



## Practical Experience for Doctors in Training

Filip Pajak

Project Manager of SASA Foundation, Warsaw, Poland, Email: [Phillip.pajak@gmail.com](mailto:Phillip.pajak@gmail.com)



**Type of article:** Interview

### How to cite this article:

Filip Pajak. Practical Experience for Doctors in Training: An Interview with Filip Pajak. *Electronic physician*, Volume 8, November 18, 2016, doi: [10.19082/medtrain2016](https://doi.org/10.19082/medtrain2016)

### Abstract

An idea connecting medical students with physicians from around the world is a current project run by **Filip Pajak**. The concept truly supports countries and hospitals with financial needs and is aimed towards ambitious medical students who wish to experience and learn more than the university can offer them. It is an innovative approach to a number of global medical issues. In the interview, he presents principles of the project, talks about the needs and his own motivation.

**Keywords:** Medical training, Idea, Practitioner, Clinical training

### The Interview

#### *What does your project mean for a student and for a host?*

For each student who decides to go abroad, it is certainly an extraordinary experience and a unique, modern way of learning. All thanks to highlighting the practice and the use of theoretical backgrounds of students, which had been learnt traditionally before. The project allows them to face the real world of medicine, and helps focus on what they really like in medicine. It is also about acquiring the experience of cases and disorders exclusively found in books – and otherwise not common in their own country. The project gives them real opportunity to see it in reality. For a clinic, it is a unique chance to receive financial support for hosting each student. It may be the way to get support with often needed medical equipment and become more prominent, attracting more prospective sponsors. As you can see, both sides truly benefit from it.

#### *How did you come up with this idea?*

I am a student myself and I know what it means to have ambitions and a huge will, but to be limited. The university hospitals do not always allow students to attend interesting manipulations. Many medical residents and interns are the priority for hospitals, and that limits places for humble, but ambitious students. However, international experience works as a huge booster of motivation, a perfect possibility to check which branch of medicine they match to and what benefits the self-development and conscious choice of their career. There are plenty of students who would like to dedicate their extra time to study cases and learn in a more practical way. However they can seldom find such opportunities, not only in their own university, but throughout the whole country.

#### *Who is the potential host?*

Any clinic, hospital or even a single practitioner who speaks English and wants to host volunteer students would be an interesting candidate to cooperate with. Although, practically anybody who wishes to contribute is most

welcome, with any skills, for example IT, photography. I am truly open to ideas and a fresh thought about the project. Precisely what would be on offer for the student? Certainly a complex offer, including a well-written article about specificity of each country, vacancy at the hospital with open and friendly doctors, family hosting or different accommodation and insurance. The hosting family can be seen as a fundamental connection to the culture and a key to understanding the people and the environment – their habits, approach and life situation. All those components are of great value for a student, because it's not that easy to organize something like that on one's own.

***Is this idea unique?***

I believe it is, yes. There are a few websites offering similar programs for students, but they seem very commercial and it's hard to find a specialized one in the field of medicine. My goal is, supported by a medical journal, to contribute to the development of hospitals and medical centers with needs. Through this, to have a real impact on the situation in hosting countries and to improve the quality of practical knowledge of the medical students.

***Do you have any experience?***

Yes, I did my elective program in South-East Asia this year. That project received interest from two American institutes: Global Clinical Trial and Princeton Medical Institutes. There, I established the first network of doctors that have possibilities and the will to teach. I work as a project manager for SASA Foundation that continually sends medical volunteers and equipment to Tanzania and gives our students the extra opportunity to learn. I underwent a complex seminary and leadership course that taught me how to manage my own projects well.

***Is it your only medical project?***

No, I also work on a forum of young researchers and medical doctors as a platform to cooperate. That will unite people with the same ambitions and goals, who seek help in writing, or simply want to share ideas about interesting conferences. The concept needs more people for it develop further, and prospectively work on the international level.

***Filip Pajak is the project manager of SASA Foundation and coordinator of numerous European Commission projects. He is an ambitious medical student and activist who has visited 26 countries and speaks 4 foreign languages.***