

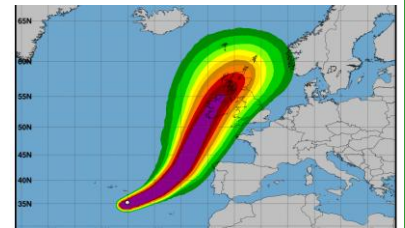


Summary of Experience from the 2017 International Health & Development Training for Healthcare Workers

Friday 13th – Sunday 15th October 2017

Achill Outdoor Education Centre, Achill Island, Co Mayo

From Friday 13th through Sunday 15th Oct 2017, 55 participants and 9 facilitators braved the incoming Storm Ophelia to attend the International Health and Development Training weekend at the Achill Outdoor Education Centre in Achill Island, Co Mayo. The workshop was organised by the Health Service Executive (HSE) Global Health Programme in partnership with Comhlámh; the Irish Forum for Global Health; Kimmage Development Studies Centre; University College Dublin; National University of Ireland, Galway; and ESTHER Ireland, with support from Irish Aid.



The workshop covered a range of topics for healthcare workers who were interested in volunteering in less-developed countries. It introduced key issues in global health and the nature of healthcare in resource-poor settings, and provided attendees with opportunities to explore skills and competencies they could bring to the sector.

Participants engaged in practical workshops and training activities including: role play, diversity board games, case studies, a living sculpture exercise, group work, candid discussions exploring peoples' cultures and beliefs, a live video link to a healthcare worker in Mozambique, and even the design of a latrine in a refugee crisis situation! Those who had worked or volunteered in less-developed countries shared their fascinating experiences with the group as well.

Facilitator Presentations

Our facilitators on the programme were as follows:

- **Dr David Weakliam**, Specialist in Public Health Medicine & National Lead for HSE Global Health Programme
- **Dr Diarmuid O'Donovan**, Director of Public Health HSE West & Senior Lecturer in Social and Preventative Medicine at NUI Galway
- **Dr Méabh Ni Bhuinneáin**, Obstetrician / Gynecologist at Mayo University Hospital
- **Brid Boyce**, Quality Improvement Advisor, HSE National Quality Improvement Division
- **Sive Bresnihan**, Training and Education with Comhlámh
- **Niall Roche**, previous Environmental Health Officer, now working with WaSH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) in humanitarian context
- **Steve Macdonald**, Communications Coordinator for the IFGH and researcher & communicator with global NGOs
- **Deirdre Healy**, education and training facilitator with Kimmage Development Studies Centre
- **Margaret Fitzgerald**, medical doctor working with HSE Social Inclusion

Presentations from the event are available by contacting Mary Lawless in the HSE Global Health Programme Office at globalhealth@hse.ie.



Feedback on the Weekend

At the close of the weekend, we asked participants to complete an evaluation of their experience so that we could gather feedback on the content and structure of this unique training weekend.

What people enjoyed the most about the course was the fact that it brought together a like-minded but diverse group of people, with opportunities for networking and sharing experiences. Participants noted the warm atmosphere, excellent facilitators, and positive group dynamics. Overall, the majority of participants said that it was a “great weekend. Well done and thank you”.

“I found it a fantastic weekend, mainly because of all the people involved – participants, presenters, and staff of the outdoor centre.”

“It was most positive and reflective. It challenged my views and past experiences, and enlightened my enthusiasm to partnership in future. Well done.”

The course organisers noted a few areas for potential improvement to shape future training courses like this. Attendees suggested it would be great to include more downtime time to explore Achill Island, as many had never been there before. Recommended topics for future courses included: additional presentations on specific options and opportunities for volunteering and working overseas; ethics and code of practice; mental health and self-care when volunteering; up-to-date information on current humanitarian emergencies; and presentations from people who have recently returned from volunteering or working abroad.

Ways to Stay Engaged

We encourage our training course participants to stay engaged with Global Health in a number of different ways. Many offer opportunities for grant-funding overseas project work, networking, courses, volunteer stories, and other supports and services that may interest you.

Online: Regularly check-in with the Twitter accounts & websites of Irish organisations involved in global health, including:

- [Health Service Executive \(HSE\) Global Health Programme](#): Since 2010, the HSE Global Health Programme has facilitated HSE staff and institutions to engage globally, including with international organisations as well as developing countries in Africa and Asia.
- [Comhlámh](#): Comhlámh is an independent membership organisation which advocates for a just and equitable world, working together with and drawing on the experience of development workers, volunteers and activists.
- [The Irish Forum for Global Health](#): The Irish Forum for Global Health brings together academics, NGO workers, researchers, civil society, and industry.
- [ESTHER Ireland](#): ESTHER Ireland works to foster international partnerships between Irish health institutions and organisations, and their counterparts overseas, to strengthen health systems and improve health outcomes.
- [Irish Aid](#): Irish Aid is the Irish Government’s official aid programme, working on behalf of Irish people to address poverty and hunger in some of the world’s poorest countries.

Email: The HSE Global Health Programme is currently compiling a mailing list of healthcare workers who are interested in overseas work. If you wish to be included on this mailing list and receive future information from the Global Health Programme Office, please email globalhealth@hse.ie

Networking Events: The Irish Aid Volunteering Fair offers an opportunity to meet face-to-face with organisations in Ireland that offer overseas volunteering placements. This year’s event is scheduled for 5th – 7th October 2018. For more information, go to <https://www.irishaid.ie/get-involved/volunteering/volunteer-fair/>

Training: We are currently planning the 2018 International Health & Development Training for Healthcare Workers, which is expected to take place in Achill in October 2018. Details will be available on the HSE Global Health website at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/qid/other-quality-improvement-programmes/globalhealth/>

