

**Specialty:** Family Medicine

**Country:** Kenya

**Location:** Matangwe & Bondo

**Rural/Urban:** Rural

**Hospital or non-hospital placement:** Hospital & Orphanage

**Type of placement:** Pre-clerkship

**Date:** July 2010

**Project title:**

**Organization:** Caring Partners Global

**Website:** [www.caringpartners.ca](http://www.caringpartners.ca)

**Main language spoken:** Luo

**Other language(s):** English

**Project description:** From the CPG Website: "The Matangwe Health Clinic is the primary volunteer site for Queen's CPG. The services provided include outpatient clinics, immunization and antenatal programs, inpatient care, labour and delivery, laboratory testing, counseling services, and health education. Medical students can participate in all medical services provided at the clinic. They have the opportunity to learn about medical conditions common in Kenya and participate directly in patient care. Medical student also have the potential to improve services being provided by introducing new ideas to the clinic, and by donating supplies and medications."

**Student experience description:** As an undergraduate medical student, I went into the experience aware that I would be learning more than I would be providing medical assistance while in Kenya. My outlook was to help in whatever way I could, even if it was not in a medical capacity. As such, this meant that, along with seeing patients and assisting the Medical Officer at the clinic, much of my time was spent cleaning, filing or taking inventory at the clinic. That being said, the experience at Matangwe taught me so much. I think the biggest thing I learned from my exposure was that health issues around the world are greatly affected by so much more than the availability of medications and healthcare professionals. Government, education and socioeconomics are major factors that need to be addressed as well in order to fully understand the current health situation in a particular country. Thus, my time at Matangwe has expanded my view of how policy affects global health and how I may be involved in global health in the future

**Placement safety:** I felt incredibly safe during my placement. At every checkpoint travelling to and from Kenya, someone was there to meet me. As well, the accommodations in Bondo were well-guarded, and transportation was provided to get to and from the clinic daily.

**Educational experience (out of 10):** 6

**Social/cultural experience (out of 10): 9**

**Does the organization have any religious affiliations? Yes**

**At any point did you feel expected to participate in religious activity? Yes**

**Program fee:**

**Dress code:** At the clinic, scrubs are suitable. While out in the village, dress for hot weather, but it is probably better to wear longer shorts, and t-shirts as opposed to tank tops or something more revealing.

**Accommodation:** Student volunteers are placed at the Switel Hotel in Bondo village. Breakfast is included and dinner can be purchased nightly. The grounds are beautiful and very secure.

**Accommodation cost:** less than \$10/day

**Helpful hints:** The clinic has its busy days and its slow days. When it is slow it is really up to you to find ways to help out. The experience is what you make of it. Take the opportunity to visit the Bondo District Hospital. On weekends, explore neighbouring areas. However, don't get too caught up in scheduling activities. None of my weekends in Kenya were spent exactly as planned, due to invitations from those in the area or new opportunities coming up.

**Questions you are glad to have asked before leaving on placement:** I'm glad I asked about transportation and safety before I left. It made me feel more secure before embarking on my placement.

**Questions you WISHED you asked before leaving on placement:** Honestly, I don't think there was anything I missed asking. Along with Queen's pre-departure training, Caring Partners Global does its own preparation session, thus I felt I had more than enough information heading into my placement

**Overall, would you recommend this placement for future students? Yes**