

## 2016 Mission Trip Belize, CA

A non-profit organization of North Carolina, Barnabas Bar Petra, Inc. regularly travels internationally with medical teams to provide care to children with disabilities and their families. In July of 2016, a medical team comprised of doctors and physical therapists from Cape Fear Valley Health System travelled to Belize, Central America to provide medical and rehabilitation services under the organization of Barnabas Bar Petra, Inc.

The Belizean people has benefitted from annual visits of this Organization for the past thirteen years. On Monday, July 18, 2016 the team began their mission at The Inspiration Center in Belize City. The Inspiration Center provides physical and speech therapy, community based rehabilitation, basic medical services and social support for the holistic care of children with disabilities (birth to 16 years) and their families. The merging of the Medical Model and the Community Based Rehabilitation Model of Care is what makes the Inspiration Center unique.

On Monday July 18<sup>th</sup> the Team met with the doctor and physical therapist who are employees of the Center as well as a physical therapy student from the University of Kentucky. There the US team provided consultation for many children with disabilities. The team gave both medical and rehabilitation care to improve the children's medical conditions and advance their physical capabilities.

At The Inspiration Center the team saw children with a variety of conditions to include, hypotonia with decreased muscle strength throughout; Marfan Syndrome with joint pains and uneven bone growth; cerebral palsy, Down Syndrome with poor muscle function, Autism Spectrum Disorders and children with gross gait disturbances.



Above: far right Dr. David Parker, MD observing Bruce Gilliard, PT assessing for hip dysplasia and severity of muscle contraction. Physical Therapy student in background observing

On Tuesday, July 19 the US team returned to The Inspiration Center, in Belize City for half the day before traveling to the District of Dangriga, approximately 111 miles (over 2 hours) away . At the Center the team did education and training for the medical and rehabilitation staff. A few special need patients were used to demonstrate new and improved way of addressing the conditions. The center staff members were very grateful for the training they had.

On Wednesday, July 20 the Barnabas Bar Petra Team set up a free medical and physical therapy clinic in the Red Cross building in Dangriga, Belize. The team that worked at the clinic consisted of four physical therapists, three doctors, a student and a nutritionist. The patients that attended this free clinic were able to receive nutritional information, a wellness checkup, medicine as needed, physical therapy interventions and home program recommendations.



Dr. David Parker assessing a boy with Limb-girdle muscular dystrophy (LGMD)

The clinic saw 43 patients with medical conditions to include a seventeen month old child with shunt placement one year prior. This child was diagnosed with seizure disorder, poor activity and reactivity, and quadriparesis. A 54 year old woman was seen by the doctor for possible viral bronchitis. A three year old boy was seen and diagnosed with Down’s syndrome. His parents were encouraged to know what the child’s issue was and verbalized that they will continue treating the child normally so that he can grow and learn as much as possible.



Dr. Moses Kumi evaluating a woman with possible viral bronchitis

On Thursday, July 21 we set up another free medical clinic in the Helpage Building in Dangriga, Belize. Once again, the team consisted of four physical therapists and three doctors. We saw a five year old child with Noonan's Syndrome and pulmonary stenosis; this child is the only documented case with Noonan's Syndrome in Belize. The patient suffers from decreased shoulder elevation and uses a palmar- grasp to pick up objects.



Dr. David Parker is documenting medical finding for parents to follow up with community physical. Ms. Syreeta Steward, PT collecting both medical and rehabilitation information to assist the Inspiration Center in their follow up with all clients seen by Barnabas Bar Petra's team.

Some conditions seen at this clinic were spina bifida, hydrocephalus, club foot, and wrist sprain. A caregiver of two disabled children came into the clinic with complaints of low back and right knee pain. She had a growth in her eye as well (pterygium). The doctors not only diagnosed these conditions, but provided medication to manage the issues.



Ms. Zelina Henry, PT who specialized in pediatric management is here instructing a mother how to strengthen muscles of a child with cerebral palsy.

Throughout the team's visit in Belize, many patients were seen and helped. Without the help of the free medical clinics set up by Barnabas Bar Petra's team many patients would not have received the care and medicines that they were in need of. It is commended that doctors from Cape Fear Valley Health teamed with physical therapist travel on their own time to provide medical and rehabilitation help to the Belizean community. It is very difficult for some Belizeans to receive healthcare; something as simple as multivitamins is very difficult for parents to give their children because of monetary restraints. For many families, coming to the free medical clinic once a year put on by this team is their only source of healthcare.



Mother demonstrating techniques she just learned

Mission Medical Team:

Bruce Gillard, PT; David Parker, MD ; Moses Kumi, MD; Zelina Henry, PT; Syreeta Stewart, PT; Lucas Henry, PT; Carolyn Blissett - Physical therapy student and Kaitlin Smith an observer preparing for medical school