



Annual Report 2020

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Health for Humanity Board of Directors

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Health for Humanity has been committed to support our partners and their patients throughout 2020. This year presented a variety of obstacles and setbacks both locally and internationally due to the unprecedented outbreak of COVID-19. The pandemic impacted people worldwide, especially those in developing countries. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 H4H was unable to complete a mission to Guatemala in 2020. Although we were unable to support our Guatemalan partners in person, the H4H Board made a priority to offer continued support throughout the year. We were able to send financial aid to a variety of our partners to help support their programs, staff, and patients. With vaccination distribution happening worldwide, we are hopeful that we will be able to complete a mission in late 2020. Whatever the future may bring, H4H will continue our support in whatever ways are necessary and possible.

Culture, Communication, and Community

Over the past year, the Health for Humanity board has reflected on the crucial importance of delivering culturally-responsive care in both the surgical and primary care setting. This is particularly vital given the significant indigenous population of patients and families who entrust us with their care. The foundational principle of global health is to remove power imbalances between countries and to strengthen partnership in pursuit of shared goals. The Health for Humanity Board members have been engaging in thoughtful discussion on the decolonization of Global Health and how we can provide education and orientation to volunteers participating in missions.

While working with our partners in Guatemala, we are heavily reliant upon Spanish interpreters to communication with our patients, families and community partners. The Health for Humanity team would like to encourage volunteers in the acquisition of language skills to transcend barriers in communicating effectively within the clinical setting.

To support and strengthen safe, culturally-centred care and to enhance effective engagement across language and communities, the Board is in discussions with respect to volunteer orientation. Volunteer development may take the form of special rounds, journal clubs, videos, presentations, and discussions.

If you would like to be involved in these volunteer development initiatives, please reach out to a board member. We look forward to working with you.

Primary Care, Public Health and Partnership

During the last mission in 2019, the Primary Care Team had a very successful mission to a number of remote communities in the region adjacent to Antigua. While many patients received excellent care, the Primary Care Team felt that it is important to partner with remote communities with a view of working together on shared goals for health.

At this time, we are exploring with Asociación Compañero para Cirugía opportunities to establish sustainable, long-term partnerships for health in remote communities. The partnerships would have tremendous benefits in terms of public health programming, following patients on a longitudinal basis who have ongoing needs for essential medicines, and strengthening local health systems in place through education and planning.

Facilitating Educational Opportunities for the Children of Guatemalan Coffee Plantation Workers

Many children of coffee plantation workers do not get a full education because of financial constraints. The Finca Santa Clara Scholarship Program is supporting the scholastic goals of children of workers on the coffee plantations of the Finca Santa Clara in Antigua, Guatemala. H4H has facilitated donations to this program with a formal MOU and currently 33 students from grade school to university levels are receiving financial assistance.

Future Partnerships and Activities

H4H is hopeful that 2021 will be a better year for all. We are looking forward to working with new partners such as Days for Girls Guatemala, an organization that supports young girls in remote areas who have limited access to feminine hygiene products. Also in the works, is a virtual fundraiser that our board is putting together for Spring 2021. This fundraiser will help to raise money for ongoing programs like the infant nutrition program.

Acknowledgements

Immense gratitude goes to our partners who help maximize our effectiveness in providing the best possible health care to the most marginalized populations in Guatemala:

- Partner for Surgery for seeking out patients who have treatable surgical conditions and supporting these patients to remain health while waiting for surgery
- Obras Sociales del Hermano Pedro Hospital for provided a base for us to offer many programs in addition to surgery

H4H also wants to express immense gratitude to all of our past and future volunteers for their continued support during every mission. We also want to thank all of our members and donors for your continued support through monetary donations and endless resources so that we have been able to provide continued support for our Guatemalan partners throughout this difficult year.

We are hopeful for what the future brings and are excited to be able to return to Guatemala soon to continue helping populations in need.