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*(Above) Mothers and children gather for Grace Children's mobile health clinic, which is held in a warehouse that is also used as a church in one of the many tent cities still located in Port-au-Prince.*

## NOVEMBER 2017 COMMUNITY HEALTH VISIT TO GRACE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

by Jeannine Hatt, MD

**O**ur day began with a visit to a community health clinic site in a tent city about 30 minutes from Grace Children's Hospital. Our team consisted of myself, Chuck Phelps, MD, Ellen Palmer, PhD, RN and Becky Baird, MS, RN, as well as health agent Esther Damus, who has worked in the program for more than 22 years, and GCH translators, Robenson Luceus, Peterson Jules and Nathalie Cajoux.

Esther explained to us that she and three other workers cover 22 communities, five days a week, all year long, seeing 40-60 children with each clinic. (Due to funding shortages, the number of workers has decreased from 22).

We drove into one of the slum areas around Port-au-Prince, parking at the entrance of a large tent city, a remnant of the loss of housing after the 2010 earthquake. We made our way down a narrow walkway between tents where women were sitting on the ground cooking in pots over propane burners and washing clothes in large buckets while curious children everywhere watched us go by. As we entered a large room with rows of wooden benches that was used as a church, we saw mothers with children had started to gather. Before we left, the room was full of dozens of women with babies and young children. The clinic was opened with song and all quickly joined in.

*November Visit continued on page 2*



*A child waiting outside his one-room tent-city home, while his mother sits inside on the dirt floor doing their daily washing.*



*Curious and friendly children welcomed us as we entered the mobile clinic site.*





Community health worker Esther Damus demonstrated how a child's weight is plotted on a growth curve specifically designed to screen for malnutrition.

### *November Visit continued*

Esther says she considers the most important service health agents provide is the administration of life-saving vaccines, including BCG which helps to protect children against the more severe complications of tuberculosis, as well as diphtheria, tetanus and polio.

Children are also weighed and referred to the nutrition program at Grace Children's Hospital (GCH) if they fall into the malnutrition area of their growth chart. Vitamin A, which serves to preserve healthy eyes and a good immune system, is administered along with periodic anti-parasitic drugs. Among the important services is regular health education especially in the area of sexually transmitted diseases, HIV, family planning, hygiene and illnesses such as diarrhea. The topic of the day was the prevention and recognition of cholera and what to do if it is suspected.

When asked why she had done this work for so long, Esther quickly replied, "I cannot watch children dying when there is prevention out there that I can bring here with vaccines and education." We left with great admiration and thankfulness for Esther and her coworkers.

**"I cannot watch children dying when there is prevention out there that I can bring here with vaccines and education."**

The following is a report sent by Dr. Bijou on GCH community health service statistics during the first six months of 2017:

- Vitamin A distributed: 2,244
- Number of vaccinations: 7,470
- Education sessions: 2,874
- Deliveries by GCH trained birth attendants: 552
- Home visits: 5,910
- Community meetings: 108
- Children who had growth monitoring: 6,516
- Number of fortified food bags distributed to out-patient children: 2,652

Grace Children's Hospital depends on donations to help provide these services and we urge you to contribute to ensure no family is denied care.



Children are weighed, sitting in a seat that is hanging from a simple scale.

## HELPING GRACE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL EXPAND ITS ULTRASOUND SERVICES

Grace Children's Hospital depends on its radiology department in its care of children who often present with complications of advanced tuberculosis and, particularly, to improve their maternal health services, which include family planning and prenatal care.

In the past 12-month period, Grace Children's Hospital has performed almost 10,000 X-Rays and it is common for patients to be referred from other hospitals and clinics for radiology services.

Ultrasound is also an important imaging modality Grace Children's Hospital uses to assess patients. At a recent ICC USA visit to the hospital, it was discovered that the radiology department's ultrasound machine was no longer functioning and high-quality obstetrics services, which depend on fetal imaging of the pregnant mother, had been suspended.

The inability to adequately evaluate abdominal masses and certain pulmonary diseases was another negative outcome due to the loss of this service, both for children in the in-patient unit and adults and children in the out-patient department.

To address this deficiency, ICC USA worked to repair one machine, with additional high-quality ultrasound equipment donated. Chuck Phelps, MD, a radiologist in practice in Denison, Texas, recently visited Grace Children's Hospital, sharing his expertise and experience to assess one of the pregnant mothers being followed in the perinatal clinic.

With Dr. Phelps' help, the obstetrician was able to accurately identify gestational age and identify any significant fetal abnormalities. The mother was quite pleased to hear that she had a healthy 22-week fetus and her follow-up could be routine. She will continue receiving a broad spectrum of prenatal services. Both mother and newborn will be admitted into Grace Children's Hospital's healthy family program with ongoing educational and preventive healthcare services.

Thank you to all who support ICC Grace Children's Hospital and its commitment to healthy births and accurate diagnoses in the evaluation of women and children.



*Nursing staff in Grace Children Hospital's reproductive clinic greeted us and the women who are being seen for prenatal visits.*



*Dr. Chuck Phelps, a U.S. radiologist, worked with one of the Grace Children's obstetricians, demonstrating how to use a newly-donated ultrasound machine to assess the health of a pregnant mother and her baby.*

**adopt a project...** Grace Children's Hospital needs your help! If a church, or group of churches is able to "adopt" this project together, we can better care for families and children treated at Grace Children's Hospital. Please consider today how you can be a part of their healthy future. Contact [iccusa@internationalchildcare.org](mailto:iccusa@internationalchildcare.org) to discuss possibilities or make a contribution.





International Child Care

Grace Children's Hospital

## REMEMBER GRACE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL DURING LENT

During Lent we encourage you to support the children of Haiti by helping to raise much needed funds for Grace Children's Hospital in Port-au-Prince. Your contribution helps GCH continue its mission to provide high quality care to children and families in need. **Your generous contribution helps to provide ongoing medical care, at Grace Children's Hospital and its community outreach initiatives.**

As long as you have a compassion to help others, your dedication will celebrate Grace Children's Hospital's success and show that you all are a part of its future!

Visit [www.internationalchildcare.org](http://www.internationalchildcare.org) to learn more about how to help.

## FROM THE BOARD: WE'RE MOVING FORWARD TO MAKE ICC BETTER

The Board of Directors of ICC-USA would like to update you on changes taking place in our organization. We thank you for your patience as we work through the transition process, which includes a recent move of the ICC-USA office to Ann Arbor, MI, where we are located in the NEW Center, a shared workspace dedicated to non-profit organizations. This move has allowed us to greatly reduce our overhead expenses so that more of every dollar collected makes it to our programs in Haiti and the Dominican Republic (DR). This move to refocus the organization will ensure a better future for ICC. We do not intend to lose sight of the folks who have helped us for many years. ICC will continue to support the ongoing work in Haiti and the DR, continuing our previous mission and direction. Thank you for your support!

We will remain a faith-based organization. The purpose of the move to Ann Arbor is to find a bigger donor pool and easier access to larger foundations in order to help more children and families in Haiti and the DR. It has been difficult to operate an international organization from Kalamazoo without having something as simple as a major airport nearby. The board took a deep look at the advantages and disadvantages of staying in the area. It just makes more sense to be in a city where we can move forward at a normal pace. However, we do plan to continue our relationships and engagements with church conferences as well as large and small local churches.



There will be more information coming as we continue the journey to make ICC a more robust organization. We appreciate your patience during this process!

Please visit our website at [internationalchildcare.org](http://internationalchildcare.org) for more information, including contact information.

Sincerely,

Scott Hoyer, ICC Chairman of the Board

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Advance:

Grace Children's Hospital: 418520

Integrated Community Health: 418847

