

KOMPIAM MEDICAL PLACEMENT (September 2005)

What to bring:

- Loose, casual, comfortable clothes to wear in the hospital
 - Tie, shirt and trousers not required
 - Sleeves in tops for girls (cheap polo shirts from Target or Cotton On are good)
- Thongs (can wear these on the ward)
- Good walking shoes you don't mind getting filthy
 - Expensive hiking boots are not necessary
 - Cheap imitation RM's from K-Mart are fine (~\$40) → wear them in beforehand
- Sleeping bag
- Mozzie repellent
- Sunscreen
- Light waterproof rain jacket
- Umbrella
- Good torch (head torch is useful)
- Camera
- Pens and notepad
- Stethoscope and pen torch
- Hat
- Shorts and t-shirt to swim in
- Some clothes you don't mind getting filthy or wrecked on hikes (shorts/pants, t-shirt)
- Water bottle
- Pack of cards
- Music
- Lots of books to read (not medical books, these are all supplied)
- Soccer boots if you have them
- Small/medium backpack for patrols/hikes
- Towel
- Dental floss (for sugar cane)
- Vegemite (the locals love it)
- Anti-malarials (doxycycline daily or mefloquine weekly)
- Anti-diarrhoeals (especially if you eat the meat at the market)
- Other medications (eg. panadol, cold and flu tablets, ibuprofen, eye drops, strepsils)
- Bandaids ad blister treatment
- Do not require shoes to wear in theatre
 - Boots are provided, or can just go bare feet with theatre shoe covers on
- Old pair of sunglasses (but no one wears them in PNG)
- Blank CD's to burn photos onto
- USB SD card reader, or camera software with USB computer connection, to transfer digital photos to computer

Money:

- 1600K - 2000K should be enough for 4 weeks
 - K1200 for accommodation in Kompiam (40K per night)
 - 100-200K per night for accomodation Mt Hagan
 - 160K one-way airfare between Mt Hagan and Kompiam (360K return)
 - Other spending money (eg. petrol for the hospital car, food, billum, hospital canteen)

Facilities in the student house:

- Duplex → One side for boys, the other for girls (Note from Dave – this has since changed with the new student house – as of Sept 2008)
- Gas stove and all kitchen equipment (eg. plates, cutlery, pots, containers, etc.)
- Shower, toilet, laundry sink
- Mirror
- Linen, pillows, beds, mattresses
- Candles, detergent
- Mop, broom
- Gas Fridge
- Automatic washing machine
- TV with DVD player – can always borrow DVD's from the Mills'
- Wireless link to satellite based broadband – Skype is available with this.

Accommodation in Mt Hagan:

- Kimininga Lodge → 70-100K per night (tea and coffee provided)
- Highlander Hotel → 200K per night
- Mt. Hagen Missionary Home → 100K per night (breakfast and dinner provided)

Things to buy in Mt Hagan before you leave:

- Lots of canned food (eg. baked beans, tuna, vegetables, tomatoes, soup, tomato paste)
- Rice, pasta, 2 minute noodles
- Coffee, tea, sugar, milk powder
- Salt, pepper
- Tomato sauce, sweet chili sauce, soy sauce
- Cooking oil, matches, lighter
- Biscuits, crackers
- Bread, margarine
- Meat, eggs
- Toilet paper, tissues
- Fruit and vegies at the market

Things you can buy in Kompiam:

- Coke, tea, coffee, sugar, milo, milk powder, salt
- Crackers
- Matches, lighter, candles
- Toilet paper
- Chickens (live), ~30K each
- Rice, 2 minute noodles
- Fruit and vegies at the market

Things to do in Kompiam:

- Learn Pidgin (main PNG language)
 - PNG is in the Guinness Book of Records for the most languages spoken (~700)
 - Enga Province also has its own language (called Enga)
- Buy a billum to carry your stuff in, hottest fashion accessory (even boys)
- Get the locals to teach you how to cook their food properly
- Go to the markets on a Wednesday (very cheap fruit and vegies)
- Go on a hike to see other people's Villages and other parts of PNG
 - Take water, Papua New Guineans don't seem to get thirsty!
 - Wear old clothes
 - Take bandaids for blisters
 - Take mozzie repellent, sunscreen, clothes to swim in, torch
 - Get the locals to make you a walking stick
 - Pack lightly
- Have a mumu (cooking chicken, pig and vegies in the ground with hot rocks)
 - Watch the killing and how they prepare it
- Swim in the river (~20 mins from the hospital)
- Get involved with all the local staff, all very friendly and generous
- Play in the Medics soccer team on Saturdays
- Check out how rough the rugby is on Sundays

Other:

- There is only electricity from 6.30-10pm each day when the generator is on. During this time ...
 - Charge camera battery
 - Find candles and torch
 - Turn electric water pump on for the house
- Be prepared to see a lot of trauma as a result of tribal fighting and domestic violence (eg. knife wounds, fractures)
- Everyone carries a machete or an axe around, but no one will attack you → Kompiam is a safe area
- Don't go out after dark in Mt Hagan or Port Moresby though
- Roads are terrible, but the 4WD is excellent for a bit of adventure
- Everyone stares at you, and sometimes they laugh, but it's not nasty, it's just because you look different
- Religion is a big part of life, involving ...
 - Praying with the patient in the theatre before each operation
 - Praying on road journeys (eg. changing Province)
 - Saying grace when having dinner with others
 - Listening to Christian music in theatre
 - Church service on Sunday morning, but not obliged to go
- Religion is not forced upon you
- Get fit before you come
 - Papua New Guineans are very fit
 - Hikes may be a bit more extreme and a lot longer than expected (rugged terrain, steep muddy hills)
 - Expect to fall over, expensive hiking boots do not help
- Eating with hands is fine
- Smoking and alcohol is forbidden
- Distance and time are always under-estimated, nothing usually happens on time