

HEREFORD - MUHEZA LINK SOCIETY

(Working with Health Services in Tanzania, East Africa)

Supported by the E.F. Bulmer Benevolent Fund & the Hereford Acute Hospitals NHS Trust.
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VISITING MUHEZA WITH THE LINK.

So you would like to visit Muheza.

The Link Society has arranged eight visits to and from Muheza in each of over 20 years. Almost always visitors have travelled in twos – company helps people to rise above any culture shock, and helps with travelling.

Anyone working for the health services in Herefordshire or in the area served by the County Hospital is eligible to apply. The Link is open to any health professional or provider, not just nurses and doctors. When necessary the Link Society can pay travel expenses, but hopes that most applicants will be able to find some, if not all, of their travel costs. (Return tickets to Tanzania are usually about £500, and there are also the costs for a visa, vaccinations, and malaria prophylaxis. Expenses in Tanzania are usually small – the exchange rate is very favourable for people with sterling.) The PCT and Hospital Trusts may grant study leave. The Link Society is not in a position to pay for locums. Visits are usually of between four and six weeks.

Most visitors to Muheza hope to learn about illnesses and treatments in the tropics, to live for a short time in another culture, and to see how a service can be provided with only a tiny portion of the finances available in Herefordshire. Many of our habits appear amazingly wasteful to those who have been to Muheza. Visitors are also encouraged to go with some small project or area of study, and, if invited, to be prepared to teach clinical staff or lecture in the school of nursing.

A frequent question is “How can I do anything useful when I’m there?” The answer is that you cannot do a lot, but may be able to contribute a little, and that after you come home there will almost certainly be ways of helping, such as providing information or advice or finding useful items to send in the Society’s containers. The friendships you make may be useful for years.

You should join the Link Society – at present the subscription is £10 per year, or better if you work at the County Hospital you can make a monthly contribution through your salary. You should contact previous visitors and make a point of meeting visitors from Tanzania, who visit the County Hospital each summer. (And see the information details in the website.) Then you should discuss the possibility of obtaining leave with your manager, and put together a simple written account of yourself, your background and skills, and what you would hope to do in Muheza. Discuss those with the secretary of the Link Society or anyone on the committee and send your written account to the secretary – at present John Wood, Dormington House, Dormington, Hereford HR1 4ES – 01432 850543 and john.b.wood@lineone.net The committee will then wish to meet you.

If you are interested, find out more. Go for it!