

Charlie Bongolon - Guatemala

Hello, my name is Charlie and I have been serving on humanitarian medical missions all over the world as a Registered Nurse for four years now. My most recent medical mission trip was to Antigua, Guatemala. Guatemala is located in Central America and borders Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador, and Belize. Despite significant improvements in the health of the general Guatemalan public, those who are poor and indigenous lack proper health care. Health care in rural areas is usually offered through the public sector. Unfortunately, they have limited resources, infrastructure, personnel, inadequate supplies, and medicine.

Throughout this seven-day mission trip, the OR completed 150+ cases in five days. The GI Clinic averaged about 20 procedures a day equaling about 80 total. Our Dental Clinic saw about 15 patients a day and the audiology clinic treated 50 patients. In total, we served about 350 patients in one week.



Stacy Hevener- Uganda



We were able to provide free health care to approximately 1200 patients of all ages from 5 different villages in what is considered one of the poorest regions of Uganda. The medical team was able to provide quality care that included assessment, diagnosis, treatment, education, testing, and/or referral to link patients to care. HIV testing was offered to all persons of sexually active ages. Any persons that tested positive had results disclosed by a Ugandan certified HIV counselor and were linked to free care provided by the government. Testing for malaria, typhoid, H. pylori, urinalysis, and pregnancy was also provided with appropriate treatment as needed. In addition, wound care supplies, soap, toothbrushes, and reading glasses were dispensed as needed to patients. Education was also provided in tandem with all services by every member of the healthcare team. Our team was composed of both Ugandan staff and American volunteers, which included RNs, NPs, MDs, lab technicians, and pharmacists. All American volunteers had Ugandan translators to assist them. This ensured cultural understanding and the correct exchange of information. Even though our services are limited, the communities visited highly value the free resource and care provided.

Amy Laxamana- Philippines

We went to the impoverished area Town of Buhl where the majority of the public never had an office visit or comprehensive exam by a physician. The people were already waiting 3 hours ahead; they came early with their numbers that were distributed a few days earlier. People came with all sorts of medical problems, and they were glad that a group of medical health care providers were there to help and resolve their medical needs.

For the Town of Buhl, we were prayers answered because some people have to travel 2 hours and spend money on transportation to go to another town for their medical needs. They were able to bring their families, including the children, for dental and vision needs.

There are families where two children in a family are sick and they are holding on to their faith that they will get better. It's great that we have both volunteers and Pediatric & Family doctors assessing and writing prescriptions. We also have 11 nurses from Arizona, 11 volunteered Dentists, and 7 Surgeons to do minor surgeries. The whole town cheered for us and more than thankful for the health care provided immediately.

We set up a room of pharmacy with nurses and volunteers to teach about discharges and medications in their language. The Mayor & Vice Mayor including the Chief of Public Health were so appreciative of the outcome. We planned to see 1,000 patients but we end up seeing 2,370 patients in the three days of combined medical, dental, vision, and surgical services. The Philippine Army was requested by the Mayor to help us secure the area, protect us from the crowd, organization, and proper direction if the crowd starts complaining of heat even under a tent.



Aljereau Manabat- Philippines



The town of Buhi in Camarines Sur, Philippines is an area where there is no hospital, just a rural health clinic, with one municipal health doctor. Our organization did the medical-dental-surgical mission. There are 38 Barangays in the town of Buhi. We served 2,370 people (from infants to the elderly) from January 27-28th. We checked vital signs, blood sugar, height, and weight. We had some doctors that provided medical consultation and prescribed medications. We also gave free medications, with health teaching and medication administration teaching. We provided free chest x-rays to those who really needed them. We also had dentists who provided dental check-ups, tooth extractions, medication, and teaching. We gave away free toothbrushes and toothpaste. We also did vision spot checks and gave free reading glasses.

We also had a one-day surgical mission. The surgeons did some minor surgical procedures like circumcision and excision of superficial lumps and lipoma. The Philippine Army provided free haircuts and shoeshines. We provided snacks to the community during lunchtime. The people of Buhi were very thankful for the services they received. Their smiles and gentle "thank you's" really showed their gratitude. The Mayor even prepared a farewell celebration for the volunteers, with nice performances from the youth of the small town, lovely tokens given to the volunteers, and a sumptuous dinner. Even though the mission was only for a few days, we provided health teaching and free medications that will help them for some time. We also gave our surgical supplies and the leftover medications to the municipal health doctor and nurses of the Rural Health Clinic.