Building a South African Exchange Program: Update and Future Goals
Highlights from the November 2015 Trip

- Set up ENT clinic at the Church of Scotland Hospital in rural Tugela Ferry, South Africa
- Saw ~400 patients over a five-week period
- Developed an appreciation for providing care for common ENT disease in a resource-limited setting
- Exposed to very unusual manifestations and complications of HIV and tuberculosis and late presenting cancers, which would be rarely encountered in ENT practices in the United States
- Established contact and began developing a partnership with local ENT surgeons at both tertiary referral hospitals (Pietermaritzburg) and academic centers (Durban)
- Expedited urgent follow-up and intervention that was needed for patients

**Three Main Ongoing Goals:**
1. Partnership in Clinical Care
2. Enhancing Access to Care
3. Research Initiatives
We are partnering with local South African ENTs to develop a sustainable, bilateral exchange of training and ideas to benefit educational, patient care and research initiatives.

Our Partners include:

- The Department of Otolaryngology at the Nelson Mandela School of Medicine in Durban, South Africa (chairman and some residents pictured above)
- The ENT Department at Edendale Hospital (tertiary referral hospital) in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

These relationships substantially enhance our ability to integrate with the robust infrastructure that already exists in South Africa.

**Exchange Development:**

- Two trips this year with both Yale ENT residents and attendings
- Experience expanded to three sites; a remote rural South African hospital (Tugela Ferry), a major tertiary referral hospital (Pietermaritzburg) and an academic medical center (Durban), providing a remarkable breadth of experience
- Host a South African ENT resident at Yale
- Coordinate two small educational symposia promoting a forum for the exchange of ideas. South African ENTs have extensive training and experience but lack access to subspecialty training. Our Yale participants stand to gain a substantial appreciation for providing excellent care in the unique health care environment of South Africa, as well as the impact of HIV and Tuberculosis.
Empowered by this partnership, we are working to expand access to surgical care in the region by strengthening the referral pathways from the rural areas to these major hospital centers.
Chronic Otitis Research Project

- World Health Organization: between 65 and 330 million people are affected
  - 0.9% of children in developed world
  - Up to 20% of children in developing world (Benson 2012, Hallbauer 2014)
  - Thought to cause ~80% of acquired hearing loss globally (Acuin 2004)
- Between 40 and 90% of children will develop some degree of permanent hearing loss
  - Risk Factors: overcrowding, poor hygiene, malnutrition, URIs, poor access to healthcare

We are continuing to work on our pilot study in Tugela Ferry investigating the pathogens of chronic ear disease in a population with a high co-infection rate with TB and HIV. We have expanded the study to other hospitals in the region to provide a more comprehensive understanding of this disease process with the ultimate goal of effecting change on the course of this disease within the entire province.

In addition, we are working with our South African colleagues to develop future research projects designed to address the unique healthcare needs in the region.