

MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY MEDICAL PRACTICUM REPORT  
January 2017

This 33rd Medical Practicum was the 23<sup>rd</sup> to Nicaragua, and the seventh to the Alto Wangki-Bocay autonomous region, where dugout canoes are the sole transport to the indigenous villages. Throughout the nine days of primary care clinics in the Mayangna villages of Wisuh, Amak, and Wina, we accompanied Nicaraguan Ministry of Health providers and worked toward local health care goals.

Our group from the United States comprised 17 students, four physicians, two physician assistants, one pharmacist, two dentists, one dental assistant, one athletic trainer, two agricultural specialists, and two support people. Nicaraguan group members included nine English-Spanish translators, one assistant, two local physicians, two medical students, one community health worker, one nurse, three watchmen, three agricultural workers, and 13 boatmen. The Medical Practicum program and its supporters have been contributing to university educational expenses for these medical students and agricultural workers. These 68 people traveled more than 100 miles in six motorized dugout canoes to access the communities, where we experienced an unfamiliar simplicity: locally prepared food, purified river water for drinking, hammocks for sleeping, almost no electricity, and virtually no cell phone service.

Financial and material donations from 46 U.S. individuals, businesses, and organizations, along with Medical Practicum Endowment Fund earnings, enabled us to purchase medicines and medical/dental supplies for \$18,663. Medicines and supplies not used were left with the health clinics to fill later prescriptions.

We performed 1,477 medical consultations, saw 223 dental patients, extracted 513 teeth, completed 350 lab tests, filled 2,821 prescriptions, and administered 845 vaccinations. Our on-site lab testing included glucose, HbA1c, *H. pylori*, Chlamydia, hemoglobin, and pregnancy, leaving Pap smears with the regional health system for analysis and follow-up. 174 cattle and 332 pigs received dewormer.

The communities, of course, have to give free, prior and informed consent for any work the Medical Practicum performs. This year the pre-trip coordination and communication with the elected president of the Mayangna MSB region was the most involved to date. We continue to improve our collaboration with this indigenous population.

Since 1981, 122 different U.S. health care providers, including 46 MU alumni, have volunteered their services and paid their own expenses to join a Medical Practicum, resulting in over 41,000 patient consultations in underserved populations. The extraordinary contribution of these providers also includes invaluable mentoring and role-modeling for the 373 MU undergraduate student participants. The 2017 Medical Practicum once again continued this tradition of service and, we believe, was worth the effort.

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