Risk Management: Students Participating in Study Abroad Programs

The UMass Amherst Experience

Presenters
- Patricia A. Donahue Leitch, MSN/EMBA, APRN, Nurse Practitioner, Ambulatory Care and Travel Clinic. University Health Services, University of Massachusetts Amherst
  pandonahue@uhs.umass.edu
- Linda H. Hoer, RN, MS, Director, University Health Services, University of Massachusetts Amherst
  lindahoer@uhs.umass.edu
- Carol Lebold, Associate Director of Education Abroad, International Programs Office, University of Massachusetts Amherst
  cjl@ipo.umass.edu

Objectives
- This presentation will review the development and implementation of a collaborative program between the University’s International Risk Management Committee (IRMC), International Programs Office (IPO) and University Health Services’ (UHS) Travel Medicine Clinic to improve travel health knowledge for students, families, faculty and staff.

Background
- Study Abroad programs are becoming increasingly aware of risk management issues for students, their families, faculty, and staff involved in this educational opportunity.
- University of Massachusetts at Amherst (UMA):
  - 22,252 undergraduate students
  - 6,383 graduate students
  - 28,635 total undergraduate and graduate students
  - Approximately 1,300 full-time instructional faculty
- UMA has over 1200 undergraduate students participating in Study Abroad Programs each year.
- However, with over 400 programs in 50 countries, it is important that students and families, in concert with faculty and staff, have the resources and information necessary to make informed decisions with regard to risk reduction based upon students' health needs, educational goals and risk tolerance.
- This collaborative enterprise helps to address this knowledge gap by providing tailored, specific and current information regarding health, safety, security and in-country/out of country resources.

Background
- Students applying for study abroad programs are involved in a complex process encompassing multiple departments, such as, the International Programs Office, Dean of Students, University Health Services and UMass Legal Counsel and Risk Management.
- The stakeholders in this process did not collaboratively assess and mitigate issues related to the students' physical and psychological risks as well as safety, security and environmental risks.
- UHS Travel Medicine Clinic and the International Programs Office, with the support of the International Risk Management Committee, began to look at a collaborative practice to address risk reduction and mitigation concerns for undergraduate students traveling abroad.
Development of collaborative strategies to evaluate student health risks and educate students to make informed decisions about their study abroad choices and risk reduction.

Implementation of collaborative strategies to more effectively assess risks involved in study abroad plans with risk reduction and mitigation action plans.

In 2009, the CERM Committee participated in a self study to identify and prioritize risks, develop risk reduction and mitigation strategies and coordinate departmental risk assessment.

CERM established a subcommittee on International Risk Management (IRMC).

The International Programs Office was charged with leadership of this committee and University Health Services became an active member.

IRMC was charged with developing guidelines, policies and procedures to maintain the health and safety of UMass Amherst students, faculty and staff who study or conduct research and/or University affiliated business internationally.

Continued focus on preserving academic freedom and the robust research agenda of its faculty and students, while addressing health/safety and security issues inherent in their University Affiliated travel Activities.

Maintain an international travel registry

Maintain a list of restricted countries and regions

Provide travel advice, guidelines, and resources for students, faculty and staff

Coordinate communications procedures regarding reporting/press releases on international travel incidents and issues to the media

Implement pre-departure orientations and information for students and faculty

Development of policies on approving/restricting travel destinations, emergency evacuations and/or provision of emergency assistance

In 2013, University Health Services and the International Programs Office/Education Abroad Division began meeting to develop processes to focus on risk assessment, reduction, mitigation in order to enhance ongoing health, security and safety of students/faculty involved in Study Abroad.

We met to discuss the current state of the Education Abroad application process with regard to risk assessment, reduction, mitigation in order to enhance ongoing health, security and safety of students/faculty involved in Study Abroad.

IPO was collecting information about students health in the On Line Application

IPO staff would send a request for additional information to the student on a case by case basis

No health care providers involved in the process
Building the Team
Improving Health, Safety and Security Information
Providing Health, Safety and Security Education

Encouraged open dialogue among the team
Respected each other’s roles in the process
Brain Stormed to develop new processes
Identified potential health problems that could be exacerbated by anticipated Study Abroad activities
Identified a common goal of risk reduction and empowerment of the student’s self care during their study abroad experience

Revised Health Information Form for the online Education Abroad application including physical and emotional health
Developed a Health Information Disclosure Process. This collaboration between IPO and UHS facilitates student specific health risk assessment and risk reduction strategies
Developed a Health Risk Reduction Action Plan that addresses physical and psychological health concerns which is completed by their Primary Care or Mental Health Provider

Education of IPO staff to HIPAA regulations and development of a consent form that allows sharing of information between IPO and UHS on a case by case basis
Development and Implementation of a one hour additional Education Abroad Pre-departure Workshop on Health and Safety for students
Program attendance became mandatory for undergraduate students anticipating studying abroad opportunities
Development and Implementation of a Pre-departure Workshop for Faculty leaders of study abroad programs.

UHS/IPO Disclosure Process

Risk Reduction Interventions
- Travel Clinic – Not just shots
- Pre-departure health workshops for students – Not a trip to your favorite theme park
- Pre-departure health workshops for faculty – Get rid of those rose colored glasses
- IRMC Health, Safety and Security Risk Reduction Action Plan
  - Assessment of risks associated with the destination and planned educational experience
  - Student physical and psychological health issues
  - Title IX requirements and implications
  - Safety, security, transportation and communication issues
  - Emergency plans and evacuations
  - Educational resources for faculty, students and their families regarding health and safety issues for their intended destination
**Summer 2014**

- Israel Programs
- Convened IRMC and IPO
- Health, Safety and Security Action Plan
- Risk Management and the Academic Mission

---

**Summary of UHS/IPO Collaboration Strategies**

- Acknowledged that information is only as good as that which is disclosed
- Encouraged open dialogue with the team
- Developed the Health Risk Reduction Action Plan
- The goal of the plan was individual empowerment, risk reduction and development of an action plan that would educate the student’s self care during their study abroad experience.

---

**Information for Students**

The UHS Travel Clinic is staffed by specially trained health care providers who will provide specific health information regarding risk assessment associated with your travel plans and education to minimize risks during your travel. In addition to immunizations appropriate for your travel destination:

- Health, Safety and Security
- Pre-and Post-Travel Care
- Influenza (Noon)
- Marital Planning
- Familial Health Care
- Tobacco Prevention
- Hepatitis
- Yellow Fever
- Polio
- Rabies
- Japanese Encephalitis
- Diphtheria
- Measles
- Malaria
- Typhoid
- Meningococcal
- Travel Health

---

**Information for Students**

**Travel Immunizations**

The UHS Travel Medicine Clinic provides immunizations for:

- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Meningococcal
- Typhoid
- Malaria
- Rabies
- Japanese Encephalitis
- Diphtheria

---

**Information for Students**

**Travel Immunizations**

The UHS Travel Medicine Clinic provides immunizations for:

- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Meningococcal
- Typhoid
- Rabies
- Japanese Encephalitis
- Diphtheria
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Lincoln Health Services Travel Clinic
Faculty Program: Getting Ready for Your Trip

- PLAN EARLY
  - Start planning about host country, culture, dress, gender biases, and laws
  - Schedule visit to clinic, staff, and students
  - Eye - eye glasses, contact lenses, supplies
  - Dental - repair kit for loose filling, lost tooth or loose crown
  - Physical: complete medical examination
  - Doctor: complete list of restricted items and special circumstances
  - Security: activate Medical Discharge Form
  - Action Plan: for any of your chronic health problems
  - Medications: list, for chronic and acute health problems
  - Think about diarrhea, constipation, nausea, altitude, pain, birth control
  - Psychiatrist/Counselor: what is your health while away? What risks will you employ to deal with stress of travel and new culture?
  - Alcohol and drug issues: plan on strategies to manage any issues. Student Code of Conduct
  - Self-Disclosure: encourage student to be open and discuss any concerns or chronic medical and/or psychiatric problems. Do they carry an epi-pen? Do they have diabetes or a seizure disorder?
  - Topics for Consideration during program specific Student Orientation Program: Code of Conduct and Title IX, issues in communication, buddy approach to travel
  - Additional Topics: Alcohol, drugs, sexual assault risks, risk of pedestrian/motor vehicle accident, cultural expectations and consequences.
  - If we ALL give the same message perhaps everyone will hear, THINK and ACT.

On Line Resources

- International Society of Travel Medicine, http://www.istm.org/
- NAFSA: Association of International Educators http://www.nafsa.org/
- Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) https://www.osac.gov/Pages/Home.aspx
- Host Laws: www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_4965.html http://travel.state.gov/travel (look under the “Criminal Penalties” and “Special Circumstances” of each country you are visiting)
- http://photos.state.gov/libraries: look for specific country: medications
- Host Laws: www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_4965.html http://travel.state.gov/travel (look under the “Criminal Penalties” and “Special Circumstances” of each country you are visiting)
- http://photos.state.gov/libraries: look for specific country: medications

On Line Resources

- http://studentsabroad.state.gov
- Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) https://www.osac.gov/Pages/Home.aspx
- Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) https://www.osac.gov/Pages/Home.aspx
- International Society of Travel Medicine, http://www.istm.org/
- NAFSA: Association of International Educators http://www.nafsa.org/
- Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) https://www.osac.gov/Pages/Home.aspx
- Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) https://www.osac.gov/Pages/Home.aspx
- Host Laws: www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_4965.html http://travel.state.gov/travel (look under the “Criminal Penalties” and “Special Circumstances” of each country you are visiting)
- http://photos.state.gov/libraries: look for specific country: medications

On Line Resources

- International Society of Travel Medicine, http://www.istm.org/
- NAFSA: Association of International Educators http://www.nafsa.org/
- Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) https://www.osac.gov/Pages/Home.aspx
- Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) https://www.osac.gov/Pages/Home.aspx

On Line Resources

- International Society of Travel Medicine, http://www.istm.org/
- NAFSA: Association of International Educators http://www.nafsa.org/
- Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) https://www.osac.gov/Pages/Home.aspx
- Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) https://www.osac.gov/Pages/Home.aspx

On Line Resources

- Host Laws: www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_4965.html http://travel.state.gov/travel (look under the “Criminal Penalties” and “Special Circumstances” of each country you are visiting)
- http://photos.state.gov/libraries: look for specific country: medications

Summary

- Strive for your Best Practice
- Team Approach
- Empowerment
- Action Plans
- Emergency Response Team