



## Exciting Opportunity for Paediatric Intensivist 2020

Mercy James Centre, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa

Are you looking to work overseas? Would you like to spend time living and working in a stable part of Africa? Are you interested in global medicine and curious to see how this links with PICUs? Are you a trained paediatric intensivist, anaesthetist with some PICU background or general anaesthetist/ intensivist with versatile skills?



### Introduction

Mercy James Centre for Paediatric Surgery and Intensive Care (MJC) is seeking an enthusiastic doctor, to work in a predominantly surgical PICU in Blantyre, Malawi. The position is vacant from December 2019 but an earlier or later start date would be considered.

### Commitment

The candidate would ideally stay for at least 6 months with longer periods being preferable to ensure continuity in establishing the unit. The intensivist will work with a Malawian doctor who is currently training in PICU in South Africa with plans to return to the MJC in early 2020 and a group of international intensivists who visit the unit on a recurring basis. The on-call rota is also supported by paediatric intensivists from the Blantyre Malaria Project and the paediatric anaesthetists. The call, although relatively frequent, is not generally onerous.



## Job Description

The intensivist will be responsible for the management of the patients in the 6-bed paediatric intensive care unit (PICU) and will provide support to the surgical team with management of the surgical high dependency unit (HDU). The HDU currently has 4 beds with additional neonatal beds due to come on stream. This position will supervise the anaesthetic clinical officers (ACOs), PIC clinical fellow and rotating registrars working in the unit. There is a clinical fellow +/- an ACO in the unit daytime with night-time cover by an ACO.

As the unit has only been open for two years, there is still significant work to be done in training staff and establishing systems and practice. The job therefore is an interesting mixture of clinical work, training and system development.

For the past 18 months the PICU has been run by two international intensivists, a critical care fellow, five ACOs and on-call support. There is a commitment to maintain this model with two intensivists over the next 5-10 years as this model has been found to work well.



## Patients

MJC has 3 consultant paediatric surgeons who undertake all forms of paediatric surgery except transplantation and open-heart surgery. The driver behind the establishment of the facility was to support the perioperative care of these patients.

The PICU admits approximately 30 patients a month, three quarters of whom have surgical conditions. The remaining patients have either medical conditions or cerebral malaria. During the rainy season, patients with cerebral malaria are enrolled in a research study looking at ventilation for brain swelling.

As the role of PICU in paediatrics in Malawi becomes more established, the number of patients with medical disorders is likely to increase. The wide variety of (tropical) diseases in Malawi and the often-delayed presentations of diseases in a relatively high proportion of complicated and varied cases, makes the job challenging, interesting and rewarding.



## Qualifications

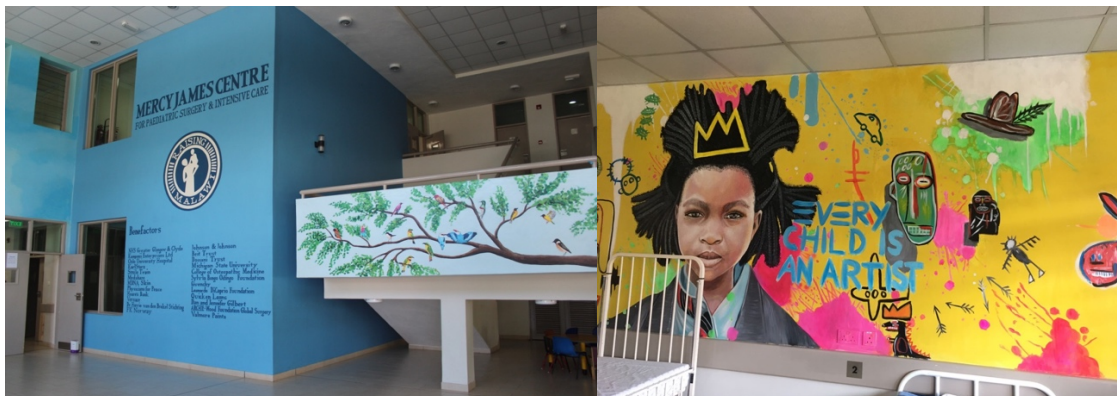
The candidate should have completed training in PICU, Paediatric Anaesthesia and Intensive Care, hold a current license or registration in their country of residence, thus allowing registration with the Medical Council of Malawi. He or she could be from a paediatric, anaesthetic or surgical background. This post would suit either an experienced clinician, a mid-career clinician on sabbatical or career break, or a younger doctor with an interest in global health.

Other desirable characteristics are:

- Extensive clinical experience
- Strong teaching skills and enthusiasm for supporting training
- Excellent interpersonal/intercultural
- Ability to work well in a multicultural, multi professional team
- Good organisational skills
- Flexibility and ability to improvise
- Good communication skills in English
- Previous experience abroad/in Africa
- Resilience

## Mercy James Centre and Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital

The Mercy James Centre for Paediatric Surgery and Intensive Care opened in July 2017. It is a 50-bed paediatric surgical hospital with 3 theatres, a 6-bed ICU, and two 4-bed HDUs (only 1 is currently operational). The unit is the national referral centre for paediatric surgery and includes the country's only PICU. The MJC is part of the Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital (QECH), the academic teaching hospital of the College of Medicine, the only medical school in Malawi. The paediatric wards of QECH have approximately 300 inpatients in the general and specialized wards such as an oncology, orthopaedic, malnutrition ward and burns unit. The Mercy James Centre is a public facility supported by Malawi's Ministry of Health, with supplementary financial support from several local and international donors.





## Malawi

Malawi provides a very welcoming environment to live and work for a doctor. Blantyre is the second largest city in Malawi. It is a friendly, safe city with shops, restaurants, sports facilities, international primary and secondary schools and is located within easy reach of several of the country's tourist highlights including mountains, Lake Malawi and game parks. It provides a lovely quality of life and great opportunity for new life experiences and travel.

## Reimbursement

Reimbursement varies with the time commitment. For doctors coming for over 6 months there is:

- Cost of living stipend
- Housing and transport provision or stipend to cover these
- Reimbursement of country-specific vaccinations
- Required visas and work permits
- Round-trip transportation to Malawi
- Medical insurance coverage

For intensivists with families who are able to commit longer-term, support for schooling will be considered on an individual basis.

Some financial support is available for shorter term commitment, depending on facility needs.

## Interested and more information needed?

For more information about this position or to make an informal enquiry please contact Dr. Patricia Weir ([weirpm@gmail.com](mailto:weirpm@gmail.com)) and copy in Donna Mataya ([donna@raisingmalawi.org](mailto:donna@raisingmalawi.org)).

Formal applications should also be directed to Professor Eric Borgstein, Professor of Paediatric Surgery and Director of Mercy James Centre ([eborg@me.com](mailto:eborg@me.com)).

