

7/31/2012

Report of 2012 Mercy Missions-Amichi, Timmy Global Health

Dear Friends and Family,

Mission for 2012 was accomplished!

Thanks to you, we served 854 patients from July 2nd to 5th during our 6th Annual Medical Mission at Diocesan Hospital Amichi, Nigeria. Patients began to line up as early as 3am on Sunday, July 2nd. Invariably, we leave without seeing every single person who needs it. Thankfully, your support also makes it possible to run a weekly Wednesday-Clinic (free of charge to patients) for follow-up care and also to see new patients. This is awesome because our work does not end when we leave during the 4-day medical mission but continues all year round. We are extremely blessed to have our community partners and volunteers led by Dr. Okwudiri Obiadazie. Our volunteers included physicians (ophthalmologist, family, and internal medicine) nurses, opticians, nurses, nurse aids, laboratory technician, registrars, housekeeping staffs, and so many more.

We treated patients for diabetes, high blood pressure, multiple eye conditions, osteoarthritis, and ulcers. We provided education, screened for high blood sugar, provided eye screenings, and distributed over 300 pairs of brand new reading glasses from our "Ready Glass Angels". We provided eye surgeries to 16 patients and in partnership with the ophthalmology residents and staffs from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, and our other community partners. The eye surgery supplies were provided free of charge by Surgical Eye Expeditions.

We have good news and bad news:

First the good news: The weekly clinic has been very successful in providing ongoing care to a group of regular patients. This group of patients no longer has to attend the 4-day mission. According to Dr. Obaidazie, they said, "we will see you at the clinic; we do not have to stay in line during the mission." They have regular access to health care.

The bad news is that we are still seeing large numbers of new patients who attend the 4-day mission. As I indicated earlier, we served 854 patients meaning our number is not going down. Though we were located in Diocesan Hospital, Amichi, patients traveled from over 20 other surrounding communities just to get health care services.

Of the 854 patients, about 77% were women and 23% were men. Our youngest patient was one year old and was treated for malnutrition. Our oldest patient was 100 years and was treated for Plasmodiasis (related to Malaria) and high blood pressure. Most patients ranged in age from 24 to 81 years and 65% are older than 40 years old. For example, we served a 52 years old woman who came to the clinic. She weighed about 180 pounds and had a blood sugar level of 472 milligram/deciliter and blood pressure of 180/110. We diagnosed her with diabetes and high

blood pressure and started her on medications. She will return to the clinic in 2 weeks for follow-up care. There were many more like her diagnosed with diabetes, or high blood pressure, or both.

We have large numbers of women who have osteoarthritis and have difficulty walking without excruciating knee pains from their bones rubbing against each other because of worn-down cartilages. Thanks to Dr. Sampson Obichi, many got much needed pain management therapies. Most of these women need physical therapy and/or knee replacement, luxuries that many can't access or afford.

There is a need to understand why we have such high numbers of women who are developing osteoarthritis. It is also interesting that we are seeing few men even though the scientific evidence show that more men than women develop diabetes and high blood pressure.

The World Health Organization projects that the number of persons with diabetes and high blood pressure will continue to grow.* For example, the number of persons with diabetes will double between the year 2000 to 2030 from 171 to 366 million people.* When left untreated, diabetes and high blood pressure lead to more health complications like heart disease, stroke, and eye problems. These health conditions can be prevented with early diagnoses through screenings, treatment with medications, diet, and exercise.

In line with the mission of Timmy Global Health, we must continue to combat lack of awareness about diabetes and hypertension, limited access to health care, and inadequate treatment of health conditions.

Thank you for supporting the work of Mercy Missions Amichi-Timmy Global Health.

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1. Wild, S., Roglic, G., Green, A., Sicree, R., & King, H. (2004). Global prevalence of diabetes *Diabetes Care*, 27(5), 1047-1053.
2. Ulasi, I., I., Ijoma, C., K., Onwubere, B., J., Arodiwe, E., Onodugo, O., & Okafor, C. (2011). High prevalence and low awareness of hypertension in a market population in Enugu, Nigeria. *International Journal of Hypertension*. doi: 10.4061/2011/869675

Breakdown

Total served 854

Females

Total - 659 people

0-30 years - 59 people

31-50 years - 262 people

51-70 years - 275 people

71-100 years - 63 people

Males

Total - 194 people

0-30 years – 32 people

31-50 years - 55 people

51-70 years – 82 people

71-100 years - 25 people