The UCLA Center for World Health has established strong relationships with the Regional Hospital of Loreto in Iquitos, in the Amazon region of northern Peru. Iquitos is the largest city in the Peruvian rainforest, and is considered the densest city in the world that cannot be reached by road. The government’s Regional Hospital serves over a million residents from the city and its surrounding rural communities in the Amazon basin. Some patients seen there have traveled for over two weeks by boat from remote villages to reach medical attention.

We are pleased to offer a clinical rotation in Iquitos in the spring of 2018. This global health elective will provide broad exposure to an extremely underserved population, with opportunities to see patients at both the Regional Hospital of Loreto and at high volume outpatient centers, including the Belen Clinic on the Amazon (both settings pictured to the left).

Opportunities at the Regional Hospital include rotating on a general pediatrics ward service, an adult infectious diseases ward service, an Ob-Gyn service, and an Emergency Medicine experience. A one-week outpatient experience will be established as well, with likely opportunities to see patients in rural health care centers “up river,” traveling with a primary care physician and a public health nurse. Some of the most frequently seen diagnoses include pneumonia, diarrhea and dehydration, tuberculosis, dengue fever, malaria, HIV/AIDS, trauma, seizures, meningitis, snake bites, burns and leptospirosis.

While in Iquitos, students are supervised by attending physicians in pediatrics, primary care medicine and adult infectious diseases. At the Regional Hospital, students will work alongside the equivalent of transitional residents and pediatric residents, along with medical students from the Universidad Nacional de la Amazona Peruana. Students must have strong conversational Spanish skills in order to participate in this elective.

The rotation in Iquitos has been developed with formal goals and objectives. We are seeking students with an interest in caring for underserved populations, and those with enthusiasm for global health, tropical medicine and health care delivery in resource poor settings. Students will be expected to demonstrate the highest level of maturity, professionalism and cultural sensitivity.

Interviews for the elective will take place on October 7, 2017, with a few additional time slots during the following week. Students selected for this rotation are required to participate in a full day pre-departure training program in Los Angeles on Saturday, January 20, 2018. Upon return home from Peru, students will be expected to provide feedback through written evaluation forms, and to participate in a mandatory lunchtime feedback session on Thursday, May 31, 2018.

Students will receive $1,500 in support for the Iquitos clinical rotation upon return from Peru. These funds will offset the costs of roundtrip airfare and in-country accommodation and food. Students will need to cover the remaining expenses from other funds, as the cost of this rotation will exceed the amount provided.

Rotation dates for Iquitos have been confirmed. Students applying to this elective must be able to commit to this elective from March 26, 2018 through April 13, 2018. Note that a March 26 start date will require departure by March 25, 2018, at the latest, and that there may not be any clinical activities on March 30, due to the Good Friday holiday.

Questions regarding this rotation should be directed to Dr. Traci Wells at twells@mednet.ucla.edu. Thank you for your interest in this clinical opportunity in Peru!