**BSSH LION Hand Service**

**Consultant Hand Surgeon Volunteer**

**Terms of Reference**

**What is LION?**

The Lilongwe Institute of Orthopaedics and Neurosurgery (LION) is a new purpose built healthcare facility attached to the Kamuzu Central Hospital (KCH), which is the main public Hospital in Lilongwe, the capital city of Malawi. Estimated completion date for the main buildings is the end of 2022. When fully operational, LION will offer a comprehensive range of diagnostic, orthopaedic, neurosurgical and rehabilitation services, free at the point of delivery for Malawi Citizens. The institute has an emergency department, four operating theatres, clinic space, a modern radiology department, laboratories and a rehabilitation centre.

The LION has a number of established partnerships with other charitable organizations and its main sponsor is Haukeland University Hospital in Bergen, Norway. LION’s mission is “to alleviate orthopaedic and neurosurgical disability and its economic impact on the people of Malawi through provision of high quality, equitable, safe and compassionate surgical care and rehabilitation, effective and efficient management, valuing our staff and clients, and conducting quality research and training.”

**What is the BSSH LION Hand Service?**

The BSSH LION Hand Service is a formal partnership between the British Society for Surgery of the Hand, the British Association of Hand Therapists and the Lilongwe Institute of Orthopaedics and Neurosurgery in Malawi. The main purpose of the project is to support the orthopaedic service at LION in the development of subspecialist skills in hand surgery that will aid delivery of treatment to patients with elective and traumatic conditions of the hand. Over a period of 5 years, commencing in January 2023, the aspiration is to provide the continuous presence of a volunteer Hand Surgeon, Hand Therapist and Hand Trainee at LION. Volunteers will work with local surgeons, therapists and trainees to develop and deliver a subspecialised hand service, engaging in training at all levels and helping to treat the large numbers of Malawian patients with hand problems. It is the aspiration of BSSH, BAHT and LION that at the end of 5 years, the local surgeons and therapists will be sufficiently experienced to run the Hand Unit autonomously, with BSSH and BAHT withdrawing to a background level of support.

**Who can apply?**

Consultant level surgeons of at least 1 year’s standing, who consider themselves to be competent Hand Surgeons are invited to apply to volunteer in the BSSH LION Hand Service. In general, it would be anticipated that approximately 50% or more of the consultant’s regular practice was in hand surgery, and that they are still in active practice, or within a year of retirement. Volunteers will need to have full medical registration in their own country, be up to date with satisfactory appraisal and revalidation, and not have any outstanding investigations into their fitness to practice.

They will be expected to be broadly competent in the treatment of hand conditions, including hand trauma, but it is acknowledged that most consultants’ practices will not cover all aspects of hand and wrist surgery. Willingness to use local anaesthetic to perform some hand surgery is essential. It is desirable, but not essential, that candidates have experience of global healthcare/surgery and familiarity with working in low resource settings.

**What does the role entail?**

The Consultant Hand Surgeon will be part of the BSSH LION Hand Service. The aspiration is that the team will consist of at least one volunteer, consultant level Hand Surgeon and at least one volunteer Hand Therapist as well as a Trainee or Assistant in Hand Surgery. This team will work collaboratively with the Lilongwe Kamuzu Central Hospital and LION surgeons, therapists and trainees to develop and deliver subspecialist hand services, including hand clinics and regular hand trauma and elective lists at LION and possibly outreach clinics. The BSSH team will be available for an agreed routine work schedule. Leadership of the visiting team will be dependent on the relative experience of the individuals in the team, and will be decided by the Operational Lead of the BSSH LION hand service.

Teaching and training is one of the most important components of the programme and the Consultant is expected to play an important role in this, actively participating in and helping to manage both the clinical teaching and the formal academic teaching programme in Hand Surgery. The academic teaching programme is timetabled and therefore the Consultant will be expected to teach the planned session, regardless of their area of expertise, unless appropriate swaps are arranged with other volunteers. Much of the teaching material will be provided.

A BSSH LION Hand MDT WhatsApp group is already in existence for general communications and the discussion of difficult cases. All volunteers will become part of this group in advance of their term of volunteering. They are welcome to give advice on the management of cases posted in the chat. During their term of volunteering, the consultant will contribute cases to, and help run the BSSH LION Hand MDT group on the ground and can expect support from UK colleagues to advise on difficult cases, especially where these cases may be outside their own area of expertise.

Consultants may be expected to contribute to local audit and research projects in Hand Surgery

Consultants may also be asked to provide advice or guidance to linked surgeons at Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital in Blantyre, who may visit LION and who are also part of the LION BSSH MDT WhatsApp group.

Volunteers will act at all times, both professionally and socially, as ambassadors for the BSSH. They will need to be good teamworkers. They will oversee the work of any volunteer trainees, who are usually on ‘Out of Training Programme’ experience. The consultant will be expected to respect the local Malawian processes and staff, work within the governance framework and reporting chain of the LION, and recognise that clinical priorities may not always allow for ringfenced subspecialist services. Volunteers must accept that working conditions are often frustrating, with limited resources. Willingness to adapt is essential and if access to theatres and anaethetists is limited, then using opportunities to operate under local anaesthetic, outside main theatres is encouraged, in line with the BSSH / GIRFT / NHSE guideline, “Hand Surgery: Guidelines for Operating outside of Main Theatres”.

**Logistics**

Consultant level Hand Surgeons are encouraged to volunteer for at least 6 week periods, although shorter visits will, on occasions, be considered. Overlaps of approximately a week will generally be arranged between the outgoing consultant and the incoming consultant, especially if the incoming is new to the role of volunteering or to the venue.

Volunteers can expect airfares to and from Malawi at either end of the fellowship to be funded. Support will be given in applying for visas and medical registration as necessary, and the fees paid. Medical indemnity and insurance will be covered. Accommodation in a house with other members of the team will be provided along with basic subsistence (food, services, wifi) and transport to the hospital and to and from the airport in Malawi. There will be no salary or other expenses.

Volunteers wishing to contribute to their fares or self-fund, particularly for shorter visits, would be most welcome to, as this will help ensure the longer-term viability of the project. Volunteers are encouraged to make a contribution to the fundraising efforts for the project.

**Application and selection process**

Recruitment will be managed by the BSSH via an application and informal interview. The successful candidates will be asked to provide written confirmation of the agreed volunteer period.