



Practicum Opportunity

Assessing Neglected Clubfoot Programming Protocol

MiracleFeet Overview

MiracleFeet is an international nonprofit organization that increases access to proper treatment for children born with clubfoot in low and middle-income countries (LMICs) through partnerships with local healthcare providers. There are over one million people living with untreated clubfoot, making it one of the primary causes of physical disability in the world. Since our inception, we have supported the treatment of over 25,000 children in 21 low and middle income countries through over 185 partner clinics. We utilize the Ponseti Method (non-invasive, gold standard of treatment involving serial casting and bracing), which makes it possible to treat clubfoot effectively and safely for as little as \$250 a person. By increasing access to treatment, MiracleFeet gives children born with clubfoot the chance live active, healthy, and productive lives. MiracleFeet aims to reach 100,000 children by 2022, with a mission of working to eradicate the disability associated with clubfoot globally.

See www.miraclefeet.org to learn more about the issue of clubfoot and how MiracleFeet is approaching it.

Summary

There is good evidence for an effective low-cost treatment for clubfoot (Ponseti method), however occasionally a surgical review (assessment of the need for surgery for a patient in treatment) is required. Surgery may involve manipulation of the muscles, tendons, ligaments or joints for more difficult cases of clubfoot. For older children with partially corrected or relapsed clubfoot, there is a need to fully assess the presence and utilization of referral pathways within the healthcare system, and determine the need for protocols to assist the success of potential surgical intervention.

Currently, there is no standardized method of assessing and referring children with clubfoot for a surgical review in many low resource settings. Multidisciplinary team collaboration is required for planning pre-surgery and rehabilitation. Evidence for pre-surgical referral pathways and rehabilitation protocols is required to inform program planning in LMICs.

This practicum will involve researching existing protocols and guidelines for “neglected clubfoot” and providing a review of available literature to the principle investigator and MiracleFeet. The work from this practicum will deeply inform the work done by MiracleFeet and in-country partners in developing a survey and needs assessment that will follow. Ultimately, this practicum



will contribute significantly to the establishment of best practices in clubfoot management globally.

This position reports to the Research, Evaluation and Operations Manager and works closely with the Deputy Director of Programs.

Responsibilities

- Research existing guidelines and protocols on neglected clubfoot in published and grey literature
- Provide a report to the principle investigator and MiracleFeet staff
- Draft an Introduction section for a journal article that will include Methods and Results from the subsequent survey and needs assessment

Skills and Experiences Developed

- Research, synthesis, and analysis of literature content
- Technical writing
- Insight and experience at a well-connected global nonprofit
- Contribution to in-country program development and establishment of best practices in global health

Location, Timing and Funding

This practicum must be completed during the spring 2018 semester, with final deliverables due May 1, 2018. This practicum can be undertaken remotely and done during or outside MiracleFeet work hours. Space is available at the MiracleFeet office in Chapel Hill, NC for the student to work at the office. The student is expected to keep track of her/his hours and to submit these hours on a weekly basis. This practicum is unfunded. The student will receive authorship as appropriate for any subsequent publications that arise from this project.

Requirements

- Must have at least one semester of credits towards a masters degree, or hold a terminal degree in a health-related field
- Must be fluent in spoken and written English
- Must have frequent access to:
 - o a computer
 - o high-speed internet
 - o a university library



How to Apply

Send a resume and brief description of interest and applicable skills (<300 words) to Christie Pettitt-Schieber at christie.pettitt-schieber@miraclefeet.org.