Mission REPORT: Baja Smiles Missions

Baja California, Mexico

For the October clinic of the Smiles of Los Cabos, **18 Patients with primary cleft deformities** were treated. From the working field mission site, it was determined that the children who have been building up for care over delays from the COVID status fluctuating at the mission sites making them unable to obtain their planned dates of care, had reached a critical mass, and a change of the SIF MISSION DATES was made to February 2021 and August next year and years following. The other dates for TecateSmiles remained the same with May and November which will also allow for the other 6 screened patients who were prescreened by SIF Communications Director, Leticia Gottwald and Dra. Macrina Bustos to be operated with individual appointments at the following mission surgical clinic in addition to others.

The host Rotary Club of Cabo San Lucas was again very much involved in that they hosted a welcome presentation allowing Dr. Moses, in his role as Rotarian/Surgeon liaison for the project, award three of their members with Paul Harris Fellowship meritorious service recognitions, each valued at $1,000 and pin the PHF pin on each of them as well as having the Rotary District 4100 Governor Oscar Guillermo Navas Amaya pin the award upon the past president of Rotary Club of Los Cabos, and current Cabo San Lucas mayor, Armida Castro.

These awards followed a presentation by Dr. Moses to the Rotary Club of Los Cabos, outlining the process by which Paul Harris funds are gathered into the Rotary Foundation which, in turn, allows for grants for these mission projects and for the Matching grants providing supplies, equipment and care for the underserved.

Dr. Moses was then able to present the $22,000 Rotary Matching grant check to Dr. Alexandro Avalos, who was representing his H. de Especialidades, for the Rotary DMG P-3165 Power for Smiles, for purchase and installation of the backup power generator for the operating rooms used for the Mission CaboSmiles on each clinic.

The CaboSmiles clinic covers the region of the entire Baja Sur, Mexico as the population of the region is only around one million persons with 250,000 living in Los Cabos and another 250,000 living in La Paz and the other half Million persons spread all the way Northwards to the Mulege- Loreto line 500 miles south of the USA Border. With the radio and television coverage of the clinic success and support, this clinic is expected to grow significantly over the coming year or two. Currently, two mission clinics lasting a week per visit are scheduled now in the first weeks of February and August, annually.

The Mission site for TecateSmiles covers the region of Baja Norte from the Mulege-Loreto line further North 500 miles to the USA border and spreading over the Mexico Mainland into the state of Sonora, MX. This project site covers a population of over one million persons from the Baja as well as Sonora regions. An estimated 200
thousand population of affected persons with facial cleft deformities live in this mission’s service reach. Fortunately, there are parallel missions in Ensenada, Mexico also founded by Rotarian/Surgeon, Dr. Moses and these missions help to control the underserviced patient load with their 4x/year clinics.

**Power-For-Smiles Backup Hospital Generator Donated and Mission Cases**

A photo example of cases treated at these missions is included in this report below including the above- shown photo of the installed 85KW Power-For-Smiles hospital backup generator desperately needed for this hurricane-plagued regional hospital.

This grant was funded with Dr. Moses’ and matching Rotarian monies for purchase. Even without this purchase, a financial estimated value of the February 2021 CaboSmiles mission (if done at a USA hospital) totaled $276,000 for the surgeries alone. Obviously, however, the full benefits to the families, children, and hosting communities having no resources for care otherwise is immeasurable, not to mention the eventual entrance of the children to their society functioning in a productive life.

**New Mission Surgical Protocol**

A newly developed model for Mission Care in the face of COVID19 risk has been developed for treatment of essential babies helping them to feed and nurture through the provided surgeries on their primary cleft deformities. This protocol utilizes a remote screening process via the Internet with on-site appointment being given several weeks prior to the anticipated surgical team’s visit. The supporting Smiles Communication Director works together with a local surgeon who donates several individual appointments to visit with one the baby’s parents and preliminary photographs and exams are performed which are then sent to the Mission Leader, who in turn, holds a remote mission surgeon’s conference for selection of the cases based upon critical needs. Then, upon arrival to the mission site, the pre-selected babies and one of their parents are seen by individual appointment at the hospital with 20-minute intervals for just the surgeon and anesthesiologist for final approval and surgical scheduling.

During the surgical week, the baby and parent are admitted by appointment with a minimum of staff presence and administered a rapid COVID testing prior to being taken back for surgery.
Operating rooms protocols are with N95 filtration masks and, as required, a face shield, if required, and personnel are limited to essential workers. The medical volunteers were COVID PCR tested or Vaccinated prior to arrival at the mission site. In retrospect, the mission site seemed to be the safest location for avoidance of the COVID virus after all was reviewed.
Baby Surgery 2011 and in follow-up        Surgical Mission Team CaboSmiles

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Report submitted in grateful Service,

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