



Opwall Medical and Evacuation Procedures Guyana 2022

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1. Introduction

Medical screening

As with all expeditions careful planning is essential to ensure that all individuals enjoy a safe successful trip. Some members of the expedition team (including all volunteers and staff) may have significant pre-existing health problems or disabilities, which in the field, could potentially lead to problems.

Medical questionnaire - All participants will be required to enter their medical details onto the Operation Wallacea data portal. Details of how to log on are sent out upon receiving the booking from the participant. The data is stored securely and is initially only available to certain Operation Wallacea staff members, and, for groups of school students, the teacher leading the group.

Screening - All medical forms are assessed by Operation Wallacea. The country manager may seek to contact the participant to gather further information, which they would then enter on to the portal. Following the initial screening by the country manager, the details are then passed to the on-site medic. He or she can ask for further information, and will have an opportunity to discuss any issues of concern at a medical meeting (between the expedition medics and Operation Wallacea staff) held approximately 3 months prior to the expedition. The team of medics will discuss any potential medical issues, advise anyone if a further consultation with a medic is required and will also suggest additions to the medical kits in light of any pre-existing health problems highlighted.

Insurance - Operation Wallacea requires all participants to purchase medical and travel insurance for their expedition. Details of these are provided in advance of their expedition so they are available to operational staff in the event they should be required. Operation Wallacea evacuation procedures are designed so that there is no delay waiting on insurers before providing care thus expediting the administrative processes behind organising an evacuation.

Roles in the event of an Emergency

Carefully planned evacuation protocols are in place at the expedition sites in Guyana. All staff will have training on the evacuation procedures and protocols. Once a major incident leading to an evacuation is identified the Expedition Manager will take overall control, and will decide with the expedition medic the level of emergency evacuation required for the patient. These should be classified as **Emergency or High Priority** (requiring the fastest possible transfer, usually by plane from the closest, to Georgetown's Ogle airport, or **Medium Priority**, requiring the patient to be moved as quickly as possible by road and in some areas speedboat also.

In all Emergency or High Priority cases where a patient is being transferred to medical facilities they should be accompanied by the relevant Medical Officer or someone appointed by the medical officer as fit to accompany the patients. The absence of the Medical Officer from the site whilst the patient is accompanied to the hospital will require the suspension of all high risk activities at the site until the Medical Officer is back on site. In the case of a Medium Priority evacuation (e.g. transfer to a hospital for a confirmatory X-ray) another staff member other than the Medical Officer may be nominated to accompany the patient.

2. Medical Facilities in Country

There is a small village health post in Warapoka, and a more substantial staff clinic in nearby Santa Rosa. Opwall will have a doctor on staff at the lodge, where patients that do not require emergency evacuation to hospital can receive attention.

Facilities in Georgetown

Georgetown Public Hospital
New Market Street
Tel: +592 227-9449 or 227-8236

This is the best public hospital in Guyana with a large group of leading specialists capable of carrying out a wide range of major surgery and procedures. Facilities include operating theatres, X-ray, body scanner and magnetic resonance equipment, laboratories, a diagnostic centre etc. This hospital can provide suitable facilities for all emergencies.

Woodlands hospital (Private) 110 Carmichael Street Georgetown Guyana

Tel: +592 225-4050

Fax: +592 225-5865

This is the best private hospital in Guyana with several doctors and surgeons capable of carrying out a wide range of major surgery and procedures. This hospital is likely to provide suitable facilities for most emergencies, and may be likely to give the fastest response time.

Facilities Around Warapoka

There will be a qualified and experienced expedition medic in the camp at all times, who will be contactable by radio at all locations. The camp will be equipped with an expedition medical kit to deal with first aid and many minor injuries and conditions.

There is also a local village health post with basic first aid and clinic supplies.

Finally, a fully staff regional clinic is available at Sant Rosa, along with the closest maintained airstrip.

Evacuation Facilities

In the event of an emergency priority evacuation, air services to the closest airstrip will be used. The following services will be utilised and are listed in order of priority.

Remote Area Medical Volunteer Corps/Wings of Hope Inc. Captain: Terrence Trapnell Tel: +592 772-2168
Cell: +592 610-9850

Trans Guyana Airways
Tel: +592 222-2525 (office hours)

After hours: Dale Hing +592 624-1693

Capt. Gonslaves +592 624-3768

3. Air Service Ltd.

Tel: +592 222-4368 / 222-4357 / 222-6739

4. Roraima Airways Ltd.

Tel: +592 225-9647 (office hours)

After hours: Learie Barclay +592 225-9648 / 665-4998 Basudewa Rupchand +592 222-4032 / 626-3001

Medical cover in field camps

All camps will have a medical officer at all times. The camp will be equipped with an expedition medical kit recommended by the Royal Geographical Society.

3. Evacuation Procedures

Once a High Priority or Emergency evacuation is called then the Expedition Manager takes control of the situation. Speedboats or vehicles will be dispatched (depending on the location of the patient) to meet the patient and either take the patient directly to Georgetown, or for Emergency Evacuations to the airstrip to travel by aircraft to hospital in Georgetown. Table 1 outlines evacuation times for the various field camps.

Table 1. Emergency evacuation times and methods

Location	Time to airstrip (and method)	Airstrip to Ogle airport in Georgetown (Plane)	Ogle airport to hospital (Ambulance)
Warapoka Lodge	1.5 hours by boat	Santa Rosa airstrip - 45 minutes	20 minutes
Survey sites	Up to 1 hour on foot back to lodge	Santa Rosa airstrip	20 minutes

Upon notification of a situation requiring emergency evacuation, the expedition manager will also contact the UK Office, who in turn will contact the Opwall insurance company to explain the situation and obtain the necessary approvals for the evacuation. In addition he is responsible for informing the Operation Wallacea Project Director, and the patient's next of kin, of the actions being taken and the state of the patient. He is also responsible for ensuring that all relevant staff are aware of the ongoing emergency and follow up actions.

In the event of an emergency, the team will use the satellite phone to call local staff to arrange for air transportation (if required).

They will alert Luke Johnson and UK Headquarters (depending on the location of the evacuation team), to ensure that any necessary preparations are made for the incoming patient.

The Operation Wallacea head office should also be alerted 00 44 1790 763194 (24hr)

4. Reporting and Logging

During evacuations it is crucial that a log is kept by the Expedition Manager and expedition medic, detailing times, personnel involved and all relevant details of each step of the evacuation process.

A full safety assessment must be carried out after all evacuations and if a similar incident is likely all activities must be stopped until the situation has been rectified.

The Expedition Manager will collate the reports of all medical treatment and evacuations and will submit the final report to the UK office. The Expedition Manager will also submit the costs and report to the insurance company for re-imburement of costs.