

Abstract

There is an increasing interest in medical students participating in short-term global health experiences, and such programs are gradually becoming more established at many medical schools. With this comes a striking need to establish best practices for students to have responsible global health experiences. We set out to conduct a review of the existing published literature on best preparation practices for medical students with the goal of consolidating this info for global health programs to use in creating their own short-term experiences. Twelve articles from 2007-2018 were selected for final review after a thorough literature search of several databases that resulted in 759 articles. Of these articles, concepts of bidirectional participation, site-specific resource training, implementation of ethics training, and situational judgement tests and case discussions emerged as the most common themes. These themes were incorporated in both the selection and training process for medical students embarking on global health experiences. The findings in these articles provide an adequate starting point for novel or existing global health programs seeking to establish their own experiences, and employment of these preparatory practices that are tailored to specifics of a particular international elective can provide enriching experiences for both students and countries of destination.