

## JAMAICA OUTREACH PROGRAM

**REPORT TO:** BOARD OF DIRECTORS & other interested parties

**Re:** Dental Mission to St. Pius—Kingston, Jamaica; SEPTEMBER 21, 2024 AND SEPTEMBER 22-26, 2024

**From:** Michele LaBasi, MEd, BS, RDH

### TWO OUTREACHES

#### **Outreach #1 –Saturday, September 21, 2024 Collaborative Jamaican Dental Mission JOP| JDA|UWI**

**Vision and Objective:** This outreach aimed to engage more Jamaican dental professionals and students from local university dental schools. With the assistance of Dr. Sarah Tibby, a Kingston-based dentist and adjunct professor who frequently conducts dental outreach programs across the island, we launched our first collaborative effort. This initiative sought to foster sustainable dental care solutions in the community.

#### **Team and Execution:**

- **Team Composition:** The team primarily consisted of Jamaican professionals, bringing awareness of JOP's presence in Jamaica and opportunities to become involved. Dr. Tibby recruited four dental assistants, six dental students (recently graduated or near graduation), and area dentists who provided direct 1:1 supervision.
- **Early Arrival:** Melat Hussen, RDH (returning) and I arrived ahead of the main mission to coordinate efforts with the local team.
- **Equipment and Setup:** Dr. Tibby secured portable dental chairs, which were set up in the St. Pius gazebo to facilitate cleanings, fluoride varnish application, sealants, and an extraction. The dental clinic was used for more complex procedures such as cleanings, fillings, extractions, and minor oral surgeries.

#### **Impact:**

- **Patients Treated:** A total of 57 patients were seen during this one day outreach, for a range of dental services.
- **Challenges:** As with any inaugural event, there were a few logistical hiccups, but they were minor and did not significantly impact the overall success of the outreach.
- **Feedback:** Both patients and participants provided positive feedback, emphasizing the value of the services provided and the collaboration between local professionals and the JOP team.

**Next Steps:** Building on the success of this outreach, we are planning the next collaborative dental mission for January 18, 2025, which will precede the full January mission (January 19–23, 2025).

**Conclusion:** This outreach was a milestone for the organization, proving the potential for increased local involvement and collaboration. With the lessons learned, we are confident that future efforts will be even more impactful.

September 21, 2024	Patients
Total Patients Seen (Adults and children)	57
Cleanings	35
Sealants	8
Fillings (Adults and children)	4
Extractions (Adults and children)	11
Unable to Treat (BP too high or uncooperative)	1
Exams	35
Referrals	8



## Outreach #2 MTW, September 23-25



*New:* Voluntary Stovall, DA (VA), Krystal Quaynor, RDH, (CT), Ronald Fenderson, RDH, (MI) Corliss Eubanks, RDH, (SC), MJ Madison, RDH, (MA), Sweetie Araujo, DA, (NY) Dr. Franklyn Aguebor, (NY), Larissa Pretoni, DA (NY) *Returning:* Melat Hussen, RDH (VA), Sarah Haezebrouck, DA (FL), Michele LaBasi (OH)

### Oral Health Education Program at DuPont (September 2024)

JOP was blessed with another generous donation of toothbrushes and toothpaste from CariMed (Kirk LLC) for the DuPont school program

**PROGRAM LAUNCH:** September marked the beginning of the Oral Health Education Program at DuPont. This initiative is designed to promote dental health awareness and provide treatment for students, making oral care more accessible within the school environment.



**TEAM AND STRUCTURE: Team Composition:** A team of six Registered Dental Hygienists (RDH) rotated between providing educational sessions to students and treating patients in the clinic.

Many team members brought extra suitcases filled with items they collected for the mission. There were hundreds of toothbrushes, along with sealant and composite material, and a countertop full of toys and prizes for the OH program. The children are filled with delight and are eager to participate and answer questions to get a prize. The toothpaste that was collected by the St John Ladies of Charity arrived to Jamaica. I watched the patients' eyes widen when they saw the generosity of each oral hygiene item being handed to them.

### IMPACT:

- **Student Participation:**

The program successfully reached over half of the student body (628

students out of 1022) during its first month of operation, demonstrating strong engagement and laying the foundation for long-term oral health improvements in the school community.



**Conclusion:** The new school year launch of the Oral Health Education Program was a success, largely due to the dedicated RDH team and the invaluable support from Marie Mattai. JOP values the continued support we receive from Fr. Mario, Boxer, Rosemarie, Ms. Bradford and many more. With this positive start, we are well-positioned to continue providing oral health education and care during our upcoming missions in November 2024 and January 2025.

### Dental Care in the Clinic

The clinic operated on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. As our usual part of our process, we made efforts to pre-register patients to ensure a steady flow and to anticipate patient load. However, the actual attendance and punctuality can be unpredictable. We continue to accommodate emergencies and walk-ins to meet the needs of the community.

### Challenges Faced:

- **Weather Impact:** Monday's heavy rains resulted in a lower-than-expected patient turnout, with many students also staying home from school. This contributed to overcrowding and busier treatment days on Tuesday and Wednesday, as more patients sought care.
- **Equipment Issues:** We encountered several equipment malfunctions that slowed down treatment. Fortunately, Mr. Jolly, our technician, was able to make the necessary repairs in a timely manner. His pre-mission evaluation identified a leak in one of the units and a few minor issues that were addressed.

### Ongoing Concerns:

- **Suction Capacity:** The most pressing concern remains the inadequate suction when all four dental chairs are in use. The current HVAC system, rated at 2 horsepower (hp), is insufficient to meet the clinic's needs. Mr. Jolly has recommended adding another 2 hp to provide adequate suction power for all four chairs. He has provided an estimate of \$1,900 for the upgrade.
- **Next Steps:** This issue will be brought up for discussion at the next board meeting in October, where we will review the estimate and consider the necessary funding for the HVAC upgrade.

### Dental Clinic Decluttering Efforts (January 2023 – September 2024)

**Objective:** Since January 2023, Sarah Haezebrouck and I have been focused on decluttering the dental clinic to create a more efficient and organized space for our missions. This effort is aimed at improving accessibility and workflow, particularly for new team members unfamiliar with the clinic's setup.

### Progress:

- **Focus on Essentials:** The primary goal has been to remove unnecessary or unused items that may cause confusion or slow down operations. This includes gathering and sorting composite materials (white filling material) and dental burs, ensuring only current supplies are kept.
- **Organization:** We've centralized all necessary materials and equipment in a designated area and have begun distributing only what's needed for each mission, streamlining the process and minimizing waste.
- **Team Involvement:** Much of the decluttering has been done gradually over the course of eight missions. Despite limited time during each mission, substantial progress has been made toward our goal.

**Current Status:** We are nearing the completion of this decluttering/organizing project with a shifting focus on routine maintenance and structural repairs.

SEP 23-25 MTW	Patients
Total Patients Seen (Adults and children)	110
Cleanings	35
Fillings (Adults and children)	4
Extractions (Adults and children)	11
Unable to Treat (BP too high or uncooperative)	1
Referrals	8



**Going Forward** In addition to the Nov 2024 and Jan 2025 missions in Kingston, a March mission is planned in Seaford Town Immediate needs for school program:

- Fluoride varnish
- Disposable mirrors
- Toothpaste and floss
- Stickers and small toys for OH bags and prizes

For more information about serving or donating dental supplies, please contact: Michele LaBasi [mlabasi.jop@gmail.com](mailto:mlabasi.jop@gmail.com)