

## Medical Volunteers



### Highlights

- Lending a hand to understaffed, under resourced medical centers and knowing you are making a real difference.
- Gaining medical experience in an environment very different to your home country.
- Living and volunteering Cusco - gateway to the fascinating Machu Picchu!

### About The Project

The health care in Peru is one of the most under funded in South America. Lack of resources and funds, poor management of resources and lack of medical knowledge exasperate the problem. We are working with a number of projects, which aim to provide medical care to underprivileged children and adults. These people cannot afford to pay for private health care, and as such their medical conditions would go untreated if it weren't for the projects.

We are working with two medical clinics that provide the following services:

- General medicine
- Obstetrics
- Gynecology
- Physiotherapy
- Rehabilitation
- Psychology
- Ophthalmology
- Andean Medicine
- Dentistry
- X-ray
- Clinical Laboratory
- Pharmacy
- Kindergarten



We also work with a home for senior citizens which was established in 1981 after a Peruvian citizen donated her house to the cause. The elderly people are no longer able to look after themselves and sadly neither are their families.

### Volunteer Role

The first Monday at the Academia is an orientation day. All new students and volunteers go on a city tour of Cusco to get to know the city and learn how to get around and use the public transport system. In the afternoon there's an information session in which you will learn about the Academia, as well as about important issues such as security, do's and don'ts in Cusco, accommodation, volunteer work etc. Your volunteer placement commences on Tuesday of the first week.

Duties will vary depending upon your medical experience, but we welcome both medically and non-medically trained volunteers. You will observe and assist doctors and nurses in the above-mentioned medical areas getting hands of practical experience if you are qualified. You will also be able to help in the pharmacy with classifying and sorting medicines, as well as learning about and assisting with Andean medicines – all made from plants and herbs. The children in the kindergarten will also love your attention, and creativity is needed to keep them entertained in an under resourced center!

Volunteers choosing the home for senior citizens will be involved in some or all of the following:

- Organizing entertainment such as singing and dancing
- Accompanying the elderly people on walks
- Assisting the nursing staff with basic medical duties such as taking blood pressure
- Motivating the patients to participate in stimulating activities such as games and discussions
- Helping with therapy and massage
- Supporting the staff with the cleaning and up-keep of the center, including gardening

Your hours will vary depending upon at which placement you are based, however you will work either mornings or afternoons Monday to Friday, and have weekends free to spend as you wish.

### **Location**

Two of the projects are reached within a 15-20 walk from the Academia in Cusco, the other is a 20 minute bus ride away.

The city of Cusco sits perched amidst the clouds and the lush Andean greenery at 3300 meters above sea level. Due to the high elevation, it is cool at night, and sunny but cool during the day all year-round - this can be a great excuse to seek out the many markets selling the beautiful wool sweaters and textiles for which the country is renowned!

It's undoubtedly the archaeological capital of the Americas, as the gateway to Machu Picchu, and as such, is an exciting place to spend an extended period of time. Not only is it surrounded by beautiful Incan ruins, but you will be living in the hustle and bustle of a tourist city that still manages to retain many of its traditional ways of life. The narrow cobblestoned streets are lined with imposing Inca-built walls, and the plazas are thronged with Quechua-speaking descendants of the Incas.



Since Cusco is such an important tourist destination, its no surprise to hear that there is a huge wealth of cafes, restaurants, bars and nightclubs to keep you entertained - a fun and varied social life is guaranteed in Cusco! Shopping is also another favorite past time amongst volunteers and students in Cusco, with some of the best places to pick up jewellery, leather crafts, textiles, woollen sweaters, musical

instruments and other artesian products.

### **Accommodation**

You will stay either at the student residence or with a host family. Host family accommodation includes a private room, breakfast, dinner and laundry service. Singles, married couples and parents with children can all be accommodated. It is also possible to stay in a student residence – one is located within the school grounds, and there are two very nearby. Here you will self cater - there are shops and markets very nearby and a fully equipped kitchen.

### **Requirements**

Volunteers must be able to commit to at least 4 weeks at the project in order to build up a trusting relationship with the children and staff.

All volunteers must hold a high intermediate level of spoken Spanish. If your Spanish is at a lower level, you must join our Spanish language school prior to commencing your volunteer work.

When choosing to volunteer in a developing country such as Peru, it is important to remain flexible as the needs of the project are constantly evolving. This is what makes volunteering so rewarding – the fact that you are on hand to lend your support when and where it is needed. By choosing Academia Latinoamericana de Español you will have a comprehensive safety network behind you as we are here to help throughout the duration of your entire stay!

### **Feedback**

*“Doing all the touristy things such as Machu Picchu was very nice, but being at the medical clinic, getting to know the staff and coming into contact with the community was an amazing experience”.*

Nicholas Savage, UK

*“At the home for elderly people, volunteers are needed to provide the patients with some attention and time, and help to keep them entertained throughout the day. I felt really useful and know I made a difference”.*

Arianne Tange, Germany

### **Programme Fee Includes**

- Accommodation
- 2 meals per day if staying with a host family
- Project Support
- A donation that goes directly to your project
- Orientation and city tour
- Pre-departure information
- Laundry service if staying with a host family
- 24 hour emergency support

### **Programme Fee Does Not Include**

- International flights
- Meals if staying at the student residence
- Laundry service if staying at the student residence
- Visas
- Travel Insurance
- Inoculations
- Excursions over and above the itinerary

### **Travel Ideas**

At our office we are fully equipped to help you with making weekend travel arrangements, and onwards travel arrangements following your time in Cusco. We work with the best tour companies to offer safe, reliable and competitively priced trips. Some of the most popular excursions include:

- In and Around Cusco – at the weekends there are plenty of sights for you to explore in and around Cusco. There's the beautiful Chinchero Plaza, possibly the original Incan marketplace. Ollantaytambo fortress, where the Inca fought their last battle with the Spanish invaders. Pisac Indian market – one of the most well-known markets in the country, selling everything from textiles and paintings to vegetables and animals!
- Machu Picchu – No visit to Cusco is complete without seeing the enchanting and dramatic Incan citadel of Machu Picchu. The most famous route is via the multi-day Inca Trail route, however, there are plenty of alternative routes that also culminate in Machu Picchu, including a scenic train journey!
- Nazca Lines – A great mystery of South America. Take a flight across the stony plains of Pampa de San Jose and see for yourself the incredible animal-shaped and geometric etchings.
- The Amazon – Swing in hammocks, swim with pink river dolphins, spot exotic wildlife and pretend to be Tarzan! The ultimate Peruvian adventure!
- Lake Titicaca – South America's largest Lake which borders Peru and Bolivia. Stay on one of the floating islands for a true insight into the lifestyle and culture of the local communities.

### **Apply Now**

If you have some further questions about this project, please feel free to contact us at [sandra@latinoschools.ec](mailto:sandra@latinoschools.ec)

If you would like to book this programme, please [click here](#) to complete the booking form. We will be in touch within one week of application to confirm your booking!