

2024 Optical Mission Report Seafordtown

Dates: October 23-25, 2024

Team Members: Dr. Tom Kelly, Peggy Johnson, Paul Connor

The mission started with Peggy arriving on Tuesday October 22 to begin set up. Due to difficulties with flights, Paul and Dr. Kelly were delayed until Wednesday afternoon. Upon arrival we immediately set about configuring the exam lane, pretest area, frame selection area and optician workstation. A patient flow system was implemented, all instruments were checked then we began seeing the clients. Due to the late start in the afternoon, we extended our work hours until 7:00 PM In the evening.

After closing for the day our team retired to the guest house where dinner was waiting and prepared by Jenny.

Thursday morning found us back at the clinic by 09:00 AM and we worked till 8:00 PM to make up for lost hours on Wednesday. Friday was a repeat of Thursday although we ended our day at 5:00 PM.

It is important to note that we found all the optical instruments covered, clean and in good working condition. At the conclusion of the mission, we covered and packed away all the instruments for the next mission. All total we saw 70 patients that needed eyewear. All patients with cataracts, glaucoma, or maladies that required further follow-up, were advised to seek treatment in Montego Bay or where ever possible. We did find the auto refractor which is quite old to be no longer functioning. Assuming optical missions will continue in that location, I strongly recommend its replacement. There were plenty of readers available, but a fresh stock of ophthalmic frames is in order. Bulbs for the Burton 825 slit lamp are needed as we used the last spare. It is my recommendation that no more than 3 patients be scheduled per hour. If there is time at the end of the day, stand by patients could be seen. We had to turn away multiple patients that had waited most of the day.

St. Pius

Dates: October 30th- November 1st 2024

Team Members: Dr Tim Deigel, Dr. Tom Kaminska, Sue O'brien, Helen Fusco, Deacon Scott Proper, Amy Kuzma, Peggy Johnson, Jeanne Pittman, and Paul Connor

The mission started with Peggy, Jeanne, Amy and Paul arriving on Monday and meeting at St Pius. Since it was late in the afternoon, we checked out the area, visited with Fr Mario and Alicia. Around 5:00 PM the four of us were transported to Immaculate, had dinner provided by Delicious Dish caterers and were assigned quarters. On Tuesday October 29th we worked until 1:00 PM getting equipment and patient flow worked out. The rest of the day into the evening was spent fetching the remainder of our team from the airport and transporting them directly to Immaculate.

Our first mission day and all remaining days began with Deacon Scott assembling us in the courtyard and leading us in devotions. This spiritual centering was well accepted by team members.

After arrival at St Pius, we started seeing patients around 10:00. The first day is always a bit chaotic as everyone figures out their responsibilities. A daily assignment of jobs was posted and found to work quite nicely. A change that was made this year compared to previous ones included moving the auto refractor and visual acuity testing to another room. This allowed patient work up by Sue to be carried out in a less congested and quieter area. There were no equipment failures this year. Thursday and Friday were uneventful with the exception of our inability to process 75 patients a day. I will be holding a focus group consisting of both doctors, opticians and administrative personnel to address this issue. Our total clients serviced was 157 exams and 129 glasses ordered. 33 patients were recorded for cataract surgery.

A highlight of the mission came when Jeanne found a young man and his mother with no appointment outside of our building. The young man had a very heavy prescription, and one lens was shattered and the frame badly broken. The

mother did not have enough money to get a copy of the prescription, so Jeanne paid for it. Then when they returned, Paul and Deacon Scott hand crafted a lens that fit into a new frame and the smile that we got from the young man lit up the entire room when he put them on.

Due to the rising cost of lens fabrication, Paul will be making the eyewear at half the cost of a commercial lab doing the work.

A note. All evening meals were provided by a caterer and no dining out was done. The food was pretty good but often times too spicy. All in all it was a successful mission.

Paul J Connor
Mission Lead