

Volunteer in Mae Sot, Thailand and Make a Difference! Women's Health Initiative (WHI) Cervical Cancer Prevention Outreach March 1 - 15, 2024

Project HANDS overview and philosophy

The scales of the world are unbalanced. Some of us have much more than we need, whilst others struggle to survive on an unthinkable amount of nothing. Project HANDS seeks to rebalance the scales. We are a registered Canadian volunteer organization that provides healthcare, education and support to those who, by chance of birth, have less fortunate lives than our own. We have no religious or political affiliation. Our mandate is empowerment. We do not relieve developing societies of their duty to provide healthcare. Rather, we assist them through training and upskilling. When we help make sustainable change, the scales begin to rebalance, and it is time to move on and offer our hand to someone else.

What are the goals for this trip?

To screen 800 women and administer immediate thermal ablation treatment for dysplasia.

Why is this work important?

Cervical cancer is nearly 100% preventable, yet it claims more than 300,000 lives a year. 90% of the deaths occur in poor countries. Early detection and treatment save lives.

What methodology is used?

We use a "see & treat" methodology (visual inspection with acetic acid and immediate thermal ablation). It is the most cost effective (fewest dollars spent per life year saved) strategy for low resource regions.

What are the program achievements to date?

We have trained 70+ healthcare professionals, screened 9200+ women and administered 600+ ablation treatments in Bolivia, Myanmar and Thailand.

What is the trip schedule?

Days 1 & 2 | Friday, March 1 & Saturday, March 2 | travel to Bangkok, Thailand

Day 3 | Sunday, March 3 | fly to Mae Sot

Days 4 - 13 | March 4 -13 | 8 days of screening clinics and 2 weekend days at leisure

Day 14 | Thursday, March 14 | fly to Bangkok and onward destinations or overnight

Day 15 | Friday, March 15 | travel home

Where will the team work?

We will work at Mae Tao Clinic, Mae La Refugee Camp and Umpiem Mai Refugee Camp, in the vicinity of Mae Sot, Thailand.

What is our target demographic?

Our target demographic is low-income women between the ages of 25 & 55 that live on the Thai-Myanmar border. Most are displaced refugees. All are vulnerable because of the prevalence of HPV and lack of screening programs.

What is the team makeup?

The team will consist of three clinicians and a logistics coordinator, who will work in close collaboration with International Rescue Committee and local medical professionals and interpreters.

What types of volunteers are needed?

We are seeking three gynecologists, colposcopists, general practitioners, physician assistants, nurse practitioners or midwives with relevant experience.

When is the application deadline?

Recruiting will remain open until we find the perfect team members.

Where does the team stay?

We stay at a very comfortable hotel with private rooms and en suite bathrooms.

What are the participation requirements?

- resume and proof of current professional registration
- online registration form, volunteer agreement and waiver of liability
- book and pay for your flights and hotels
- pay all individual expenses en route and in Thailand (listed below)
- purchase international medical and evacuation insurance
- comply with strictly enforced deadlines for all requirements
- be in good physical health, as the days are long and demanding
- be flexible, possess a sense of humor, and contribute to positive team dynamics

How much does it cost to volunteer?

Estimated costs may include the following, if applicable:

- international airfare: varies widely based on departure city and other factors
- flights between Bangkok and Mae Sot: US\$250
- transit hotels in Bangkok for 1 or 2 nights, if required: US\$200 - \$400
- Mae Sot hotel, based on single room occupancy: US\$500
- meals US\$300
- international medical and evacuation insurance: US\$100

Upon completion of the trip, you may request up to US\$2,000 reimbursement of eligible expenses (airfare, hotels, meals, ground transportation). Receipts must be provided.

Are my expenses tax-deductible?

Project HANDS can issue a Canadian tax receipt. US volunteers should consult a tax advisor.

May a friend or family member accompany me?

Sorry, we cannot accommodate friends or family members. There is no role on the team, the examination areas are strictly off-limits, and there are no tourist attractions or diversions in the vicinity.

I would like additional information about Project HANDS.

Please visit www.projecthands.org.

I would like to be considered for the team, and/or have additional questions.

Please contact Debbie Jefkin-Elnekave at debbie.projecthands@gmail.com or (808) 214-6053. First time applicants must submit a resume in order to be considered. If you have applied or volunteered in the past, your resume is still on file. Volunteers who are selected for the team will be provided with a link to formally register online.

What if it was you who needed a hand?

Would it be there?