



Medical Volunteering at the Lifeline Clinic

Our aim is to provide volunteers with a wonderful opportunity to contribute to the medical welfare of the San community and experience unspoiled African wilderness. Our volunteers are key to the success of this special place. All the money raised through our volunteering programme goes directly back into the project which provides employment, healthcare, education and accommodation to the local Bushman community and to ensure the rescue, survival and rehabilitation of orphaned and injured African wildlife.

Namibia truly is a wonderful country to experience, the scenery is spectacular and you will work with our friendly and dedicated team. If you come prepared to learn and to give your best you will be rewarded with a fantastic experience and wonderful memories to take home.

We do hope you will come and join us!

**DR RUDIE AND MARLICE VAN VUUREN
DIRECTORS AND FOUNDERS, N/A'AN KU SÊ FOUNDATION**



Medical Volunteer

During the project you will spend your time at our remote clinic in east Namibia. This is located in Omawewozonyanda (Pos 3), a rural village within the Epukiro Constituency of the Omaheke Region in which around 500 San and Herero people live.

From here you will help to provide primary healthcare for the local community and surrounding areas by assisting our 2 doctors and nurse. The Lifeline Clinic treats around 3,500 patients each year. Approximately 80% of our patients are San, and the remainder are mostly Herero and Damara speaking Namibians.



Volunteers come from a wide variety of backgrounds, both medical and non-medical, and there are many different ways to get involved in the life of the clinic and community. We can cater for medical electives and will be happy to discuss how to fulfil the requirements of your medical school.

Your arrival and departure base will be our N/a'an ku sê Wildlife Sanctuary, near Windhoek Airport, so if you wish you can also have the unique opportunity to work with the animals here for a few days. The Lifeline Clinic is approximately a 4 hour drive from the sanctuary and we will arrange all your transfers.

Our aim is to provide volunteers with the wonderful opportunity to experience African wilderness in the knowledge that you are contributing to improving the lives of the people of Namibia.

N/a'an ku sê Foundation, P.O. Box 99292, Windhoek, Namibia.

Namibia Charity no.: 21/2007/256. UK Charity no. 1142421 VAT 4432160-01-5

T: + 264 (0) 81 261 2709 E-Mail: bookings@naankuse.com Website: www.naankuse.com

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Lifeline Medical Clinic

The clinic was established in 2003 following the tragic death of a San baby, initially with regular outreach sessions and then with a permanent clinic from 2006. The Lifeline Clinic is dedicated to the health and welfare of the San Bushman community, providing free medical care. The San are considered to be the oldest culture in the world and are traditionally hunter gatherers. They have been forced from their original lands, which are increasingly being used for grazing cattle, leaving the San unable to survive in their traditional lifestyle and often living in extreme poverty. N/a'an ku sê is committed to improving the lives of the San community through education, healthcare and better living conditions.



Approximately 40% of the clinic patients are children and 70% of these are under 5 years old. TB and HIV are prevalent in the community as is alcoholism. We also see a lot of patients with aches and pains, and everyday problems. Common diseases amongst our child patients include fungal infections, intestinal worms, diarrhea, dehydration, malnutrition and mouth infections (e.g. oral thrush). By themselves, these infections and illnesses may not be particularly severe, however if left untreated they will get much worse leading to complications and in severe cases even death.

In addition to working at the Lifeline clinic, our doctors also carry out regular outreach clinics at local schools, resettlement villages and farms. This year we have received some additional funding to expand our TB program – we are travelling further from the clinic base to actively seek people with symptoms of TB before they become very sick.

Volunteer Activities

Volunteer activities at the clinic depend on your personal background and experience, but there is always something you can get involved with. You will deal closely with patients from the local San community, learn more about their way of life and give care to patients living in extreme poverty at the clinic's remote location. Tasks for volunteers at the clinic include:

- Recording patient observations: blood pressure, heart rate, oxygen saturations, temperature
- Performing urine pregnancy and dipstick tests for patients and recording findings
- Weighing babies and recording growth charts
- Glucose testing and recording
- Basic wound cleaning and dressing
- Helping in the pharmacy: stock control, packing medicines and new orders
- Family planning
- Project data input
- Sorting donated clothing and other items

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- General maintenance and cleaning of the clinic
- Playing with the local children who attend the clinic
- Preparing food packages for patients
- Recording patient information and survey responses on outreach trips



During your stay you will learn about the common diseases affecting the local population and how to treat them. The teaching will be tailored to your skill level, background and knowledge. Medical students and motivated pre-medical students will be able to conduct consultations under the supervision of the clinic doctors. Medical professionals can share their knowledge and skills with the clinic doctors, and assist with consultations – please contact us in advance of your visit to discuss how we can best utilise your particular skills.

Volunteers from all backgrounds often have special skills that are invaluable to the clinic and we encourage you to use them and suggest new activities that you feel the project will benefit from.

The clinic is open 8-5 Monday to Friday with a break for lunch. In addition to running the clinic, a typical fortnight would include:



- Six TB case finding days (sometimes camping overnight)
- Two trips to our nearest town for supplies and to transfer patients to hospital
- One or two outreach clinics at various locations up to 3hr drive away
- An afternoon of community health education with a nutritious meal provided

There are usually two to four volunteers staying with us at one time, so there will be some volunteers at the clinic while some are out and about with the other doctor. At weekends there is free time to relax, play with the local children, walk around the village, or cheer on the village football and netball teams.

While volunteering at the Lifeline Clinic you will stay in a bungalow house along with the resident doctors and nurse. Depending on volunteer numbers, you will have a room to yourself or share with one other of the same gender. The house has a kitchen, bathroom and living room (with TV and Wi-Fi). Electricity and hot water are freely available, with occasional short power-cuts. Three meals are provided each day which you will prepare yourself together with your housemates.



Things to consider bringing:

- Any donated items from our wish list (<http://naankuse.com/wish-list/>)
- Sleeping bag if you are interested in camping – you can borrow one from us but may prefer your own
- Head torch for dark nights
- Closed shoes and long trousers to protect from unwanted crawling visitors in remote areas
- Clothing appropriate for the clinic – there is no dress code or uniform but please avoid revealing tops or very short skirts/hot pants
- Sun cream, day-sack and a large water bottle for day trips



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Wildlife Sanctuary

Depending on your length of stay with us, you may also get the opportunity to spend some of your time participating in the Wildlife Volunteer project at our sanctuary near Windhoek. This project offers the rare and exciting opportunity to help care for orphaned and injured African wildlife.

The sanctuary currently provides a safe refuge for orphaned and injured wildlife including a number of lions, leopards, cheetahs, wild dogs, caracals and baboons. Our Wildlife Volunteers provide an important resource in caring for and feeding the animals on a daily basis, helping to maintain and develop the sanctuary and becoming surrogate parents to our orphaned baby baboons, bottle feeding and sleeping overnight with them.

Please be flexible as the time spent at the sanctuary and the clinic will depend on resources and timetables of other volunteers and activities. Please advise if you are interested in working at the sanctuary as part of your time with us.

Book now!

To make a booking or enquiry please email bookings@naankuse.com