

Surgical Educator

Terms of Reference



Surgical Educator, DRC

Brief and Terms of Reference

Summary

KGHP is looking for a Surgical Educator to support King's Global Health Partnerships (KGHP) in its safe surgery programme in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The post holder will have a background in surgery, anaesthesia or perioperative care and will support activity to strengthen health worker capacity on safe surgery. This is a fantastic opportunity for a volunteer interested in global health with experience in surgery and low resource settings to be involved in an exciting new phase of work in the DRC. This is a remote role.

King's Global Health Partnerships

King's Global Health Partnerships (KGHP) works with health facilities, academic institutions, and governments to strengthen health systems and improve the quality of care in four countries: Somaliland, Sierra Leone, the DRC and Zambia. We bring together health, academic and international development expertise from King's College London, the UK's National Health Service (NHS) and our international partners to:

- Educate, train and support healthcare workers
- Strengthen healthcare and training institutions
- Enhance national health policies and systems.

Our programmes are delivered by volunteers, with educators, researchers, health professionals, managers and health sector leaders taking up volunteering placements to deliver technical advice, teaching, training, and distance mentoring and on the job support to their counterparts in the global south.

King's Kongo Central Partnership

KGHP has been working in the DRC to help strengthen the health system and improve the quality of care since 2015. We work in the Kongo Central province, in the southwest of the country where there is a high burden of trauma due to road traffic collisions on the arterial route connecting the Atlantic port cities of Boma and Matadi with the capital Kinshasa. We work with our partners to provide education and training of healthcare workers, and to strengthen the trauma system, clinical services, policy and research. Key partners include the provincial Ministry of Health, the Division of Health, the Hôpital Provincial de Référence de Kinkanda (Matadi) and the Université Joseph Vubu (Boma). These institutions provide services for a population of 6 million.

Context

Surgery is an integral component of a functioning healthcare system. In Kongo Central province, most of the population lacks access to safe, timely and affordable surgery. For patients who are able to access surgical care, peri-operative mortality and complications are high and outcomes are poor. The barriers to accessing safe surgery in Kongo Central include: the risk of financial hardship for patients, the lack of a trained healthcare workforce, poor infrastructure and equipment, weak strategic leadership and limited use of data to improve health service delivery.

The four main tertiary hospitals in the province employ experienced surgical staff, but there is only one full time post-graduate trained surgeon for the province and no specialist nurse surgical training. Most staff working in the operating room are self-taught and have not received formal training in peri-operative practice.

During the first phase of the Safe Surgery project, we developed robust data on surgery and emergency care, integrated the use of the WHO Safe Surgery Checklist into routine practice, and improved staff skills and knowledge. It is essential that we maintain the momentum of this project, bring about policy change at a national level, and address areas where gaps remain. To meet these needs, the second phase of the project has been designed, in collaboration with local partners and stakeholders with a focus on reducing surgical site infection rates, to impact the healthcare system at three levels. In partnership with the ministry of health, division of health and health care institutions, this project will tackle barriers to safe surgery at multiple levels of the health system. At systems level, it will work with the Provincial Health Division to increase capacity for leadership, strategic planning and management of surgical data. At institutional level, we will work to improve infrastructure and equipment. At an individual level, we will work to improve the knowledge, skills and confidence of health workers in safe surgery.

Training

The training component of this program will consist of three elements: undergraduate, postgraduate, and in-service training for the multidisciplinary team.

1. In-service training

This program will continue to strengthen in-service training for the entire surgical team—including physicians, nurses, surgeons, anaesthesiologists, and anaesthesia technicians. The two-day course on Safe Surgery and Methodology for Improving Quality of Care (CESMAQS) will be reorganized and delivered to the ten existing partner ESSs. The course will also be adapted into an online training course on the UN SurgHub training platform.

2. Undergraduate studies

The existing undergraduate curriculum will be redesigned, focusing on the surgical components of the curriculum. The new curriculum elements will be taught by experts, in collaboration with the Kimpese IME School of Nursing. Following an evaluation, national discussion and wider dissemination will be supported. This will likely be part of a future work programme, with a proposal for additional funding.

3. Postgraduate studies

A postgraduate diploma in surgical nursing will be developed and piloted at IME Kimpese. This 15-month program will train five nurses currently working in Kongo Central in intraoperative care, including sterilization, surgical instrument management, and patient care. It is anticipated that this course will be nationally accredited, and upon completion of the pilot project, additional funding will be sought for a nationwide rollout.

Aim

The surgical educator will support the develop of the education and training elements of the safe surgery programme, providing technical expertise to the content.

Objectives

Specific objectives for the education and training safe surgery programme of work will include, but are not limited to:

- Reviewing the WHO Safe Surgery Saves Lives training package material to ensure these are up-to-date, context appropriate and follow sound pedagogical approaches for the topics covered
- Supporting existing trainers to develop and deliver a refresher training programme for the 10 hospitals involved in the current programme
- Supporting the existing mentorship programme through which health workers are supported in target facilities
- Evaluating the surgical care elements of the current nursing curriculum and update the content for A2, A3 and A4 nurses for the 25-26 academic year

- Developing a context appropriate post graduate diploma in peri-operative care for experienced nurses. This will be for an initial cohort of five nurses, over two years, with five 1-month practical placement at IME Kimpese
- Working with the KGHP team, IME Kimpese nursing school and educators to ensure that the diploma is accredited by the national ministry of health
- Ensuring all learning materials are developed appropriately for inclusion on the SurgHub online learning platform
- Ensuring engagement with provincial and national stakeholders to plan for future national accreditation of all education programmes

Timing

The project will run from November 2024 to June 2026. We are looking for someone who can engage with the project immediately for a minimum time period of 6 months.

Skills and experience

- **Qualifications:** Appropriate nursing or allied health professional degree. Diploma in tropical medicine desirable but not essential. Teaching qualification desirable but not essential.
- **Experience:**
 - **Essential:**
 - Surgical, anaesthetic or obstetric care provider (scrub nurse, nurse, nurse specialist, operating department practitioner, anaesthetic nurse).
 - Experience of working in a low-resource setting.
 - **Desirable:**
 - Surgical or anaesthetic experience and skills.
 - Experience of delivering workshops, training and/or capacity building, ideally in LMICs.
 - Experience of implementing quality improvement projects.
 - Experience of developing curricula.
 - Spoken French.

Expectations

The Surgical Educator will be expected to support this piece of work alongside others, including the Lead Surgical Educator and the KKCP team, providing technical expertise. There is a strong emphasis on learning from and working with the healthcare workers in facilities, collaboratively designing solutions and training packages which are appropriate for the environment.

All candidates that participate in our programmes are expected to attend an induction and read the KKCP handbook. All candidates will be supported to develop objectives for the engagement, which will include objectives for their own professional and personal development. Educators are expected to document the work that they deliver for the partnership and will be supported to do so in the form of logs or reports.

Our offer to you

There is no financial remuneration for this role, however, you will have the opportunity to work as part of a dynamic team and contribute to improving health outcomes for a population in need. In addition, there is strong evidence that health partnerships like ours do not only benefit people in low-resource settings. They also bring real benefit to NHS staff and services, as well as citizens in our partner countries. Among others, these benefits include the opportunity to develop:

- Leadership skills
- Skills in interdisciplinary team working
- Knowledge and skills in innovation and quality improvement

- Clinical and teaching experience
- Cross-cultural experience
- Personal resilience and efficiency

Application

All roles are appointed following an application and interview process. We will be reviewing applications on a rolling basis so encourage you to apply early. If you are interested in applying, please send your CV and cover letter to kg hp@kcl.ac.uk, referencing, “Surgical Educator Application.”

Thank you for your interest in King's Global Health Partnerships.

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