



Canada-Guyana Outreach Mission

Health Care for Guyana

www.cangomission.org

2019 MISSION REPORT

2019 Mission Team:

This year the CanGO Team consisted of the following members:

Nine Physicians: Dr. David Alsobrook (Family Physician), Dr. Joyce Dobbertin (Family Physician), Dr. Veronika Jedlovszky (Pulmonologist/ General Internist), Dr. Dagleish Joseph (Family Physician), Dr. Clare Mitchell (Developmental Pediatrician and our Medical Director), Dr. Robert Nicolson (Psychiatrist), Dr. Denise Niemira (Family Physician), Dr. Mitch Persaud (Pediatrician/Allergist), and Dr. Lloyd Stoll (Dentist and VP of the Guyana Medical Relief).

One Nurse/Practitioner: Elizabeth Hartman

Two Medical Students: Elizabeth Johnson and Emily Needles

One Pre-Med student: Krystal Gopaul

Six Nurses: Julyann Callendar, Kesharie Courtman, Dr. Lorraine Emeghebo who has a PhD. In Nursing, Roxanne O'Regan, Nancy Persaud, and Anneke Schroder.

Five Paramedical Personnel: Margaret Brac (Audiologist), Paula Holla (Physiotherapist), Anne Dworschak-Stokan (Speech/Language Pathologist), Sue Kirkpatrick (Physiotherapist), and Patricia Stoll (Dental Assistant)

Five Support Personnel: 2 Chefs (Annie Joseph and Penelope Jenkinson), and 3 administrators (Conrad Joseph, Sharir Chan (Chief Operating Officer of GMR), and Yvonne Triesman).

WEEK 1 – GENERAL TEAM

Team 1 - General Team. Team 1 arrived in Guyana on Saturday, October 26 and was divided into two groups.

Group 1 provided clinics at the Longhouse in Warakaba for patients from Karawab, St. Monica, Kabakaburi, Akawini and Warakaba. These are all Amerindian villages in Region 2.





Group 2 provided clinics at the Kumaka District Hospital in Santa Rosa, Waramuri Health Clinic, Manawarin Health Post, and Karaburi Health Post.

WEEKS 2 AND 3 – DEVELOPMENTAL/MENTAL HEALTH (D/MH):

The D/MH Team arrived in Guyana on Saturday, November 2 and treated patients with developmental disorders, cleft lip and palate, and mental health issues. Patients from Waramuri were seen at the Waramuri Health Clinic, patients from Karaburi and Santa Rosa were seen at the Kumaka District Hospital in Region 1, patients from Manawarin were seen at the Manawarin Health Post, patients from Wakapoa were seen at the Wakapoa Health Clinic, patients from Charity were seen at the Oscar Joseph District Hospital, and patients from St. Monica, Karawab, Akawini and Kabakaburi were seen at Warakaba in the Upper Pomeroon River.

This Team also provided a clinic at the New Amsterdam School for Special Needs children in Berbice, consulted on patients at the Ptolemy Reid Centre and saw patients at Project DAWN in Liliendaal near Georgetown.



SPECIALIZED MOBILITY EQUIPMENT:

This year CanGO was very fortunate to have two physiotherapists as part of the D/MH Team: Paula Holla and Susan (Sue) Kirkpatrick. Sue specializes in customized seating and patient mobility. The Team distributed two wheelchairs, three transport chairs (two of these transport chairs were donated to CanGO by GT Lime), two specialized strollers, one pediatric bath chair and two pairs of crutches, to children with physical and developmental challenges in Regions 1, 2, 4 and 6. The wheelchairs were customized for the children and their unique needs by Paula and Sue to provide seating for comfort and support as well as mobility in and outside of the home. Children are now able to be upright during the day, are better able to interact with the world around them, and families can transport their children more easily. Several other children and young adults, seen this year by our team for the first time, were identified with developmental challenges and we hope to be able to provide them with this specialized service in 2020.

Dr. Mitchell and Paula Holla met with Dr. A. Watson, Orthopedic Surgeon at the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC) to discuss referrals of children with orthopedic needs related to cerebral palsy and club feet.



Additional pictures of recipients with their new mobility devices may be found on our website.

AUDIOLOGY TESTING:

Approximately seventy-five individuals received audiology assessments this year. Sixteen of the patients were assessed with hearing loss that required some kind of follow up. Another four have suspected hearing loss and need retesting. Several patients diagnosed with hearing loss had impacted wax in their ear canals. It was recommended that they pour some olive oil in their ears and then flush them out with water. They were advised to stop using swabs (as these push the wax deeper in and can cause punctured ear drums), and have their hearing tested again. Eight patients with hearing loss were referred to the Ministry of Public Health for follow up and fitting of hearing aids. One patient who already had hearing aids, but which were dead, was advised to return to Charity for assistance. Dr. Mitchell met with Dr. Shawn Legall, a local Otolaryngologist, at GPHC to discuss the ENT referrals.

SPEECH/LANGUAGE TESTING:

The Speech/Language Pathologist was able to follow and re-assess a few of the children post cleft lip and palate surgery. The children had made progress with their ability to speak since the surgery. The D/MH Team made arrangements for children and teens/adults, who were not able to have the surgery last year, to be re-considered for 2020. This included one young girl who could not make the trip for surgery as her family welcomed another baby, and a young man who wanted more time to make a decision about palate surgery. It was our first time visiting Wakapoa, which allowed us the opportunity to meet a 15-year-old who had his cleft lip repaired a number of years ago, but continues to have significant speech difficulties. The Team will make arrangements for palate surgery for him. This year we met families with babies who were born recently with cleft lip and palate who were having difficulties gaining weight and feeding. Education and demonstrations of how to use a bottle were provided to assist with feeding and increased nutrition. Discussions and clinical education about cleft lip and palate feeding took place with nursing staff and midwives in some of the clinics as well. Dr. Mitchell and Conrad Joseph met with Dr. Rajkumar and the Plastics Team at GPHC to discuss the referrals. The Plastics Team is now partnering with Smile Train, an international group which promotes a-sustainable approach to cleft lip and palate. The D/MH Team will work with Smile Train and H.E.R.O., both American organizations, to develop longitudinal and coordinated support for cleft lip and palate.

SPRING 2019 SURGERIES:

In the Fall of 2018, Dr. Mitchell referred a number of children to H.E.R.O., an American organization, and to the GPHC for surgery.

In early March 2019, one of CanGO's Directors, Mr. Conrad Joseph, flew to Guyana to make final travel and accommodation arrangements for the children and a parent each.

On March 15, Conrad met all the children and their parents in Charity and brought them to Georgetown where arrangements were made, through the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples Affairs, for them to stay at the Amerindian Hostel. Over the next three days, the cleft lip and/or palate surgeries were performed by Dr. Doron Ringler, an Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon from New York, in collaboration with Dr. Shilindra Rajkumar, a local Plastic Surgeon. The tonsillectomy was performed by Dr. Shawn Legall, a local ENT surgeon, and the hernia repair was performed by Dr. Seepersaud, a local pediatric surgeon. After examining the child with the hernia, circumcision was deemed necessary, so this procedure was carried out as well. All the surgeries were successful. On March 22, the children had their post-op appointments and were discharged. The parents and children left Georgetown the following day for their trip home.

In addition to the surgical patients, Dr. Mitchell also referred the following children for medical treatment: One child from Region 1 was seen by Dr. Ruth Quaicoe, an Audiologist at GPHC. This child was diagnosed with hearing loss in her right ear and will receive hearing aids. One child with dystonia was seen for a second time and provided with medication. Dr. Mitchell met with the Paediatrics Team and discussed follow-up and a referral to a Neurologist. He was seen by Dr. Winsome Scott, a local Pediatrician, last year as well.

ADDITIONAL HEALTH CONCERNS ENCOUNTERED DURING THE 2019 MISSION:

Problems presented to the teams included colds and flu, respiratory tract infections, diabetes, hypertension, skin rashes, back pain, worms, asthma, abdominal pain, diarrhea, UTI, vaginitis, seizures and STDs.

PATIENT VISITS AND REFERRALS FOR 2020:

The total number of patient visits in 2019 was **944**. The General Team (Team 1) made 2 surgical referrals to GPHC. In addition, the D/MH Team made 10 referrals for surgery to Dr. Rajkumar and his team at GPHC and Smile Train. Members of Smile Train travel to Guyana each year and work with the local surgical team and therapists to perform surgery at GPHC and provide training for follow-up. The teams made 40 medicine referrals to the appropriate health facility for additional treatment.

EDUCATION:

The D/MH Team provided educational training to staff at the Ptolemy Reid Centre on "A Holistic Approach to Cerebral Palsy" and "Specialized Seating for Children with Motor Disabilities". An afternoon educational session was provided to the Paediatric Residents at GPHC on "Psychopharmacology for Disruptive Behaviour Disorders" and "Specialized Seating for Children with Motor Disabilities".

MENTAL HEALTH:

The D/MH Team visited the Berbice Psychiatric Hospital and were given a tour by the nursing staff. Dr. Robert Nicolson, a member of the D/MH Team, returned the following day to learn more about services for adults with severe psychiatric illness in Guyana and to meet with Dr. Mayda Grajales, the local Psychiatrist.

GUYANA MEDICAL RELIEF (GMR):

Members of CanGO would like to thank GMR for its continued financial support of our annual missions and for partnering with us on the rehabilitation of the Longhouse at Warakaba. This facility has given us a permanent "home" in the region and has provided continuity of care for the patients in the area. This year Mr. Sharir Chan, Chief Operating Officer for GMR, organized the repair of three bathrooms (two upstairs and one downstairs), three downstairs toilets and enough batteries to store the energy that will be generated by the 18 solar panels that were donated by Broadstreet Energy (John & Fazie Yakoub).

DEDICATION OF THE LONGHOUSE AT WARAKABA:

On November 2 there was a formal dedication of the Longhouse complete with the raising of the Guyanese, American and Canadian flags and the playing of the respective national anthems.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

The CanGO Team is deeply grateful to the following organizations that helped make this year's mission a resounding success:

All Saints CWL, Strathroy, Canada	Health Partners International of Canada, Ottawa, Canada
Broadstreet Energy, California, U.S.A.	iPharm - Integrity Pharmacy Inc, Brantford, Canada
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints	Lion Tamesh Jagmohan, Essequibo, Guyana
Direct Relief, California, U.S.A.	Ming's Products and Services, Georgetown, Guyana
Friends of Serviam, Ottawa, Canada	Ministries of Public Health, Foreign Affairs and Indigenous Peoples Affairs, Guyana
Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation, Guyana	Project DAWN, Liliendaal, Guyana
GT Lime, Florida, U.S.A.	Shopper's Drug Mart, Ingersoll, Canada
Guyana Cancer Foundation	Sunstar Americas, Inc., Guelph, Ontario
Guyana Medical Relief, California, U.S.A.	Toronto Kaiteur Lions, Toronto, Canada
Health and Education Relief Organization (H.E.R.O.), New York, U.S.A.	TransArtic Canada Inc., Woodstock, Canada
	United Women for Special Children, Georgetown, Guyana

We're also indebted to the **many** individual donors and volunteers - too numerous to mention – for their continued support of this very worthwhile endeavour.

Please visit our website at www.cangomission.org for additional pictures of the 2019 Medical Mission.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

It was a pleasure for me to honor two very deserving people, Dr. Clare Mitchell and Mr. Sharir Chan.

Clare is a Developmental Pediatrician and our very dedicated Medical Director who takes time each year out of her busy schedule to organize and coordinate the medication for the mission which, in and of itself, is quite a challenging task. She's very passionate about everything she does, be it running a marathon, climbing a mountain, hiking, or just helping others, especially the kids whose lives she tries to make better.

Sharir is the Chief Operating Officer of GMR. Over the years, with his recommendations, GMR has supported us financially and with free medication for our annual missions. They have also partnered with us on the restoration of the Longhouse in Warakaba, a job that Sharir has personally supervised.



Last but not least, I'd like to express my gratitude to the CanGO family for their commitment and service to the people of Guyana. Without this group of dedicated professionals, this mission would not have been possible. I'd especially like to thank my brother, Conrad Joseph, who stepped up to the plate in my absence during the first half of the mission. Conrad did an excellent job of coordinating the many moving parts that come with organizing the annual missions.

Yvonne Triesman
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