

Individual Project Report

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Rotary Club: Homer- Kachemak Bay

Project Title: Myanmar Health Care

Progress report Final report

Project Description

1. Describe the project. What was done, when, and where did project activities take place? If this is a progress report, what remains to be done?

The project was for volunteer Physicians and interpreters from the USA, China, Hong Kong, UK, Taiwan, and Myanmar, to provide health evaluations and appropriate medications and/or referrals to a population of very poor people in the rural Rahkine State of Myanmar, in a village called "Mrauk Oo" and a city called "Sittwe". While the people were waiting to see the volunteer Physicians, another team of volunteers provided the people with health education and prevention of disease information using a health fair/displays format. The health fair projects were conducted at the local Monastery in both locations, and in Mrauk Oo, they were also held at the hotel where most of the "team" was staying. The health care team worked in a part of the hotel at Mrauk Oo, and in the Monastery in Sittwe.

Project activities took place December 31, 2013, January 1, 2014 and January 3, 2014.

1,100 people
were evaluated
as patients and
at least that
many attended
the health fairs
while waiting
for their
medical
evaluation.

2. How many people benefited from this project?

3. Who were the beneficiaries, how were they impacted by this project, and what humanitarian need was met?

The residents of Mrauk Oo and Sittwe, women, children, and men, were the beneficiaries of the projects. These people have little or no access to medical care or preventive health education information. Most are unable to pay for care at the local hospital. In Mrauk Oo, there are usually 1-2 Doctors on the hospital staff to serve an area-wide population of about 50,000 people. There are no other Doctors in the town or in any of the outlying areas. Sittwe has more Doctors available at the hospital, but the population of the city is about 250,000 people, and the least expensive method to get to the city is by boat which can take 5-7 hours. Medications are too expensive for the local people to be able to purchase them. Humanitarian needs that were met include: disease prevention and treatment, water and sanitation education, maternal and child health education and treatment. The beneficiaries received education about cigarette smoking and its effects on lungs, and the developing fetus; and betel nut chewing and its effects on teeth, mouths, and body organs. They learned about alcohol effects on the body, and could volunteer to demonstrate walking a straight line with visual distorting goggles simulating the effects of using alcohol. They could have their height measured. They learned about appropriate ways to keep water supplies clean and use effective sanitation techniques. They were given instruction about good balanced nutrition in general and how to prevent high blood pressure, diabetes, and goiters, through nutrition, all of which are common among the population. They were all given toothbrushes as gifts, and children were given snacks, coloring paper, and a crayon each, as long as supplies lasted. Also, anyone who had registered to see a Physician was given that opportunity to be evaluated which included blood pressure checks, eye and mouth checks, and presenting problem discussions. Those with certain symptoms or history were also tested for diabetes with glucometer/test strips. They were all given medications if appropriate and/or recommendations and referrals for additional treatment if needed. The most common health problems that were found included head, neck, shoulders pain and backaches, (particularly for women because of carrying water containers on their heads for long distances), undiagnosed hypertension, undiagnosed diabetes and unmanaged diabetes, stomach ailments, and personal hygiene problems affecting teeth and bodies in general. Medication compliance issues were also discovered, particularly for chronic illnesses.

4. How many Rotarians participated in the project? 5, plus 1 Rotarian's wife

5. What did they do? Please give at least two examples, not including financial support provided to the project.

4 of the Rotarians presented all the education and demonstrations at the health fairs – which covered 6 different ½ day sessions; and used 1-3 volunteer interpreters to translate the materials. 1 Rotarian was the primary photographer for both events – health care and health fairs, and he also did "crowd control" to be sure that people waited for their turns to see the Doctors. The Rotarian's wife, as a retired nurse, assisted with the medication labeling and distribution in the health care area.