

## Reflections from 2015



## Message from H4H Board of Directors

We are proud to say that Health for Humanity has completed its 15<sup>th</sup> year of operations while continuing to grow and maintain a successful track record as we expand our services and provide more supports to local communities in Guatemala.

As in previous years, we are especially grateful and proud of the high caliber and generosity of volunteers who

support our medical missions, as well as the public health initiatives, in an effort to meet the aspirations of H4H to improve the health of those living in underdeveloped communities in Guatemala.

Our volunteers and donors are the backbone of H4H – without your support, dedication and incredible commitment of skills, time, resources and energy, none of H4H’s activities would be possible. This year, many current and new volunteers and sponsors actively supported fundraising initiatives, including our fabulous **Fall Fiesta Fundraiser**. Each one of you was instrumental in reaching our fundraising target so that we can maintain financial stability, and plan for the next year.

We are grateful to all of our donors and supporters but wish to give a special mention to Dr. Adrian Lee and Jason Choo for their most generous donation again this year in support of the 2015 surgical mission!

We hope you enjoy reading some of the key highlights of 2015, and we look forward to sharing our formal 2015 Annual Report on our website, for more details about our health missions and public health projects in Guatemala.

**Our profound gratitude to all as we move forward together, in partnership with our Guatemalan colleagues, to strengthen the health of Guatemalans and their communities.**

### H4H Board Directors



### Highlights from 2015

#### January

- H4H Board Strategic Planning Retreat

#### March - June

- 1st Annual H4H Donor Appreciation Evening
- 2014 E-Newsletter Released
- H4H participation at UBC International Development Research Network Conference
- H4H Annual General Meeting: Special speaker Ashli Akins: "International Development Through Community Resilience"
- H4H 2015 Annual Report Released

#### July

#### August

- 1st H4H Shipping Container of Medical Supplies to Guatemala
- Wood Gundy Partnership with H4H

#### September

- 3rd Annual Fall Fiesta Fundraiser

#### October

- Calgary Palooza Fundraiser

#### November

- Surgical Mission
- Primary Care Jornada



### 2016 H4H Annual General Meeting

- Thursday, May 5th 2016
- 6:00pm – 9:00pm
- At BC Women’s Hospital + Health Centre, Room D210 (Entrance #77 at West 29<sup>th</sup> Ave and Heather Street)
- Agenda & details to follow

**Letter of interest for Board positions may be forwarded to [info@h4h.ca](mailto:info@h4h.ca)**

## 2nd Annual Donor Appreciation Event

By Karen Harrison

The **2nd annual Donor Evening** was held on Friday, Feb 19th from 6:30 to 9:00 pm at the home of Esther & Joe Del Vicario in West Vancouver. Kudos to the guests who travelled through rain and traffic to attend the event!

Everyone enjoyed a wonderful evening of live music by BetoFuentes along with a delicious array of food (the guacamole was to “die for”!) and refreshments, courtesy of Granville Liquor Store. Following an update on the 2015 H4H surgical and primary care missions and public health projects by Board leaders, everyone was treated to a beautiful video produced through the

volunteer labour of Darwin Dumelod. At the close of the evening, guests received a small gift of chocolates by Xoxolat and a special small sack of cardamom seeds (spice) direct from Guatemala! We invite folks to join us next year for this heartwarming evening to celebrate all of you



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## H4H Supports Safe Drinking Water in Schools!

Over the years, H4H has partnered with Guatemalan non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and provided financial assistance to support different health promotion initiatives like wood-saving stoves and safe water filters for homes, primary school scholarships, child nutrition programs, and theatre-based reproductive health education for non-literate populations.

Currently, H4H is collaborating with the Rotary Club of West Vancouver Sunrise and a social enterprise business in Guatemala – Ecofiltro – to fund low-cost but effective water filters in school communities across Guatemala. Not only are there well-recognized positive health impacts through reduction of water borne diseases, but these low-tech water filters also contribute to reducing carbon footprint through lessening the burning of trees/wood to boil water – an important consideration in areas of significant deforestation such as Guatemala.



In November 2015, H4H Board reps visited one of the recipient schools and three different family homes where the water filters are in use. They were able to personally talk to the women who head up these households about the benefits they have seen with their children’s health, and even ask a couple of the older children why they liked these water filters. All readily agreed that the water filtered through these clay systems tasted the best, and so the kids drank more water and stayed better hydrated and, most importantly, they were not missing school due to intestinal problems! H4h thanks our donors for their support of these important health promotion projects which aim to prevent some of the more vulnerable populations from becoming ill in the first place.



## Partner for Surgery’s Targeted Infant Nutrition Program

In Guatemala each year, hundreds, if not thousands, of infants are born with cleft lip/palate. Although these conditions are readily taken care of in Canada, this can mean severe malnutrition and even death for Guatemalan babies. Infants with cleft cannot breastfeed and as their parents cannot afford formula, they desperately try to feed their infant with other liquids with a spoon that cannot provide sufficient nourishment for their baby.

This inspired Partner for Surgery’s (PFS) Targeted Infant Nutrition Program (TINP). When a cleft infant is born, the trained rural midwife informs the local PFS Health Promoter. The infant is brought to the nearest health

center as soon as possible and evaluated, weighed and registered in the health system. The mother then receives either a breast pump or donated formula (if she is no longer producing milk– breast milk is always best!), special nursing bottles, and detailed instructions. Without the intervention of TINP, these children are likely to die of starvation. While the initial goal of the program is simply to keep the infant alive, ultimately, PFS aims to help the infant gain weight and be strong enough to undergo surgery. Health Promoters continue to monitor the child regularly for weight gain and health status. Within about a year, the child will be ready for surgery by Health for Humanity. The PFS Health Promoter then accompanies the patient and a member of the family to come to the Obras Hospital where the H4H surgical team awaits, and supports the patient/families with interpretation services and emotional support.

H4H is very proud of its longstanding partnership with PFS and once again has provided a financial grant to the Infant Nutrition Program to ensure that infants are strong enough for surgery and have the best possible chance for a good recovery and health outcome!

## Surgical Mission Synopsis

By Giuseppe Delvicario

H4H sponsored a three week mission to the Obras Sociales Del Santo Hermano Pedro Hospital in Antigua in November 2015.

A total of 74 volunteers participated. The mission ran a total of 72 OR slates and performed a total of 366 procedures on 311 patients. The surgical specialties were ENT, pediatric plastic surgery, adult plastic surgery, gynecology, urology, and General Surgery. As always H4H tracks patient outcomes and complications and following this intensive surgical mission, we can share that 2 patients required a blood transfusion and 1 patient developed a surgical wound infection. Though we aim for a 100% no complication rate, the complexity of some of our patients can present unforeseen challenges.

Partners for Surgery facilitated surgical access for over 25% of the patients including 56 children with cleft pathologies. For the first time this year, we were able to document that the children with cleft problems also had middle ear fluid collections, and 16 of these patients had myringotomy tubes placed.

A 20 ft. container loaded with supplies and equipment was shipped successfully from Vancouver to the Obras in advance of the mission. Another milestone for H4H!

Most surgeons opted to stay for one week. Therefore, there were triage sessions. Colleen Fleury (a local volunteer and our lead translator) and Cheryl Davies trialed a new booking system, which was generally well received and further, improved during the mission with the helpful input of our surgical team.

The team nurses worked efficiently and cooperatively for the entire duration of the mission with great dedication from the PAR nurses. The Pediatric Plastic

patients were all operated on weeks one and two. This approach was an efficient use of our Pediatric Anesthesiologists and Cleft Pathology oriented Plastic Surgeons.

New SS Anesthetic Monitors sent in the container greatly improved patient safety. H4H donated medical equipment to the Obras Surgical Program including; 1 Aestiva Anesthetic Machine, 22 S5 monitors, 2 electronic OR tables, an operating microscope, as well as boxes of very valuable Aesculap Surgical Instruments.

As always, we had excellent support and cooperation from Odra Flores, RN, and her Obras surgical support staff.

From a cost perspective, the final direct patient expenses amounted to approximately \$100 CDN per patient!

Feedback from volunteers has been positive. H4H has been invited to run their surgical services for three weeks from Nov 4-27, 2016.



## Primary Care Jornada

By Caitlin Johnston

Year 2 in Nuevo Horizonte (NH), El Peten. The H4H team consisted of; a General Practitioner, Nurse Practitioners, a Midwife, a Bio-Kinetic Engineer, and Translators.

Once again, the team brought medication to the community anticipating a local shortage. Medications were purchased or donated, in Guatemala with help from Partners in Surgery and Asociacion Raiz.

### Summary of activities

375 patients seen in 4 communities  
264 (70%) female and 111 (30%) male

Youngest 14 days, average age 27 years, oldest 86 years

18 patients seen for follow-up  
4 home visits (including 2 patients in labour)

Group teaching session with the RN, midwives, and health promoters

25 physiotherapy visits  
3 children's dental hygiene workshops (15 children per workshop)

150 toothbrushes dispensed

We also left 3 books (Donde No Hay Doctor, Donde No Hay Doctor Para Mujeres, and A Midwife's Handbook, in

Spanish) commonly used in developing communities where access to health services is limited. In addition we left with the provider team in NH: headlamps, a multi-use tool, latex gloves, rain ponchos, rain boots, and extra medications.

Finally, Asociacion Raiz, who procured the majority of the donated medications (~25%), have committed to sourcing and donating medications for future jornadas; the goal is to have more donated than purchased medications.

## Thank-you to our mission/jornada sponsors!

Jason Choo	AMT Surgical	Associated Health
Abbie	Taylor, Leanne	Systems inc.
Addictive Sportswear	B Trudell Medical	The Rotary Help
SFujifilm, Sonosite In	Better Meals	Network
SPH Biomedical	Carestream Medical	Baxter International
Medline Industries	Ethicon-MAP	Surrey Memorial
Cardinal Health	International	Dr. Bian Mayson
Bowers Medical	Dr Kathy Jones	McKesson Canada
Supplies	Asociacion Raiz	Vancouver Gen Hosp
Dr. Jane Lea		Victoria Gen Hosp
Dove Medical Clinc		Surrev Memorial Hosp

### 2015 Board of Directors

*Cheryl Davies – Co-Chair*  
*Caitlin Johnston – Co-Chair*  
*Theresa Trinh - Secretary*  
*Connie Huang - Treasurer*  
*Mike Morton*  
*Joe Del Vicario*  
*Karen Harrison*  
*Bayron Figueroa*

### Committee Leads

***Surgical*** – Joe Del Vicario  
***Primary Care and Public Health*** – Caitlin Johnston  
***Volunteer and Membership*** – Cheryl Davies  
***Fund Development*** – Karen Harrison  
***Communications*** – Caitlin Johnston

## Wood Gundy Partners with H4H to Support New Donor Opportunities!



In 2015, Stan Clark's Financial Team of CIBC Wood Gundy formed an exciting new partnership with H4H in support of our work in Guatemala! Stan's team has graciously donated their admin services to support an H4H investment account to receive donations of securities and shares to H4H, providing another mechanism for donation to H4H while maximizing tax benefits for donors! This wonderful opportunity was introduced to H4H supporters at the Fall Fiesta by one of the members of Stan's team, and H4H has already realized some considerable donations to date! To find out more about this program, please contact Karen Harrison, H4H Board Fund Development Lead at [kha@telus.net](mailto:kha@telus.net)

## I am definitely coming back next year: experiences from my first H4H mission

By Carmen Wiechers

This past November I had the incredible opportunity to be part of the surgical outreach; to say it was an incredible experience would be understating the effects this trip had on me.

After a long 26 hour flight we hit the ground running on Sun- day where I triaged with the ENT surgeon and saw about 55 little patients, most of them cleft lip/palate surgeries. The rest of the week I spent translating for surgeons in the morning rounds and then translating for the anesthesiologist, the pre and post-surgery nurses and making sure the patients felt reassured.

Many of the patients came from small villages, some 12 hours away; some spoke indigenous dialects and we had to have special translators from Quiche to Spanish then to English!

Each day it took the efforts of 5 anesthesiologist (2 specialized in pediatrics), 6 pre and post-operative

register nurses, 1 Radiologist, 1 Urologist, 1 General

Surgeon, 2 Facial Plastic Surgeons, 1 ENT Surgeon (ears/nose/throat), 2 Gynecologists, 13 OR nurses, 4 translators, 2 Administrators/logistics to run five surgical rooms simultaneously.

All these people took vacation or time off and paid for flight and accommodation to make a difference for the patients. The level of comradery and team work was unbelievable within hours of working together, it felt like we all knew each other for years; by

the end it was it was hard to say goodbye.

The local staff was amazing and very caring with their patients; the cleanliness and organization of the hospital was amazing.

