

JAMAICA OUTREACH PROGRAM

REPORT TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS & other interested parties

Re: Dental Mission to St. Pius—Kingston, Jamaica; January 31 – February 1 - 2, 2024

From: Michele LaBasi, MEd, BS, RDH

January 2024 Clinical Team and Jamaican Support Staff



CLINICAL New: Dr. Katherine Bowen (MD), Winston Bowen (MD), Khadijha Flanders, RDH, (CT), Nichelle Venable, RDH (NV), Christy Thomas, RDH (NV), Br Moses Erugba (Nigeria) **Returning:** Dr. Renee Batts (JA), Denisha Stewart, DA (JA), Terry-Ann Guy, RDH (NY), Kerry-Ann Richards, DA (NY), Michele LaBasi (OH) **SUPPORT STAFF** Rosemarie, Marie (many more missing from the photo)

Background The January 2024 team was equally balanced between new and returning missionaries. It's always helpful to have members who have been on a prior JOP outreach and know the location of the plethora of supplies, how the various pieces of equipment work (including how to trouble-shoot), as well as the routine. November 2023 saw the completion of the school program and revealed a large percentage of children in need of further dental care. Permission slips were sent home each day and names went on a list to be seen during future missions. Appointments were blocked out specifically for those students and the school was notified who needed to be seen. We were blessed to have Dr. Renee Batts return for her fourth consecutive mission in addition to new missionary, Dr. Katherine Bowen, active-duty US Navy dentist, as well as her husband, Winston, who served as a layperson.

The Mission January delivered clear skies and cooler temps in comparison to the sweltering summer or hurricane season missions. The patients were able to wait outside in comfort and keep the reception area inside less crowded. The A/C only goes so far with extra bodies. Keeping the noise level at bay helps provide all around calmness and for the patients waiting for their blood pressure to get within an acceptable level (if possible) prior to an extraction. Taking blood pressure and providing health education for each patient, regardless of the procedure is still a goal but is best attained with a trained individual who is available during a mission.



Mrs. Nadia Morris-James, Vice Principal DuPont Primary School was notified via email of the mission dates and student names. Mr. Gregg Williams, Guidance Counselor, brought the students to the clinic at 9 am, following their morning devotions. The dentists were able to treat 17 students this mission which is almost 3x as many in past missions. In addition, 7 students were furthered evaluated with radiographs (x-rays) and will be ready quickly for dental care in March. Nichelle Venable (*left*) took the opportunity to provide group oral hygiene instructions to students who sat outside waiting for their dental treatment.

There are equipment repair concerns that need to be addressed and Mr. Michael Jolly has been notified. He will be stopping by the clinic on Tuesday, February 13, 2024 to assess what the cost of repairs will be. Suction has always been an issue but it seems to be getting worse and essentially nonexistent at the close of the missions. The lines are cleaned each night and the disposable traps are replaced at the end of each mission so attempts are being made to be proactive. We needed to end an hour sooner than anticipated which turned away some of the people for cleanings. Another consistent issue is the overhead chair lamp in room #2, which needs more repair than simply replacing a bulb. Something



keeps shorting it out. A new problem is oil leaking from the dental chair in room #3. I will report his findings at the BOD meeting on February 17, 2024.

Brother Moses (*left*) helped the students complete their paperwork and shared words of inspiration with the team.



Winston Bowen (*right*) assisted in providing encouragement in the form of assurance of gentle treatment from the dentists and entertaining the students while they waited to be seen, not always patiently. Winston also contributed muscle power by helping to unload Food for the Poor sacks of rice from the back of a semi-truck.



The results of the mission are as follows:



Jan 31 - Feb 2	Patients	Procedures
Total Patients Seen	131	135
HYG "Cleanings"	67	67
Sealants	0	0
Fillings	27	32
EXT	31	36
Unable to Treat	3	n/a
Consult/Referral/Exam	4	4

The most common preventable childhood disease is dental decay and it's preventable. Sadly, this permanent molar in a young child needed to be extracted. The loss of this tooth will cause problems in the future and continue the cycle the teams confront each mission. I recommend continuing the school program with the addition of seeing the students in the clinic for dental sealants, SDF treatment (if indicated) which helps to arrest early decay and "cleanings". It may mean a separate mission with a team devoted exclusively to handling the needs of the students.



Going Forward Dr. Sean Moncrieffe, (Dean of Pharmacology, University of Technology and Chairman of the Committee for collaborating with JOP) emailed me in January to resume discussion of the possibility of their oral medicine students providing community service hours in the St. Pius clinic. This may be an avenue to address the above needs of the children. I will inform the JOP Board of any further developments.

I was able to meet Antonette Cockburn, RDH and Mrs. Williams, RDH (Dental Hygiene Instructors at Utech) and give them a tour of the dental clinic. Antonette served with Dr. Joe Vento on the last medical mission and will be volunteering Wednesday afternoon, March 27th for the dental mission.



The upcoming March 2024 mission will be comprised of 4 dentists (3 from the US - 2 pedodontists and an oral surgeon), and Dr. Batts. The auxiliaries will be 6 dental assistants (1 for each dentist), one for triage, and one for sterilization, and an RDH from UTech.