

Dr Albie de Frey

Albert (Albie) de Frey is the 'father of travel medicine' in South Africa and is regarded as an international guru in the field. His reputation, training, expertise, and experience make him the 'go-to guy' in travel medicine, particularly regarding the management of expatriates placed in remote areas of Africa and elsewhere.

After graduating with an MBBCh from the University of Pretoria, Albie lived and worked in South Africa, Malawi, and the United Kingdom, obtaining qualifications and certifications that prepared him to work in emergency evacuation and to conduct specialised occupational medicine examinations, namely, primary emergency care, anaesthesiology, dive medicine, and aviation medicine. These were complemented with short courses in advanced trauma life support, advanced cardiac life support, advanced paediatric life support, and the flight medical attendant course.

After serving as Medical Director of Medical Rescue International (MRI), Albie decided to pursue a career in travel medicine, obtaining a postgraduate diploma in travel medicine from the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons, Glasgow. He later obtained a Certificate of Travel Health from the International Society of Travel Medicine (ISTM).

In 2000, Albie was a founding member and President of the South African Society of Travel Medicine (SASTM), at its formation during the first travel medicine course held at the University of the Witwatersrand, where he was appointed as an honorary senior lecturer. In February 2004, he was appointed as Co-chair of the African European Travel Medicine Conference, the first regional conference of ISTM. Subsequently, he has been honoured with fellowships in travel medicine from the Faculties of Travel Medicine by both the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons, Glasgow, Scotland, and the Australasian College of Tropical Medicine, Australia.

Academically, Albie lectures undergraduate and postgraduate medical students at various South African universities, conducts podcasts for ISTM, and will be participating in the Travel Medicine Review and Update Course 2025, for ISTM. His contribution to occupational health and travel at an international level has also involved being a Travel for Work Council Member for ISTM, and facilitating sessions for both the International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH) and the National Institute for Occupational Health (NIOH). As part of the global surveillance network for returning travellers, GeoSentinel, Albie has been appointed as the site director in Johannesburg.

Albie has contributed to various travel-related publications as both an author and editorial board member of the *Southern African Journal of Epidemiology & Infection*, *Travel Medicine and Infectious Disease*, *Tropical Medicine and Infectious Disease*, and *International Travel and Health* (ITH), World Health Organization (WHO). He also serves on the National Advisory Group on Immunisation, the Technical Working Group on Mpox, and the WHO Expert Roster on Travel Health.

In addition to copious pro bono activities, Albie has established a successful career in travel medicine and public health. As Director of Travel Doctor South Africa, Medical Director of International Health Management Consultants, Geneva, and a founding member of Travel Doctor Corporate, he provides comprehensive corporate and individual travel health risk management, and emergency medical



Dr Albie de Frey, President, South African Society of Travel Medicine

Photograph: courtesy of SASTM

evacuations as medical advisor to multinational companies, overseeing approximately 5 500 corporate travellers and national employees, globally. Furthermore, he has conducted health risk and infrastructure audits across sub-Saharan Africa, Afghanistan, parts of the middle east, and south-east Asia for companies involved in mining, exploration, telecommunications, and retail, providing 24/7 medical care for their expatriate and national staff in remote and offshore locations.

Back in the seat of SASTM President, Albie remains committed to providing comprehensive health risk management solutions to corporate clients, and advancing the field of travel medicine through education, research, and international collaboration. His focus is on developing the next generation of health professionals to continue his legacy within travel medicine.

Albie outlined his vision for the future of travel medicine in the latest SASTM newsletter: "If I had to have a vision for SASTM over the next three years, it would be to consolidate its position as the leading travel health society in Africa, building on the work already done over many slow, seeding years on the rest of the continent. It is wonderful to see a handful of travel health converts dotted all over the continent, most of them alumni of the SASTM/ WITS Travel Medicine Course, all of them spreading the word." [👉](#)

Mary Ross

*SASTM representative of SASOM Exco
Co-founder of the Wits Travel Medicine Course*