

# **Invitation by Parallel Integration to volunteer in Ghana for Mental Health Service Delivery Field Placement and Outreach Project**

## **WHAT IS PARALLEL INTEGRATION**

Parallel Integration is a volunteering organization based in Winneba, Ghana. It operates in four regions namely: Eastern, Western, Central and Ashanti.

## **WHY CARRY OUT THIS PROJECT?**

The Mental Health service delivery in Ghana has been one of the worst and shows no signs of recovery. The Executive Director of the Mental Health Authority, Dr Akwasi Osei, has said that mental health care in Ghana is one of the worst on the continent and needs critical attention.

According to him, records from the outpatient departments of the major mental health care facilities - Accra Psychiatric Hospital and the Pantang and Ankaful hospitals - in 2015 indicated over 100,000 patients. Some cases also often go unreported.

According to WHO, it is estimated that of the 21.6 million (in reference to 2004 population) people living in Ghana, 650,000 are suffering from a severe mental disorder and a further 2,166, 000 are suffering from a moderate to mild mental disorder. The treatment gap is 98% of the total population expected to have a mental disorder.

However, the majority of care is provided through specialized psychiatric hospitals (close to the capital and servicing only small proportion of the population), with relatively less government provision and funding for general hospital and primary health care based services. The few community-based services being provided are private.

Mental health services in Ghana are available at most levels of care.

Useful links:

[https://www.who.int/mental\\_health/policy/country/ghana/en/](https://www.who.int/mental_health/policy/country/ghana/en/)

<https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/.../The-Breakdown-of-Ghana-s-Mental->

## **PROJECT DURATION:**

For students, a minimum of Two Weeks and Four Weeks maximum are proposed. This is to ensure that students fall within their given vacation period.

However, if students wish to do more than the proposed duration our doors are opened.

Professionals can volunteer at any convenient time and duration. In all, the duration is flexible.

## **PROJECT DETAILS**

This project comprises of the:

1. Mental health service field placement
2. Outreach program

## **MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE FIELD PLACEMENT**

This phase of the project involves placement of volunteers at various psychiatric units and clinics in different parts of Ghana, within the four regions we operate for weeks depending on the length of stay. During this period volunteers will assist and be part of the psychiatric units team and will take part of all activities carried out at the unit including; home visits, case search, attending to cases, health education and talks etc.

## **OUTREACH PROGRAM**

This follows the period of field placement and involves

- Mental health and medical outreach services

**MENTAL HEALTH AND MEDICAL OUTREACH SERVICES**

This will involve series of public health trips, aside working in our partner hospitals (including all volunteers across all the placement sites) to prayer camps, traditional healing sites, 'witch' camps as tagged; that deal with mentally ill people and provision of medical and mental health services and counselling for them, support for them in terms of food, water, shelter and advocating and lobbying for the rights of the mentally ill to be respected as humans. Volunteers, accompanied by a medical officer or professional will carry out some medical screening exercise during our public health adventure, as well as dressing wounds of children, taking vitals for adults, checking malaria, blood sugar level, health education and some specific request by institutions.

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