

Dr. Emanuel Nuwas

General Surgeon, Tanzania

Dr. Nuwas will finish his training in general surgery in August 2014 and he will be surgeon in Haydom Lutheran Hospital, in rural Tanzania. Becoming a surgeon in low resourced regions is a challenging process. But he believes it also provides an opportunity for personal and patient's satisfaction. Dr. Nuwas will give a presentation about this process from his own experience:

Becoming a surgeon in a low resourced region, a personal story.

Dr. Emanuel Nuwas

Summary

My story starts when I was in primary school in a small village in Tanzania. At graduation day October 1993 I presented biology of the digestive system. The presentation impressed a visiting surgeon Dr.O.H.Olsen from Haydom Lutheran Hospital (HLH). He decided to sponsor my training on science subjects to undergraduate level and I managed to work with him as a medical student later.

After studying Medicine I worked from 2007 till 2010 as Medical Officer at HLH, a big rural hospital with bed capacity of around 400. My duties were to attend patients from pediatrics, medical, obstetrics/gynaecology and surgery (which included general surgery, neurosurgery and urology) as inpatients and outpatients on daily manner. It was also my duty to teach at school of nursing and to supervise elective medical students from different countries. This period was followed by burnouts and distress moments but I was still motivated and satisfied by the difference we make to save lives and improve quality of many of poor needy patients.

I worked with local doctors who were Assistant Medical Officers (AMO) and visiting general surgeons, neurosurgeons and resident trainees in general surgeries who were my mentors, coaches and teachers in surgery as we shared experiences at some points. Through working with them I gained knowledge, skills on decision making, operations, and follow up of patients. I was able to do primary live saving and some specialized both emergency and elective surgeries this was so satisfying and I was able to teach fellow local doctors and elective students.

Four years ago I was able to start a residency training in general surgery. It was challenging due to few trainers (consultants) with overwhelming number of surgical patients. We often work with limited diagnostic facilities, old or malfunctioning surgical instruments and inadequate consumables supplies. Good things were the dedicated consultants that were teaching and mentoring despite of being few and having to deal with big number of patients.

It's a challenging process to become a surgeon and being a surgeon in low resourced regions due to various resource limitations. During my presentation I will give some recommendations from my own experience how we can improve surgical care in low resource settings. Despite of the difficulties I am motivated and satisfied by the lives we save and the improved quality of life we can often give.

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