease issues they face daily and to prepare a new generation of health professionals for tomorrow's challenges. In response to the well documented shortage of adequate faculty and staff at Africa's existing medical schools, which limits the essential generation of new doctors and other healthcare professionals to address the health crises in Africa, Accordia has developed and refined its **Professors in Residence Program (PIR)**.

The Professors in Residence program is designed to develop and supplement existing faculty at Accordia's partner institutes in Africa to strengthen their ability to develop world class physicians and researchers. Accomplished international physician scientists spend 2-4 uninterrupted weeks as supplemental faculty to lecture, train, and supervise local scholars and clinicians, adding an essential new component to their professional development. PIR spend much of their assignment reviewing progress of research trainees, identifying linkages with other research opportunities, and providing long-term career advice. PIR make long-term commitments and stay engaged throughout the year, to allow those valuable international mentorship relationships to develop with the local students and faculty.

Prior to the PIR's arrival, assignments are carefully designed to match each individual's areas of expertise with specific needs of the faculty, scholars, and clinicians on the ground. During their stay, the Professors in Residence add real value through their teaching, clinical advising, and attending activities. PIR also bring new skills and specialties to program development efforts, ensuring the use of international best practices and the highest standards of performance.

The strong impact that these well-planned visits have on students, faculty, and staff make the program an essential component of Accordia Global Health Foundation's goal to strengthen academic medical institutions in Africa and offer a compelling new approach to improving pre-service training of healthcare providers and ultimately developing local healthcare capacity.

**BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE**

The need for more and better-trained healthcare professionals in sub-Saharan Africa is well understood. Educating and training greater numbers of new doctors and nurses will demand significant growth in the capacity of academic medical institutions. There is currently an insufficient number of medical faculty at even the most established medical schools in Africa to meet those growing needs.

Accordia Global Health Foundation has substantial experience in developing and leading such creative approaches to strengthening faculty at African medical schools, most notably through its partnership with the Infectious Diseases Institute of Makerere University in Uganda.

**FROM THE FIELD**

Dr. Jerry Ellner is an infectious disease specialist and a frequent Professor in Residence. Through his involvement with the program, Dr. Ellner helped establish a special clinic in Kampala, Uganda for patients suffering from TB and HIV/AIDS co-infection and has mentored countless Africans, thus improving the local healthcare capacity.

Dr. Mike Upio is one of the promising young researchers who benefits from the PIR program. "I feel very privileged to work side by side with an accomplished tuberculosis expert... A fresh perspective brings new ideas to my research, and new possibilities for my long-term career, so I can look forward to finding new ways to make a difference in the lives of my fellow Africans."

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## ABOUT THE PROFESSORS

Participants in the PIR program are infectious disease specialists from a number of prestigious medical schools throughout North America and Europe, with close ties to Accordia. Current members of Accordia's Academic Alliance are automatically eligible to participate and see this program as one of the most important ways they contribute to the successful training and education of Africa's future medical practitioners and leaders. Academic Alliance members also nominate peers and colleagues for participation in the program, substantially broadening the pool of PIR and adding to the diversity and value of the program.

## ASSIGNMENT ACTIVITIES

Accordia works with our partner institutes to develop a detailed schedule well in advance of the PIR's arrival. New participants are also given detailed orientation materials beforehand, to minimize disruptions for first time assignments. While some adjustments are made to meet the needs of our individual partner institutes, a PIR program normally consists of a combination of these activities:

- **Provide technical assistance for university curriculum enhancement** – PIR can assist local faculty and leadership to make “pre-service” improvements to their medical school curricula and program design in response to growing demand and evolving needs in the region. In addition to their expertise in infectious disease or other specialty disciplines, Accordia's Professors in Residence bring years of experience in the administration of formal medical education, and can share practices from their home institution.
- **Increase and diversify teaching sessions for local students** – PIR help meet the enormous demands on local faculty time by participating in formal teaching activities during their assignment. PIR present Grand Rounds to students, MMeds and others at the medical school. PIR also direct hospital teaching sessions for medical students at all levels, during which time one medical case is discussed in detail. They also teach medical students rotating through university-affiliated infectious disease clinics on a weekly basis.
- **Mentor advanced scholars and researchers** – PIR also review research being conducted by more advanced scholars at the partner institute. PIR typically select one or two scholars before their assignment and review their work to date, according to area of expertise. During their assignment, they spend dedicated time with the local scholars, and make plans for ongoing mentorship and guidance over the next year. PIR also attend organized research meetings and present their own research findings.
- **Develop and facilitate “in service” training programs** – PIR can assist partner institutes in their efforts to develop continuing medical education programs for working healthcare professionals in the region, and help facilitate such programs where they already exist. Their participation adds credibility to in-service training programs, and attracts high caliber trainees from the region.
- **Ensure high quality of care at teaching clinics** – PIR assist in the continuing development of existing clinicians and observing trainees by attending in various clinics to supervise and advise clinicians. PIR spend time in various local clinics and hospital's inpatient wards, and ensure that clinical practice reflects national policy and acknowledged standards of care. They also participate in conferences and discuss complicated cases as appropriate to identify areas for improvement in quality of care.
- **Provide specialized assistance for new program development** – Finally, PIR bring new skills and specialties and are often assigned to specific program development initiatives. As universities grow and diversify, their need increases for expert advice in specialty areas. PIR who create new programs or adapt existing ones join the growing network of members and friends building academic and research excellence into Accordia's partner universities.