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 2019. 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 potentially at a high volume outpatient center.

Opportunities at the Regional Hospital include rotating on a general pediatrics ward service, an adult infectious diseases inpatient service, a Surgery service, an Ob-Gyn service, and an Emergency Medicine service. The rotation may also include a one-week outpatient experience, with likely opportunities to do home visits for patients “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, and most recently, Zika virus infections.

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 humility.

Interviews for the elective will take place on Friday, October 5, Saturday, October 6, and Tuesday, October 9, 2018. Students selected for this rotation are required to participate in a full day pre-departure training program in Los Angeles on Saturday, January 12, 2019. 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 30, 2019.

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 25, 2019 through April 12, 2019. Note that a March 25 start date will require departure by March 24, 2019, at the latest.

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!