

The Muheza Experience

Information and Advice for Visitors to Teule Hospital

At Muheza

Before you go. Discuss what you hope to do with those who know about Muheza – previous visitors and also Drs. Richard and Karilyn Collins who are most familiar with the running of Teule Hospital and Muheza Hospice Care. Seek permission (strictly an invitation from the Medical Superintendent Dr. Rajabu Mallahiyo who has visited Hereford). Find out about accommodation. Decide what vaccinations and what malaria prophylaxis you will need. If you need formal registration with any of the professional bodies in Tanzania, make application well beforehand.

Please read carefully Dr. Sally Edmonds' 3 information sheets attached below. These are intended primarily for elective medical students going to Teule Hospital. Please also see her advice about projects.

Work and Study On arrival meet Medical Superintendent - Dr. Rajabu Mallahiyo, and the Hospital Administrator. Take a name badge.

Living Dr. Edmonds' sheet for medical students contains much useful information. There is some accommodation on the hospital campus and a hotel in Muheza. Find out expected payments for hostel or wherever you stay – offer to pay – do not wait to be asked. If, for example, you stay in the bungalow ask Sally what is appropriate to tip or give a present to the watchman and the cook. Local simcards for phones are available at airport or in Muheza (otherwise local calls will be routed through UK at extreme cost). Electricity plugs – 3 pin as here. Mosquito nets are available in Muheza - they should be used and sensible precautions taken such as not leaving doors open in the evenings, covering up, and using a mosquito deterrent. (NB Big hotels sometimes do not use mosquito nets!) Take shoes or boots adequate for outdoor walking, perhaps even Wellington boots. There are snakes though rarely seen. Torch is needed with spare batteries. Boil water. Think about writing a Muheza cookery book for the benefit of future visitors.

Meeting people Give and accept hospitality. Try out your Swahili. Children love seeing themselves on the digital camera screen. (Adults may not relish being photographed in town.) Small presents are worth taking – perhaps small bars of scented soap. If you have been invited to someone's home for a meal they will almost certainly walk you back to Teule.

Relaxation Take Binoculars for early morning walks. There is a beach (and sailing club) at Tanga. Hotel / Bars in Muheza and Tanga. There are bird and tree books at the hospital. Local maps are difficult to obtain. Church services are well worth attending. Tell Sally if you are going to be away from the site overnight.

Problems Theft is a difficulty! Sleep with your keys and valuables. Fruit bats roosting in the trees at the hospital are noisy and their smelly droppings make messes on the paths. When it rains it is very wet and Wellington boots are necessary to get out and about. Be reasonably streetwise, especially after dark.

Travelling Visas – Make sure that visas are Tourist, unless you definitely need some other sort. They can be obtained in London or on arrival in Tanzania (which at present is cheaper). Take copies of important documents. Flight prices vary greatly with dates, and are worse at school holiday times. Check for delays if changing planes in the Gulf (food vouchers are available for long stop-overs). It may be possible for the hospital car to meet you at the airport if it is going to Dar for some other reason. If so contribute to cost. NB – Richard & Karilyn Collins have contacts who can order a taxi or book bus seats (Scandinavian bus company) or accommodation in Dar es Salaam.

Buses, Walking. Bus travel is part of the Muheza experience! Scandinavian or Royal Coach buses are recommended.

Money Get currency in Tanzania. A little sterling goes a long way. There is not much to spend money on in Muheza. There is an ATM in Tanga at the Exim Bank. Travellers cheques are not much good. Sterling or euros can usually be converted, but there may be some places that still prefer US dollars.

Health **Malaria** – Doxycyline is most popular now. No malaria prophylaxis is totally effective or foolproof, and many of the prophylactic drugs may cause their own side-effects. Remember, febrile illnesses after visiting places with much malaria and many mosquitoes must be regarded as malaria until shown to be something else, and remember that Falciparum Malaria can rapidly become severe or fatal. (This is not to try to frighten prospective travellers, but to help them react promptly when necessary!)

Vaccinations need fixing up well in advance. There is a simple medicine kit in the bungalow, but take your own simple medicine kit. If you think you may suffer a needle-stick injury (which would mean that you had made prior arrangements to be helping with treatment), then in a country where perhaps 10% are HIV positive you should take with you Anti-retroviral treatment suitable for use immediately to lessen the risk of infection.

Before Going Liaise with Sally Edmonds and whoever is interested in your field of study. Learn a little Swahili (P. Wilson – Swahili Simplified) Review your knowledge of tropical illnesses. And to repeat, contact all the visitors from Muheza you can and people who have been to Muheza.

Going Further Afield. Sally has put together various reports from medical students who have been to the game parks or climbed Kilimanjaro. John Wood has a copy.

HOSPITALI TEULE MUHEZA **DR. EDMONDS' INFORMATION SHEET FOR VISITORS**

Muheza is a small district town in the North East of Tanzania 40 Kms inland from the port of Tanga and about 100 kms south of the Kenyan border. It lies at the foot of the East Usambara mountains on the edge of the coastal plain. It therefore enjoys a climate that is HOT and STICKY especially between December and March. The long rains usually come between March and May and the short ones in October and November but yearly variations are ever present. From June to September it can get a bit cool - you may even need a cardigan, but not very often. About 60% of the population are Muslims and 40% Christian of a variety of denominations. Teule Hospital is an Anglican Church Hospital but designated by the government as the District Hospital for Muheza district. The language spoken is mainly Kiswahili although everyone also speaks their mother tongue of which there are many. The hospital functions in English (notes written in English) and all qualified staff can speak it although most communication is in kiSwahili. Very few patients speak English. Muheza lies on the main tar road from Dar es Salaam to Tanga and therefore enjoys a reasonable bus service which takes 4-5 hours. You can also reach us by bus from Moshi / Arusha (6-7 hours) or by plane from Dar / Zanzibar to Tanga.

The hospital supplies medical services to a population of about 280,000 covering an area 100 kms by 50 kms. It provides primary health care for the town and acts as a referral centre for the 46 outlying village dispensaries and five health centres. A large number of patients attend daily in the adult and Maternal and Child Health Clinics. There are doctor lead clinics in medicine, surgery, obstetrics and gynaecology, palliative care and paediatrics. There are currently five doctors, six Assistant Medical Officers and 12 Clinical Officers. At the Nurse

Training School there is a 4 year diploma course in nursing and midwifery. There is an HIV / palliative care centre which now has access to free anti-retrovirals (via one of the American programmes). There is an X-ray department and an ultrasound machine. The pathology laboratory performs microscopy, haematology, some biochemistry, bacterial cultures and CD4 counts. There are dental, eye and physio services. There is always a shortage of equipment, drugs and dressings although not as bad as at some other hospitals in Tanzania due to support from the UK. We strongly recommend that you bring goggles with you for eye protection as even watching invasive procedures risks eye splashes. Gloves are available.

There is chloroquine - resistant falciparum malaria and visitors should take advice before travelling. We recommend mefloquine, doxycycline or malarone. Insect repellent is advised as are bed nets which are supplied. It is advisable to obtain advice for PEP and obtain a supply of antiretrovirals. If you do have a needle stick injury, we ask you to let us know as soon as possible, and you will be counselled and will be recommended to have an HIV test. We do have PEP but not much with a PI so would rather you brought your own. Yellow fever certificate is mandatory. You will need the usual vaccination for tetanus, typhoid, hepatitis A+B etc. Rabies is endemic but uncommon. Vaccination is available here but may be hard to access timeously. Medical Insurance is of course a must with access to finance for airlifts out (easy to organise from Muheza if needed).

There is a student hostel with cooking facilities which is basic but better than many of the local houses. Someone can do laundry for you at a small price. Electric sockets and voltage are the same as the UK (supposedly). You will not need to wear white coats while in the Hospital but do need to dress appropriately. Short sleeved shirts with trousers or skirts below the knee are suggested. Ties are not needed. Sandals are recommended and unless you need walking boots for going up Kilimanjaro decrease the amount you need to bring. This dress code is not just for at work in the hospital but also if you go into town and in other places while travelling in Tanzania especially in Zanzibar during Ramadan. Shorts are OK if not too brief, especially if you get a kanga (local length of cloth) to wrap round you while you go from the bus to the taxi! Exposed mid riffs are not OK. Mobiles work at a price although you can easily buy a Tz. simcard to use with your hand set which many have found useful. Texting to UK costs about 4p and phone calls about £1 per minute.

Socially you may be kept busy with invites out by nursing staff as well as by the other wazungu (whites) quite apart from the inevitable "chipsy miyai" (egg n chips) and beer at the local Elephant Inn. There are many things to do at weekends with the Indian ocean not far away and hiking at Amani or Lushoto within reach. This is in addition to general travelling with animal safaris (Ngorongoro crater and Serengeti or the cheaper, less well known but arguably better Ruaha or Selous) and Zanzibar to enjoy not to forget climbing Kilimanjaro for those who like a good vomit (and the view).

The student hostel costs 25,000 Tz shs/week and needs to be paid in advance but at Teule. There is also a charge for coming to Teule of £100 which needs to be paid in the UK before your stay can be confirmed. You will need about Shs. 10,000 per week to buy basic food and

extra money if you propose to travel. Beer and sodas would double your weekly expenses depending on quite how much you consume! The current rate of exchange is 2400 Tanzanian shillings to the £1. Travellers' cheques are the safest way of carrying money but you have to go to Tanga to cash these with a commission charge, which is the same whatever amount you change. Pounds, dollars, and euros can be changed in Tanga, and ATM cards can be used in Tanga - visa only - but in Dar es Salaam you can use most cards. Tour operators for safaris will accept part payment with credit cards and cash (mostly dollars). You will need to change money at the airport, which has a good rate of exchange.

The Hospital phone is +255 27 2644121 . (phone manned 7.30 am to 3.30 pm - GMT+3 hours). You can arrange to have incoming phone calls at certain times but not to make outgoing calls. Hospital email at present is muhezaddh@kaributanga.com but may change and is not very reliable - you may do better to use my personal one. We do mostly also have internet access at the hospital for the staff to use although at the moment it is VERY restricted.

Sally Edmonds
April 2007

Projects at Teule

I get asked again and again about whether you can be involved in projects

There are many things to do at the hospital, wards, clinic, theatre, out-reach etc etc and you can be involved in any or all of them as you wish and within the bounds of others' needs. Mostly the routine of the hospital runs from 7.30 to 2.30 and the afternoons are quiet (shopping and coping with the heat time) or else you're still out on outreach or in the Diana centre. In general we find that students who are here for up to 4 weeks find just getting around everything is enough, and so they need to select something small eg: a case study. If you are here for longer then you can spend the first few days getting to grips with things and afterwards have time for something else as well.

Realistic options

1. case study - you will undoubtedly see cases that are interesting around which something can be discussed - often including cultural issues as well as medical - use of traditional medicine, hospital access and costs (why wait till you need a wheel barrow to get your hydrocoele to hospital before attending ?), malaria etc. etc.
2. audit / research - some things can be looked at closely, with questionnaires, even comparing to UK practise. eg. understanding of post natal depression, the barriers to uptake of HIV testing on the ward.

Some of these ideas will come from us but mostly from you if you have a prior special interest or notice something that intrigues you. If you want to run ideas past me beforehand as to local feasibility then that's great. On the whole it is not a good idea to start something and expect others to finish it as mostly they won't.

There is quite a lot of research going on already here (by London School of Tropical Medicine, and others). You are welcome to see what is happening but mostly we are part of data collection in large studies long term and the concept that you can "join in" isn't really possible.

If you wish to publish the results of your study, or if it involves any procedures that are not normally performed, then ethical clearance should be considered. This is a long-winded and difficult procedure (at least 6 months) so any "serious" projects which may require it must be discussed well in advance of arrival.

Dr. Edmonds.

DETAILS FOR TEULE HOSPITAL MUHEZA

I note that your arrival at Teule is approaching rapidly and thought I would just drop a line with hopefully some helpful info and ask you to let us know as the time gets closer when you actually expect to arrive. Do feel free to contact me at any point with queries. (bennsal@teule.org.uk +255 784 507985). I have tried to answer some of the FAQ's at the bottom of this info sheet so that we don't have to repeat ourselves lots. If you find things are different from what we have said - please say so, so we can change it for others.

Money

We have had endless debate with current students about what is best to bring. Different people get different experiences at the same place on different days so whatever its somewhat hit and miss. Cash - dollars is easiest as accepted everywhere but pounds will be accepted in some places only its easy to steal and untraceable and bringing enough for 8 weeks living and travelling is worrisome. Travellers cheques - can be lots of hassle and you really do need (mostly) the receipt showing where you bought them. Can take ages to change at the bank in Tanga (2-3 hours). Many students have said they wished they hadn't brought them but recently we had a set who found somewhere in Dar where the best rate was Tcheques - better than cash or card Card - not accepted by many outlets (hotels etc) except at banks and 4X but can be used in hole in the walls mostly very effectively. Even Tanga now has both Visa and Mastercard although the machine has been known to be empty

Country entry

At Dar es Salaam airport you can obtain a visitors visa easily but it takes a while (45-60 mins in the queue) but you will only be able to pay in dollars (\$50), so bring some with you if necessary (this is true for UK nationals and for other EU but check if your passport is from elsewhere). You will also need to change some money for buses, taxis etc at the airport which does give a relatively favourable rate.

Taxi in Dar

From the airport you need to use a taxi and the cost into the centre of town or to the bus terminal is about 15,000shs. We have a friendly taxi driver called Ayoub Juma (good English spoken) who is very good and has a mobile phone (+255 713352910). You can text him from the UK etc to ask him to meet you at the airport. He is helpful, honest and reliable if a tad more expensive than some. He will buy on going tickets for you at request.

Staying in Dar

If you need to stay in Dar es Salaam, there is plenty of reasonably priced safe accommodation. Recommended is the Lutheran Centre in the centre of town or with the Catholics or Free Pentecostals who both have centres rather out of town so very secure but convenient for airport and bus station. TEC (Catholics) at Kurasini (Tel no +255 22 2125751/ 2111817/ 2125865/ 2851075) does food. The Free Pentes (Tel no +255 222851140/2851362 , email fpctcenter@cats-net.com) have a kitchen and is a tad more money but both are good value at 12-15,000 per person. Juma can help you with bookings at TEC or FPC.

To Muheza from Dar

Many buses go to Muheza from Dar which lies on the road to Tanga. The main bus station is on the edge of Dar and called Ubungu. It is full of buses, touts and hassle. The two lines we recommend are Scandinavia (which has a separate enclave at Ubungu so less of a problem) and Raha Leo. They both also have terminals in town. Scandinavia is usually a bit posher - soda's, ?A/C and violent videos and is about 10,000. They leave Dar at about 8am. Raha Leo is about half that price but may charge for luggage. The journey takes about 4 ½ hours. You can also fly from Dar via Zanzibar and Pemba to Tanga. The cost one way is about 80,000shs (excess baggage charge over 15kg). email aviation@coastal.cc .Then take a Dalla-Dalla (small minibus) from the end of the airport drive to Muheza.

To Muheza from Arusha

Buses also come from Arusha (beyond being Naroibi) and Moshi. These are the safari and Kilimanjaro centres so you may be coming from that side if you have done some travelling first. Many buses go to Dar from there (including Scandinavia) which means you must get off at Segera and get a dalladalla the remaining 35 kms. Others go direct to Tanga. The journey takes about 6 hours.

Muheza to Teule

On arrival at Muheza bus station, go towards the railway line (away from the main road (Scandinavia drop you on the main road not at the station so go back a bit and turn right past the bus station)). The road then goes left, along, over a little bridge, then uphill and you want the next right. Go across the railway line, and take the right fork immediately. Keep straight on and you will go up the hospital drive. It takes about 15 minutes to walk from the bus station or you can take a taxi, at cost of 1500shs but ask them to take you right to the door of the hostel near the nurses home to avoid carrying all your heavy kit through the hospital. If you get stuck, ask anyone and they will know where to direct you - just ask for Teule Hospital.

Once at the hospital ask for me or my husband Ben, or at a push for Elizabeth Bendera, Principal of the Nursing School, who is responsible for the Hostel. If you arrive at the weekend without letting us know, then you may find that we are all away and no-one knows about you - I'm sure you'd survive but it's a bit harder

FAQ's

Bedding and mosquito nets are provided.

It is warm here, especially from November to March. I have yet to put on a jumper in Muheza after over five years. However, if you go on safari especially to the crater it is HIGH and so COLD. At work you should wear skirts of a decent length or trousers. No ties are needed. Otherwise around the hospital and especially when you go into Muheza town please be careful - avoid shorts or skirts that are very short or exposed midriffs. Sensibly most people wear sandals and you don't really need much else except perhaps walking boots if you're doing Kilimanjaro.

Cameras

You can take most photos you want although do be sensitive to taking close ups of people and remember to ask. If you bring your cable with you (or have a standard one that we possess) we are happy to help with downloading and burning photos onto a CD and keeping them for you until you get home so they are backed up.

Phones

Most people find it very useful to bring their mobile with them and get a tz sim card when here which is virtually free. We can then reach you if needbe as well family texting you or you organising yourselves with safaris etc.

Theatre scrubs

Recently the suggestion has been made (by students) that it would be helpful if you brought scrubs, clogs and clean (not surgical) gloves as well as goggles. These are NOT vital as we mostly have enough but you may find it useful. Eye protection especially is scarce and I think important to bring.

Remember - this is Africa where everything takes time and what doesn't get done today may get done tomorrow or there again

Safari Njema na Karibu sana!
(travel well and welcome)

Sally Edmonds
November 2007

PS I would be very pleased if you could let me know exactly when and how you plan to arrive in the last few days before you get here as this makes sorting out room cleaning with students coming and going much simpler. Just turning up risks no room ready for you.