

Healing at a higher level.

EMORY HEALTHCARE'S TravelWell Clinic: Serving the World from Midtown Atlanta

Global adventures and travels don't start when you get to the airport; they commence right here in Atlanta. At EMORY HEALTHCARE'S Crawford Long Hospital, travelers-to-be and people coming into the country are not only greeted by a compassionate, experienced team, but also by artifacts, postcards and photos from throughout the world — gifts from patients of the TravelWell Clinic.

Travelers visit the clinic for pre- and post-travel care, such as immunizations and travel health education. Additionally, immigrants and refugees coming into the country rely on the clinic for its services. For individuals who have been in another country and become ill, the clinic's specialists become people on whom patients can rely to have more familiarity with their illnesses.

"Twenty years ago, travel medicine was in its infancy. Since then, we have seen tremendous growth in the number of international travelers and in the area of travelers' health," comments Roberta Dismukes, who has been the managing nurse of the TravelWell Clinic almost since its inception 20 years ago. "We see many missionaries, educators, politicians, students and business travelers. Often, they are dedicated to making a positive difference while visiting other countries, especially in the developing world. Our intent is to ensure that they remain healthy and safe so they can perform their roles."

Vicki Bynoe, TravelWell nurse, adds, "We see people who are traveling throughout the world. We protect them from diseases, which means we also protect the people in those countries from illnesses. Travel medicine's positive global impact comes from its ability to safeguard others against preventable diseases."

The clinic's success comes from the positive environment the team has developed and the individualized care each patient receives. "The care is tailored to each patient's destination or origin," explains Vicki. "Additionally, in travel medicine, you get to know your patients. During appointments, they share their stories; they become more comfortable. Travel medicine provides a unique venue for connecting with others."

The staff at the clinic found one of the most significant opportunities to connect with others when it became one of the clinics for the Lost Boys of Sudan, the more than 27,000 boys displaced and/or orphaned during the Second Sudanese Civil War. Thousands of the boys settled in the United States.

According to Roberta, "Many of the Lost Boys suffered from malnutrition, parasitic infections and chronic conditions, requiring constant medical intervention. Caring for these young men opened my eyes to the suffering and tragedies of many people who are denied basic human rights. Knowing them certainly humbled me. Most have now assimilated into our society and are



Vicki Bynoe (left) and Roberta Dismukes from EMORY HEALTHCARE'S TravelWell Clinic

working and attending college. I am so very proud of them. It has been an honor to know them."

As Atlanta continues to be a global economic hub and gateway for people coming into the United States, it is certain that Roberta, Vicki and their fellow team members at the TravelWell Clinic will continue to build lasting relationships with their patients. And with each postcard or keepsake from another country, the clinic will continue to provide a glimpse into far off places.

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