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PYONGYANG PROJECT
평양 프로젝트

**Medical Science Conference & Women's Health Initiative
DPRK (North Korea)**
Kim Il Sung University
Pyongyang Medical University

Program overview

This mission seeks to develop educational contacts between foreign institutions and select DPRK universities, medical schools and hospitals. A visiting delegation of experts and academicians will provide interactive lectures for women's health providers located at various sites in the DPRK. Delegate applications will also be considered from medical students and graduate students in the health professions. Themes for women's health covered during this conference include:

- Reducing maternal mortality and neonatal death
- Improving GYN cancer screening and treatment (including breast cancer)
- Sharing new advances in treatment of miscarriage (and infertility)
- Updating community practice for routine wellness/health maintenance

Other themes, such as infectious disease, will also be covered if there is interest among delegates. While in the DPRK, delegates will interact with DPRK colleagues in a variety of contexts to discuss clinical questions concerning patient care. Evidence-based research will be reviewed to discuss current best practice, as informed by international standards.

Program objectives are achieved across a range of settings inside the DPRK—either didactic lectures or less formal small group presentations. In addition, delegates will have opportunities to learn about women's health issues in the DPRK, so the program facilitates a two-way dialogue among all participants. This will be particularly beneficial to visiting doctors having questions regarding traditional Korean medicines, about which little is published outside the DPRK.

This program strongly encourages sustained academic partnerships between DPRK investigators and foreign colleagues on areas of shared research interest, and anticipates collaborative publications to follow in peer-review medical or scientific journals.

Program Dates

August 1st through August 10th, 2014.

Registration Fee

A participant registration fee of \$2,000 USD per person is charged to cover travel, food, and organizational program costs. This includes two meals per day, flights between Beijing and Pyongyang, accommodation throughout the program, ground transportation and program staff.

It *excludes* travel to and from Beijing, the program start point. Also excluded are DPRK visa costs (humanitarian-class, cost varies depending on citizenship and visa reciprocity), personal spending, drinks, and one meal per day in the DPRK.

Accommodation is based on double occupancy (roommates assigned); should a participant require single occupancy, an upgrade is available for \$50 USD per night.

Conference Format

This exchange emphasizes creativity and learning, and includes didactic presentations, workshops, design labs, site visits, and building foundations for joint research.

Presentations

All professional and academic members of the delegation are expected to give at least one lecture style presentation on their field of research or expertise during the mission. Host facilities have equipment necessary to give PowerPoint presentations, and full translation service (English-Korean) will be provided for all sessions. Presentation notes will be distributed to each participant before the start of the conference.

Workshops

Workshops are small, specialized discussion and sharing sessions for learning about new and best practices, sharing cutting-edge research and developments all related to a specific field of study or expertise. These small group sessions are made possible with the understanding that discussions are confined to the particular topic of the session.

Design Labs

Design labs are about developing creative strategies to put knowledge to use. The goal is to have all members equally participating in practical discussions on how to best implement and develop strategies for implementation of health-care solutions. We call them “design labs” because the participants are to use their expertise and skills, as well as local knowledge to design solutions for health care issues.

Site Visits

All participants will visit various topic-related locales in the DPRK during the weeklong conference. These site visits may include hospitals, clinics, health care centers, nurseries, research labs, institutions, and more.

Joint Research Foundation Setting

One goal of this conference—and all future conferences—is to allow researchers a channel to establish joint research projects in relevant fields. Therefore, during the conference, Korean experts will be matched with foreign counterparts working in related fields to encourage joint research and/or joint publications.

Basic Conference Schedule

NOTE :: It is recommended that participants arrive in Beijing 1-2 days before orientation.

Friday, August 1st

Orientation (Beijing). In the morning, passports will be collected and taken to the DPRK embassy so that Visas may be finalized. We will host a meet- and-greet in the morning, followed by an introductory session and a group lunch. In the afternoon, a planning and information session will be held at either the Canadian or U.S. embassy.

Saturday, August 2nd

International participants will arrive in Pyongyang on Air Koryo flight JS 152, departing from Beijing Capital International Airport Terminal 2 at 12:00 and arrive at Pyongyang International Airport at 15:00.

Sunday, August 3rd

Tour Pyongyang & Pyongsong (supervised). Various hospitals, clinics, and health and medicine-related facilities will be visited. Obtain general overview of Pyongyang municipal layout.

Monday, August 4th

Pyongyang workshop—*representative schedule*

9:00am Arrival at University

9:15am Presentation :: **Maternal health challenges and controversies**

10:00am Host comments & audience Q&A

10:30am Presentation :: **Breast cancer screening & management**

11:15am Host comments & audience Q&A

12:00pm [lunch break]

1:15pm Presentation :: **Community health services for women**

2:00pm Host comments & audience Q&A

2:30pm Presentation :: **Female infertility—estimating ovarian reserve**

3:15pm Host comments & audience Q&A

4:00pm session ends - delegates depart the University and return to lodging

NOTE: *A less structured format may be desirable for some locations. The educational program is flexible, allowing for considerable variation in how material is presented.*

A more detailed itinerary will be determined from the participants' research portfolios. Afternoon sessions consist of small group sessions; subjects covered will depend on specific research fields of each participant.

Tuesday, August 5th

Conference second day. Community health screening and reproductive health/miscarriage prevention.

Wednesday, August 6th

Road trip (overnight) for rural site visits and meetings with local healthcare providers. These will be primary care facilities providing basic medical services in remote areas of DPRK; the specific sites will be determined by KIS University staff. We will spend the night at a local inn in a provincial city.

Thursday, August 7th

Return to Pyongyang in the morning; conference programming continues after lunch.

Friday, August 8th

Final conference day. In the morning participants will continue with their workshops and joint research proposals. In the afternoon, each workshop group will present their key findings and proposals in plenary session. A concluding dinner will be held for all participants that evening.

Saturday, August 9th

Participants leave Pyongyang on Air Koryo flight JS 151, departing Pyongyang International Airport at 09:00 and arriving at Beijing Capital International Airport Terminal 2 at 09:55. Upon arrival in Beijing, there will be an internal debriefing session over lunch followed by a diplomatic level exchange in the afternoon and continuing to dinner.

Sunday, August 10th

Depart from Beijing.

Responsibilities of Participation

All participants must adhere to DPRK laws and regulations while in the DPRK. All participants must submit abridged CVs and proof of credentials with their application to participate in this program.

DPRK will verify these documents along with each individual's identity during the Visa application process. All information submitted should be exact and up to date to avoid delays in Visa processing.

Application and DPRK Visa details

Individuals interested in joining the 1-10 August 2014 delegation should submit the following items by email to matthew.reichel@gmail.com *no later than June 15th, 2014*:

1. A digital colour photocopy of passport
2. A digital color passport type photo (standard 2x2 inch)
3. Current CV
4. Completed WHI application including personal statement (application provided separately)

If selected to join the delegation, the participant understands that lecture and/or presentation material is to be given only at venues specifically approved by DPRK hosts. Participants are expected to attend all sessions at each host institution.

Important Safety Information

Canadian, U.S. and E.U. law do not prohibit travel to the DPRK for the purpose of tourism, education or humanitarianism. Our delegation will, of course, have all the proper visas and paperwork to enter and exit the DPRK lawfully. As noted previously, the *Choui* will facilitate all DPRK Visa applications for all members of this delegation.

Foreign citizens have been legally able to enter North Korea for tourism, humanitarian, and business purposes since the mid-1990s. These individuals have no difficulty inside DPRK if they obtain a Visa and follow some basic rules.

Members of *Choui* have been going to North Korea for over a decade – now specifically as organizers for leading specialists and academics. Because of these years of contact, the directors have cultivated meaningful relationships with North Korean universities and organizations, and the group will be able to take advantage of this network. We are also one of the few outside organizations able to work directly with North Korean universities.

“Option to Cancel” and Medical Emergency

In the event of any unforeseen dangerous or politically destabilizing development occurring once already inside the DPRK, the scheduled itinerary may require adjustment—and possibly even an emergency exit from DPRK. There are daily flights between Pyongyang and Beijing or Shenyang, China, as well as rail service to Dandong, China. If there were significant political disruption in North Korea once a group is already there, the government is much more likely to request (or compel) foreigners to evacuate, rather than hold them in the country.

Accordingly it may be necessary to cancel the mission to North Korea, at any point, for safety reasons. This would be a solution to any number of situations that might emerge between when we plan the trip and when we leave. If there are any threats or risks to this delegation, the visit to North Korea will be cancelled immediately; the decision remains open until we step on the plane. We have never had to cancel a planned trip to the DPRK in the past for this reason. Such a situation, while possible, remains extremely unlikely.

If immediate medical care were required while in the DPRK, one option would be to evacuate the individual on a commercial flight.

Alternatively, the medical evacuation system set up by the Embassy of Sweden in Pyongyang may be used. A third option for less urgent cases would be to receive treatment at the Red Cross clinic, largely established for foreign diplomatic and resident NGO personnel (with a European-trained staff). Payment for this service is made up-front, and is typically 130 Euros (cash only).

Administration

This program operates under the sponsorship of the Department of International Relations at Kim Il Sung University (Pyongyang); the Pyongyang Medical University and the DPRK Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The delegation is co-chaired by Mr. Matthew Reichel from Choui (Vancouver, BC), Dr. E. Scott Sills from the Faculty of Science & Technology, University of Westminster (London) and Office for Reproductive Research/HRC Fertility (Los Angeles, CA), and Ye-jin Kang from Harvard Medical University (student).

What Next?

If you are interested in being considered for this delegation to DPRK, contact the following trip organizers: Dr. Sills, if you are a professional or academician, or Ye-jin Kang, if you are a student. Email them and request an application before June 10, 2014. There is no cost to submit your application. This step is required to collect academic and institutional data.

Next, if approved to join the group, your program fee of \$2,000 USD must be received by Choui no later than June 15, 2014 in order to process your DRPK Visa and reserve your place in the mission.

Request Your Application by Email:

E. Scott Sills, sillsivf@havingbabies.com
For Professionals and Academicians

Ye jin Kang, yinkng88@gmail.com
For Students

Matthew Reichel matthew.reichel@gmail.com
For other inquiries

Program Fee of \$2,000 USD Due By:

June 15, 2014.

Payment must be in U.S. funds. Specific information will be provided to approved delegates under separate cover. For your protection, please do not attempt to initiate a wire transfer related to DPRK without this guidance.



The word *cho* [조, 朝] refers to North Korea; and *ui* [의, 義] captures the essence of righteousness, justice, responsibility, and duty. CHOUUI [조의, 朝義] combines these ideas into one platform for creativity, capacity building, and entrepreneurship in North Korea.