

JAMAICA OUTREACH PROGRAM

REPORT TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS & other interested parties

Re: Dental Mission to St. Pius—Kingston, Jamaica; March 22 - 25, 2023

From: Michele LaBasi, MEd, BS, RDH

March 2023 Clinical Team and Jamaican Support Staff

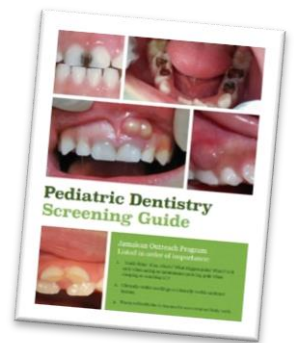
CLINICAL New: Maryam Fatemi, DA, (Toronto), Makenna Isbell, RDH (TX), Joanna Redona, RDH, (TX), Lisa Morlan, RDH (TX), Lissett Huerta, RDH, (TX)

Returning: Dr Kim Burford (CO), Dr. Vejay Ravindran (NC), Dr. Ernesto Vera (VA), Kerry-Ann Richard, DA (NY), Terry-Ann Guy, RDH (NY), Caroline Bounce, RDH, (TX), Sarah Haezebrouck, DA (FL), Michele LaBasi, RDH (OH) **SUPPORT STAFF** Rosemarie, Marie, Boxer, Lesly-Ann



Background We had a large team of thirteen dental professionals and auxiliaries who graciously volunteered their time and skills. Several individuals who serve(d) in the US military deserve special recognition: **USAF** General Dentist, Dr. Kimberly Burford (Active Duty), Caroline Bunce, RDH (Vet) and Joanna Redona, RDH (Vet), **US ARMY** Oral Surgeon, Dr. Vejay Ravindran, (Vet), and Pediatric Dentist, Dr. Ernesto Vera, (Vet). We value their continued sacrifice of giving of themselves through missions, to help to the poorest of the poor in Jamaica. We are grateful for all the missionaries and the distances they traveled to serve. From the time of preparing the clinic to the closing the door on the last day, this team showed initiative, worked cohesively, and had fun together at St. Pius and offsite. An expression of gratitude must be given to the following: Dr. Ravindran and Dr. Vera for their help in locating, ordering, and bringing restorative supplies from the US which were not available in Jamaica. This involved what seemed like endless emails but they were champions at replying and aiding in this task. Dr. Burford was able to take leave from active duty. Also, special thanks to Dr. Vera for creating a pediatric screening guide with photos and questions to help the School Program RDHs determine immediate vs can wait treatment needs. It will be reused with each school mission. Dr. Sarah Tibby, who practices in Kingston also assisted with our needs.

The list of patients waiting to be seen and the school program schedule was backlogged due to the heavy rains in September which closed the schools and kept the students from the program. In January, additional children were screened from grades 4 - 6, and more were identified as having teeth needing to be extracted or filled from the earlier mission school screenings and the list grew. The younger grades of Infant [Pre-K] - 3 grade screenings were slated to be completed this mission.



The Mission The Jamaican Support Team (many not pictured) worked diligently to prepare for the mission. Assignments were given to the missionaries with the understanding for fluidity as the need arose. After a slow start of patients arriving well after their appointed time on the first day (which is being resolved), the dentists and hygienists' schedules filled rapidly. Dr. Ravindran kept up with the demands for extractions despite having a surgical handpiece that was not performing well and had a safety issue. Along with 1-2 new handpieces and specific instruments, he recommends having an updated surgical console to help increase the speed of the current 10K rpm unit to aid in cutting through dense bone. It is helpful for people to know new and used donations are always welcome and tax receipts can be given.

The final number of people seen in the clinic was 238. The breakdown of services is: Cleanings (mostly adults) – 85, Fillings – 57 (many with more than 3 surfaces), Extractions (Simple and Surgical) – 116, Exam only – 8, Referrals – 3, Sealants - 92, SDF – 24 (explanation below) More fillings or extractions would have been completed had some of the children not been so fearful while seated in the dental chair. For those children, Dr. Vera was able to place Silver Diamine Fluoride (SDF), known to arrest the

progression of decay, but not remove it. It is a simple, minimally invasive procedure and can be done quickly, however, it should not replace restoring a tooth. It is a temporary stop-gap when a child will not cooperate for treatment.



Examples of Immediate dental needs identified through the school screening program. Earlier intervention by prevention during a hygiene appointment will help prevent this childhood disease.



The dental hygienists working in the clinic demonstrated great skill in assessing their patients' needs and carrying out individualized treatment plans many involving advanced therapies in shortened time. Because of the donated dental sealant and SDF, RDHs were able to use those materials on some of their patients to add an additional preventative service. Appreciation goes to the RDHs for how they rotated through the clinic and school program to share the heavy patient load.

January 2023's RDHs working from specific units thoughtfully prepared set-up and troubleshooting lists to leave behind for the incoming teams. Overall, the lists helped to prevent service calls by Mr. Jolly, but other unfamiliar idiosyncrasies emerged and will be added. Unfortunately, there were equipment issues this mission which caused interruptions to treatment. The autoclave, which sterilizes the instruments, has a panel which is sensitive to changes in electricity. These fluctuations cause the autoclave to reset and remain hot but not cycle through. The autoclave would then overheat, but not be able to be opened because of the extreme pressure within. Mr. Jolly suggests it is time to replace that autoclave due to its history of issues and made a recommendation for a specific model known as a "workhorse." The digital camera performed brilliantly throughout its continuous use for all three dentists' pre-procedural exams until the last day. The camera itself was in 'Ready mode' but the software on the laptop indicates it is not ready to advance to next image. Mr. Jolly was made aware and will assess it. In addition to the posted list of steps to take to prepare the clinic between missions, an inventory was completed and recommendations for dental materials, patient load, and clinic administration procedures were forwarded to those in charge.



School Program The school program was headed by Lisa Morlan, RDH, who is experienced in many overseas dental missions and a first-time missionary with JOP. She reported: *DAY ONE at DPIS consisted of screenings, OHI and fluoride varnish for children grades Pre-K – 3. We made a few modifications to the suggested flow to be more efficient. The majority of the children we screened presented with poor hygiene and multiple [cavities]. Far too many of them have been experiencing pain. DAY TWO we implemented Silver Diamine Fluoride to our routine. Children with clinically visible incipient lesions [beginning to decay] and caries [a cavity] received SDF to arrest the active decay, with a short-term goal of "holding them over" until they can be seen in the clinic for restorative treatment. DAY THREE We talked with the guidance counselor and instructors and got permission to revisit the children screened from day one to give them the benefit of having SDF placed. By implementing SDF, our long-term goal*

is for less children to experience dental pain and to see a decrease in children needing their permanent teeth extracted. Another important step in changing the oral health and dental experience for these children, is getting them seen in the clinic for cleanings, sealants, and fluoride treatments early on. Prevention and education are key for these children to have a healthy mouth to last a lifetime. A total of 336 Pre-K to Grade 3 students were seen. All received OHI, screening, and a fluoride varnish treatment with the addition of 278 teeth having SDF placed to help arrest decay.

Major thanks to Jody-Ann Innerarity from St Pius X for all her help recording the findings and creating a spreadsheet with the data.



Going Forward The next mission is July 20-22, 2023 and we are looking for dentists, RDHs and DAs/EFDAs. **JOP is *always* recruiting for new and returning missionaries for the 5 missions/year.** Please contact Roger Plante at rogerplante10@gmail.com.



Working with angels that live on the earth was one of my best experiences - the ones who live for helping others and spreading their love. One week of hard work but with the best feeling I have ever had. ❤️ -- Maryam Fatemi



"Thank you to the JOP. What a blessing to offer my knowledge and skills. To live a life of Dental Hygiene is to live in the life of service. I left Jamaica wondering if we did enough, if we saw enough patients, and if I could have done more each day. I will never forget the faces of joy and the sweet thank you and "yes miss." Thank you to everyone who was involved in this mission. SO MANY people to mention I could not post everyone. I made amazing new friends and connections that I look forward to working with again in the future. I think I found a new calling in my heart. ❤️ – Makenna Isbell, RDH



See the **March 2023 Photo Album:** <https://photos.app.goo.gl/QGfNtfANz9yXgow89>