



BAJRABARAHI CLINIC

# VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

MAKWANPUR NEPAL 2025-2026



AcupunctureReliefProject



## Bajrabarahi Clinic Volunteer Program Makwanpur, Nepal 2025-2026

### Welcome



Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in Acupuncture Relief Project's **Bajrabarahi Clinic Volunteer Program**. As a volunteer with our organization, you will be embarking on an exciting journey not only as a health care practitioner but also as a scholar of the human experience: an adventure of self-exploration and development through service to others. Like any adventure, there are many risks requiring careful consideration and planning. You will need a steadfast commitment to prepare and be prepared for what awaits you in our Nepal clinic. As a practitioner, this is an opportunity to perfect and learn new skills while witnessing the transformative power of your medicine and serving a community that desperately needs your help.

Our Bajrabarahi Clinic Volunteer Program invites qualified practitioners to work and live at the Bajrabarahi Clinic for a duration which suits their individual situation. Your stay can be as short as three weeks or several months in duration. This program is for people who are comfortable working independently or within a small group. Previous experience living and traveling in a third-world country is an advantage but not a prerequisite. This program is available for up to two practitioners at a time, year-round.

While volunteering at our clinic you will be expected to work 5 1/2 days a week with a goal of treating 20 or more patients a day. Treatments will be conducted community style with patients sitting in chairs or laying on a mat on the floor. You will be responsible for managing all aspects of our clinic resources and patient case management under the guidance of our Clinic Director and staff. Living in a third-world country is unpredictable, exciting, and requires a flexible approach to each day. In short, we are looking for dependable practitioners who want to help us make this project sustainable, effective and insightful.

We have a world-class team of interpreters to connect you with the community and clinic staff who will arrange for you to get to our clinic and facilitate your orientation to the clinic operations. From there you are free to explore and practice your own personal style of healing. We do require that you keep accurate treatment records and communicate with us regularly during your stay. We are here to support you and to make sure our patients are cared for with respect and professional diligence.

If you are licensed in the United States, you will receive 10 Professional Development Activity (PDA) credits from the NCCAOM for your participation in this program.

This program includes transportation to and from the clinic, your meals (at the clinic), accommodations, clinic supplies, facilities, language interpreter and support staff. The cost of your participation will be \$1600 plus \$28/day USD with a minimum stay cost of \$2800USD. You are strongly encouraged to raise this money by involving your community of friends, family, patients and business associates. We will help you with fund raising ideas and all donations on your behalf are tax deductible in the United States. Our goal is to offer you this opportunity with little-to-no monetary outlay on your part. Your participation will help us achieve our primary goal of providing a much-needed, permanent and sustainable clinic in this area and will facilitate an ongoing opportunity for other natural health practitioners.

Review the information in this packet carefully as it details many aspects of participation in the program. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me. If you are ready to sign on and commit to the project, please apply online at <https://acupuncturereliefproject.org/volunteer/programs>. There is a \$35 non-refundable application fee and you must attest that you have read all of the information provided in this booklet. We will then contact you within 14 business days of your application for a phone interview. Our programs do fill up so please apply early for the best chance at the dates that suit you best.

I'm very excited about offering this opportunity and I hope that we will be working together in Nepal.

Andrew Schlabach  
President,  
Acupuncture Relief Project



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### Project Details

#### Qualifications

To participate in our program as a practitioner you must be a qualified medical practitioner having graduated from an accredited program and having completed all licensing requirements for your country of origin. You must provide all of the information required on the Master Application and your costs of participation must be paid in full 30 days prior to departure. You also must have a valid passport with at least one year remaining before expiration.

#### Clinic Sites

Acupuncture Relief Project (ARP) recruits and places qualified, professional acupuncture practitioners in a variety of villages and clinic settings in Nepal. Facilities are basic and we utilize a community style treatment set-up. Treatment rooms are equipped with basic chairs and some floor pads enabling practitioners to treat 20+ patients per day.

#### Clinic Practice

This project is designed to be an opportunity for you to explore all aspects of your medicine. All we ask is that you practice in accordance to CCAOM "clean needle" technique and insure a safe experience for your patients. You are encouraged to use any and all modalities or styles of treatment in which you are trained. We hope that you will share with your clinic team and other colleagues what worked best for you in treating a variety of conditions you will commonly find in Nepal.



#### Facilitation

You will be working under the supervision and guidance of Satyamohan Dangol and Sushila Gurung who have both been trained and mentored by Acupuncture Relief Project in rural primary care. They have been working for our organization for over a decade and are experienced facilitators of foreign practitioners. They are responsible for the safe operation of the clinic and have the final say on any patient care. They are interested to learn from you and

I hope you will be equally interested to learn from them.

#### Transportation and Accommodations

After arriving in Nepal, you will be met at the airport by a staff member and they will escort you to a hotel that we use in Kathmandu. Here you will spend two nights resting and shopping for any last minute supplies or comforts. Our liaison will help you get oriented to the city and assist you in any shopping you might need for clinic necessities. Three nights at the hotel will be paid for by ARP (two nights when arriving in Nepal and one night when we return you back to Kathmandu at the conclusion of your program). Breakfast at the hotel is included but all other meals while in Kathmandu are at your own expense. You will be transported by private vehicle to Bajrabarahi which takes about 4 hours. It is dusty so please wear a mask. Accommodations at Bajrabarahi the clinic will be provided. It is an open dormitory which you will share with one or two other volunteers.

#### Language

Several languages are spoken in Nepal. In our community Nepali, Newari and Tamang are the most common. While in Kathmandu it is fairly easy to get around and transact business speaking English, however, in the village, English is much less common. In our clinic, very few of your patients will speak English and an English speaking interpreters will be provided. At first you will find it quite challenging to treat patients with the help of an interpreter. It is a process requiring patience and practice but it can be very rewarding when you finally get into the rhythm of it. If you are interested in learning the local languages, your interpreters will only be too happy to help you and your patients will be completely delighted when you speak to them in their own language.

#### Dress Code

Living in a Nepali village requires us to mention a few things about appropriate dress. Sleeveless shirts and shorts are not appropriate for either male or female practitioners. Basic trekking (traveling) clothes are fine. You will want to have easy to wash, conservative and comfortable clothing. You will be required to wear a white lab coat while you are in the clinic (you should bring two as they will get dirty fast) and you will be provided with a name badge.



## Bajrabarahi Clinic Volunteer Program Makwanpur, Nepal 2025-2026

### Project Details



### Drug and Alcohol Use

Alcohol and drug abuse is a major problem in Nepal especially in the rural areas in which we operate. Many of our staff members have been dramatically impacted by alcoholism in their families and they are very sensitive to usage in and around the clinic. Cultural norms that you are accustomed in the West are not understood in Nepal and volunteer drug and alcohol use has become a problem for our project. We have a zero tolerance policy with our Nepali staff regarding the use of alcohol and drugs (including marijuana) while they are employed with us. **We ask our volunteers to refrain from all alcohol and drug use while they reside at our facilities. It is expressly prohibited to indulge in alcohol or drug use with our staff.** In this event, both you and our staff member will be asked to leave the project. If you cannot abide by our request for abstinence, PLEASE DISCUSS THIS WITH US. There are some exceptions and we will try to work with you but we will not tolerate covert behavior.

### Food and Water

All meals at the clinic are provided, however, you will be asked to help with some food preparation and cleaning tasks. Our cook will do most of the grocery shopping. You will be treated to Nepali, Newari and Tibetan cuisine. The food is basic, tasty and sometimes very spicy, usually including rice, lentils and local vegetables. It is fairly easy to manage a vegetarian or vegan diet in Nepal. **Regardless of dietary preferences, you will have to eat rice** as there are few options for the necessary calories you need. If you cannot or will not eat rice, this is not the program for you. Extra groceries are at your own expense. All water sources in Nepal should be considered unsafe to drink. Bajrabarahi Clinic is equipped with a triple filter system and boiled water is also available. When away from the clinic drink only bottled water that has an unbroken seal. Try to minimize the use of plastic bottles whenever possible as these are usually burned, contributing to Nepal's less than clean air.

### Travel

You are responsible to provide your own travel to and from Nepal. **Bring two extra passport photos as you may need them when entering Nepal.** Prior to finalizing your airline ticket, be certain the name on your airline ticket matches your passport exactly. This can be a last minute disaster.

### Risks and Insurance

Nepal is not Disneyland. Nepal is full of risks which we cannot predict and as with any third-world experience, nothing has been inspected for your safety. There is an extraordinary amount of traffic, pollution and disease. There is civil unrest in some areas (though mostly non-violent) and occasionally there is some crime directed at foreigners. This is not meant to scare you, rather it is to make you aware that you need to have your wits around you at all times. As a team, we all work to keep each other safe but ultimately, YOU are responsible to keep yourself safe. This means you must protect yourself in the clinic and well as on the streets. Acupuncture Relief Project does not provide any insurance on your behalf. If you were to become ill, injured or have to leave the country prematurely you will bear that expense yourself. We highly recommend that you purchase a traveler's insurance policy.

### Vaccinations

Nepal's Ministry of Health requires you to provide proof of having received the following vaccines on order to work at our clinic: **Hepatitis A and B, Typhoid** (Typhoid risk in Nepal is the highest in the world), **Tetanus, Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR), and Polio.**

We also recommend that you research and receive all appropriate vaccinations as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for travel in Nepal. <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/nepal>

### Program Cost and Payment

The cost of this program is \$1600 USD plus \$28/day with a minimum of \$2800 USD.

Examples:

3 week stay = Your cost \$2800 (program minimum)

8 week stay (56 days x \$28 = \$1568) + \$1600 = Your cost \$3168

12 week stay (84 days x \$28 = \$2352) + \$1600 = Your cost \$3952

Upon acceptance to the program you will be sent a volunteer agreement which is a legal contract that binds us. Read it carefully before signing. Return the agreement with a non-refundable deposit of \$500 US to lock-in your position with our organization. The balance must be paid or raised in full 30 days before your departure.





## Bajrabarahi Clinic Volunteer Program Makwanpur, Nepal 2025-2026



### Fund Raising

Unfortunately there is a lot more to running an international relief project than just having volunteers show up to treat patients. Much of our operating expense is incurred maintaining our clinic facility, supplies, and staff. There are also administrative and legal costs involved as well as budgeting for future projects and goals. Our Board of Directors tries very hard to insure that the maximum amount of every dollar raised finds its way into patient care. This program is an opportunity for you to help people that need your help but it is also a priceless opportunity to develop as a practitioner with wisdom and skills that will last you a lifetime. As a volunteer, you may raise as much of your participation costs as you would like. Checks that you collect from friends, family or other sponsors should be made out to Acupuncture Relief Project and will be tax-deductible to the donor. These funds will be credited to your name and will be deducted from your cost of participation. We have many fund raising ideas and are here to support you with promotional materials, press coverage and a dynamic web presence.

### Website Blog

Please make an effort to provide us with at least one blog entry for our website during your stay. Focus on expressing your personal experience rather than reporting on the clinic news. What we (and our audience) are most interested in is you: what is your experience, how do you feel about it, why is it challenging or rewarding and how is it changing you and your medicine. You might want to share a brief case study or clinic anecdote. When you have something you would like to submit, please email Andrew Schlabach ([andrew.schlabach@acupuncturereliefproject.org](mailto:andrew.schlabach@acupuncturereliefproject.org)) your document and photos you would like included with your article.

### Feedback

We know your stay in Nepal will be a mixture of excitement, challenge and adversity. We hope that you are challenged in a way that helps you grow as a practitioner but also as a compassionate human being. We would sincerely like to hear your comments on how you think we can improve our program for future practitioners. We want to hear it all... what you loved, what you hated and what you think we can change. Please feel free to process these comments with us in writing before, during or after your experience in Nepal.



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### What to Bring

#### Personal Equipment

Try to pack as lightly as possible. Anything that you find you might need once you are in Nepal is probably available there and for far less than you can acquire it for here. Try to bring clothing that is durable, easy to wash and is fast drying (*cotton is not the best choice for travel*). If you are sensitive to the cold you should add a layer or two but please travel as light as possible.

- Small Backpack (2600-3200 cubic inches)
- Small Shoulder Bag
- Large Nylon Stuff Sack
- 2 - White Lab Coats
- 2 - Travel Pants (or Long Skirts for Women)
- 1 - Shorts
- 7 - Pair Socks
- 7 - Pair Underwear / 2 - Bra
- 1 - Set Long Underwear
- 2 - T Shirts
- 2 - Shirts (one long sleeved, one short sleeved)
- 1 - Sturdy Comfortable Shoes / 1- Flip-Flops (shower shoes)
- 4 - Handkerchief / Bandana
- Sunglasses
- Light gloves
- Warm Hat
- Light Rain Jacket
- Fleece Jacket
- Light Insulated Jacket
- Headlamp / Spare Batteries
- 0° (or better) Sleeping Bag (can buy in Kathmandu for about \$80-150USD)
- Camera / Charger / Batteries / USB Cable
- iPod / Charger / Travel Speakers (Optional)
- Reading Material / Journal / Pens
- Passport / 2 Extra Passport Photos
- Cash / ATM Card / Credit Card
- Laptop Computer or Tablet

#### Toiletries:

- Towel / Washcloth
- Toothbrush / Toothpaste
- Skin lotion / Hand Sanitizer
- Sunscreen
- Lip balm
- Biodegradable Soap / Shampoo
- Herbs / Supplements / Medications / Prescriptions
- Ibuprofen / Alleve / Antacids / Gas X / Pepto-Bismol / Cough Drops
- Hair Brush / Hair Ties / Nail Clippers
- Earplugs
- Q-tips
- Band-Aids

#### Clinic Equipment

If your treatment modality requires specialized equipment or supplies, please discuss your needs with your Team Leader before departure.

#### Recommended Apps

This is a list of electronic apps for your personal device that you will find helpful.

- Merck Manual
- Medical Dictionary (like Tabor's)
- Drug Reference (like Epocrates)
- Anatomy Reference (like Visible Body or Netter's)
- Lab Value Quick Reference



**Apply Online at**

<https://acupuncturereliefproject.org/volunteer/programs>





## **AcupunctureReliefProject.org**

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Acupuncture Relief Project is a registered 501(c)3 non-profit organization located in Vancouver Washington. Its mission is to provide free medical support to those affected by poverty, conflict or disaster while offering an educationally meaningful experience to influence the professional development and personal growth of compassionate medical practitioners.