

Health Talents International

Eye Surgery Clinic

November 2019

Team Participant: Ophthalmologist: Adam Dossey, Nathan Stevens; Physician: Mike Kelly; Optometrist: Debbie Murman, Dakota Waldrop; Lay Circulator: Tim Johnston; RN Circulator: Dani Swisher; Surgical Tech: Stephanie Barnes, Lacie Darlymple; Ophthalmic Asst: Kyla Hardy; Recovery Room RN's: Carol Angelo, Myka Fisher, Victoria Petts, Laura Hauk, Michelle Young; Translator: Alyssa Barrundia, Kathlyn Chan, Julie Kelly, Carmenza Leavitt; Intake/ Discharge: Rita Sills; Caregiver/ Eye Drops: Tawnya Bowie, Alexa Macklin, May Stevens, Abi Stevens; Sterilization: Dee Anderson, Wayne Petts, Cary Sills; Trip Chaplain: Timothy Bowie; Executive Director: Rick Harper; Team Leader: Sheri Kretzschmar

One section of the team arrived late Saturday morning and Rick traveled with them to Montellano. They were able to begin seeing the scheduled patients when they arrived. Carol and I met the remainder of the team in the early afternoon and then we traveled to the clinic. Upon our arrival, we counted some of the supplies and put them in their proper places. Many in this group have this part down solid so their supplies were easy to inventory.

Debbie, Dakota and Kyla had prepared the entrance of the clinic for the pre-op patient evaluations. We enjoyed dinner from the infamous cooks, followed by a few minutes



together and then it was time to rest before worship in the morning.

Alex's lesson on Sunday morning was about living a life in Christ. Our daily actions should reflect Christ and his love. People should be able to see it in our actions and how we respond to them.



Before lunch, we met with Dr. Walter to review information that we needed for the week. After lunch, we prepared the nurses schedule and briefed everyone who would be administering the eye drops. Rita quickly placed patients in their appropriate beds.

The block-room was under control as soon as May stepped in. She recruited Alexa and Abi to assist in preparing the pre-surgical blocks for the patients.



As many patients were placed in their beds to wait for their surgery, we went from bed-to-bed to welcome and pray with each patient. Tim, who served as our chaplain, was ready to assist with this. For many, there is a language barrier. When it comes to praying in Guatemala, patients welcome and embrace it. They have travelled to the clinic, some for many hours, because they have lost their sight and they are looking for hope.

Tim started our mornings with some thoughts and then in the evening, he talked about our one purpose, one goal and one mission in this world. He gave us applications that we can use in our daily life.

On Wednesday, Tim and Tawnya were able to go on a medical mobile clinic. They really enjoyed the day with Dr. Nehemias. It gave them a better understanding of how we serve people in the communities and how patients are referred to the surgical clinics.



There are Biblical examples of Jesus, using his miraculous touch, to heal the blind. Through medicine and the technology of today, we are able to restore sight and such a blessing it is! Doctors Adam and Nathan administered the pre-surgical medication and while it took effect, they prayed with each patient by name. They touched each eye and prayed that the surgery would return sight, so that the person would be whole and all in the name of Jesus.

In the morning, the physicians and translators went from bed-to-bed. The dressings were removed, and the results of the prayer and surgery were obvious. Patients cried, hugged their families and thanked God for the changes that were present.



As each patient was discharged, they stopped to thank and hug those who had cared for them. Because of God's power and love, they walked out much different than they had entered the clinic doors.

On Wednesday evening, we visited and sang with our patients. Josue, one of the promoters, led us in Spanish songs and our patients sang with us. We ended in a special prayer to close the night. We thanked God for the hope that had been delivered and the vision that had been restored.

Thursday, we were able to wrap the surgeries shortly before lunch. Those wanting to go to the chocolate farm, loaded up in a bus and enjoyed a few hours visiting a local farm. Some of us remained at the clinic to care for the patients until dinner.



On Thursday evening, we thanked the kitchen staff for their hard work through the week. They take very good care of us and our patients. Everyone had an opportunity to share something that impacted their week.

Many things happened that we are thankful for and this is one reason why people continue to return as often as they can. It is a special week in numerous ways..... not only for the patients but for those that serve. Many strong friendships are formed during these experiences and we look forward to seeing each other again.

On Friday morning, we cleaned out the dorm rooms, loaded the buses, enjoyed breakfast and gathered for our last photo in Montellano. Alex joined us for the photo and then prayed for our safe travels to Antigua. Mike, Julie and Tim needed to go directly to the Barcelo so our, "See you later!" began early.



During the week, we were able to provide surgical care to seventy-two patients. We know that many other lives were affected, as family members and friends accompanied our patients. Also, others were assisted with eye exams and consults. We give all the Glory to God and thankful that each of us could serve in this fashion.

On the drive to Antigua, we had a few solemn moments. A road had been reopened near where the Volcano Fuego erupted in June. Many people lost their life and homes destroyed during this eruption. It was so tragic, that thousands will never be able to return to their life as it was, only minutes before the eruption.



Many memorials were placed along the new road to remember those who were lost and never recovered.



It is just a reminder that life and each day are precious. They are gifts from our Father and we should never take them for granted.