

JAMAICA OUTREACH PROGRAM

REPORT TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS & other interested parties

Re: Dental Mission to St. Pius—Kingston, Jamaica; July 20- 22, 2023

From: Michele LaBasi, MEd, BS, RDH

July 2023 Clinical Team and Jamaican Support Staff



CLINICAL New: Dr. Renee Batts (JA), Dr. Taylor Johnson (FL), Marilyn K Bartley, RDH (CT), Jane Montalvo, RDH (NY), Luz Carvajal, DA (CT), Precious Herring, CNA (FL), Ayjha Smith (JA), Keváun Harvey (JA) **Returning:** Dr Jaih Jackson (FL), Sarah Haezebrouck, DA (FL), Karen DeCristofaro DA, (MA), Michele LaBasi, RDH, (OH)

JA SUPPORT STAFF: Fr. Mario Burton, Rosemarie, Boxer, Patrick, Mikala, Ms. Vivienne Bradford and Ashawna (not in photo).

Background We started with a smaller team for the summer month sans the school program but when two other dentists became available, we jumped on it, which meant the need for two additional assistants (DAs) without delay. This required thinking outside of the box so an appeal was made to Dr. Sarah Tibby and Dr. Renee Batts, both dentists in Kingston for help in locating available DAs. Dr. Batts secured two first year dental students from the University of Technology in Jamaica Oral Medicine who were eager to quickly learn on the job and apply didactic dental knowledge to what will present in the clinic. One third of the dental team was comprised of returning missionaries which is common. Almost half of the clinical team were either currently living in or originally from Jamaica.

The Mission Our serviceman, Mr. Jolly, delivered and installed the replacement autoclave and surgical console with handpieces that were requested following the March mission. Instrument sterilization was overseen by Karen DeCristofaro (DA), who reported a steady, uninterrupted operation of the autoclave which was a stress relief for her and everyone needing instruments. Dr. Jackson stated the new console provides so much more RPMs than what were available in the past. Mr. Jolly also tested the dental units in the days prior to the mission to assure they were functioning. The schedule was arranged to allow for three dentists to see patients for extractions and restorations in Rooms 1, 2, and 3 and the two hygienists to use Room 4 as a tag team as well as provide support for triage at the front desk. There was an overflow of patients requesting “cleanings” so some of them were scheduled in Room 2 to be seen by an RDH for a few hours on two days.

We held a three-day mission to include a Saturday and everyone used their clinical and interpersonal skills to help the patients be at ease. Dr. Jackson likes to assign a word to describe the missions he serves on – he labeled this one as, “Soulful”. Total Patients- 103, “Cleanings” (periodontal procedures)- 74, with all hygiene patients received an oral hygiene kit (toothbrush, interdental aid, and toothpaste) for home use. Extractions- 31, “Fillings”- 11, not seen due to medical contraindications – 2 (1. B/P too high and 2. recent CVA), referrals to dental school for dentures – 2. Patients were given post-op instructions, dispensed OTC pain medication, and an antibiotic as determined from need by the dentists. The names of patients who were recommended for future care at an upcoming mission were given to the secretary to be contacted. The number of patients seen for fillings and extractions is low in comparison to how many can be seen during a 3 or 4 day outreach. Unfortunately, plans needed to be adjusted early in the mission due to the failure of the x-ray equipment to consistently provide radiographic images for the dentists to see prior to a “filling” or extraction. The equipment is being reevaluated to determine what is causing the errors. Our next mission is approaching in 8 weeks so this will need to be resolved or alternative equipment found. Dr. Jackson has reached out to his contacts in an effort to see how they can be of assistance in obtaining the needed equipment, which JOP is most grateful.

Despite not having consistent radiography, the mission accomplished a lot in terms of preventive and therapeutic periodontal (gums and bone) health. They are commonly known as cleanings but even on a mission, the dental hygienists are expertly using their skills to provide more than sending patients home, free of biofilm. The dentists were involved with the cleanings as well, which underscores the necessity for having an ultrasonic available at each of the four patient chairs, plus a spare. We are also seeking to replace our current ultrasonic scaling equipment along with the inserts as these items are decreasing in their functionality.

This mission was incredibly blessed to have a layperson, Precious Herring, CNA, on the team. She was the first person a patient would see during the intake process taking place in the medical clinic. Precious warmly welcomed the arrivals, took their B/P, and recorded it along with the patient's contact information on a tally slip. She provided education to each patient and alerted those with a concerning B/P to seek medical help. A dental facility is an ideal location to help identify patients with high B/P and this screening should continue beyond taking vitals prior to surgical procedures.



Dr. Renee Batts (left), a dentist located in Kingston joined us for the July mission and expressed a desire to be involved with JOP long-term. In four short years, we will be addressing the two on the left as Drs. Harvey and Smith.



Going Forward Our next mission is tentatively scheduled for September 24-29; however, we will need to have a way to obtain radiographic images. That would involve either determining and repairing the malfunction, or replacing what is perceived as the issue which could be the sensor and/or software (to include the current laptop). The school program historically commences in September with oral health presentations, screenings, fluoride varnish applications, and SDF treatment (the latter as needed).

Reflective thoughts by those who wanted to share:

Three adjectives that are used to describe my first mission trip:

TRANSFORMATIVE: The opportunity that I was afforded really transformed my life in the area of making a difference in the way that I will serve others and the team I work with. The experience was priceless!

EMPOWERING: The education that was given to our dental patients about their whole health have empowered them to take action in caring for themselves.

FULLFILLED: Thank you, Father Mario and the entire staff. After each day's work, we left with a feeling of being fulfilled and satisfied that our mission was accomplished. We had a compassionate team leader and an efficient team. Awesome teamwork.

I am looking forward with great anticipation to our next mission trip. ~ Precious Herring, CNA



As a native of Jamaica, we had no or little access to dental care in my town. My first experience as a dental patient was in my primary school, when people came dressed in uniforms. I remember the blue chair I sat on for someone check my teeth and that memory will always remain with me. It has become my fuel to serve and to encourage others to do the same. I thank God for the opportunity to treat and educate people about their oral health and how it impacts their overall wellbeing. ~ Marilyn K Bartley RDH



As I took a final walk through the clinic, I came upon these notes, posted by Jane Montalvo, RDH, first time missionary. I only snipped the verse references to allow the print to be large enough to read. They represent a missionary's heart and reflect what the team came to do – serve.



The following wish list was put together following the mission. Some of these items can be ordered from local dental suppliers ahead of time. The majority of the items are cost prohibitive to purchase and JOP relies on donations to obtain them.

A tax-deductible receipt will be gladly issued! Please contact JOP at Info@JamaicaOutreach.org on how to donate.

Septocaine	Ultrasonic tips 25/30	Bib-Eze disposable bib chains
Collagen Plug	11/12 Gracey	Peroxyl mouth rinse
Chlorohexidine	Montana Jacks	Dental assistant carts
Formocresol	Basic setups	Glide floss and Super Floss
Sensors (adult and child)	Hygiene hand pieces	Cordless curing light
Laptop & Dexis	Saline	Patient hand mirrors
Surgical Burs	Suture scissors	11/12 explorers for hygiene
Ultrasonic Scaling Units	Prophy pal handpieces	Sturdy filing cabinets for charts

If you or anyone you know would like more information about serving with JOP on a dental mission, contact:
Michele LaBasi mlabasi.jop@gmail.com or Info@JamaicaOutreach.org.