

**2015  
ANNUAL NEWSLETTER  
6TH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**



**MEDICAL OUTREACHERS 醫心**



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# Introduction

Medical Outreachers (MO), a non-governmental organization founded in 2009, has now stepped into its 7th year.

MO is led by a group of medical students from both The University of Hong Kong and The Chinese University of Hong Kong. We strive to provide various service opportunities to medical students in hopes of nurturing doctors with kind hearts and more importantly, of serving the neglected groups of people in society.

In the year of 2015, we upheld this value by launching a series of new services and projects. More experience was gained, more medical students were inspired, and more people were cared for.

2015 was definitely a rewarding year for MO, you may know more about our work throughout the year in this booklet.





# Message from the President



Sum Lik Cheung, 6th Executive Committee

## “A Year of Breakthrough. A milestone.”

2015 was an important year to Medical Outreachers Hong Kong (MO). It was a year of expansion and, at the same time, a year of maturation. As MO stepped into its sixth year of development, we managed to expand our scope of service to not just local and regional areas, but also to the international level. The establishment of new projects and branches marks another remarkable year of MO.

### Expansion of Services

In June 2015, we launched our first international medical service trip to Uganda, Africa, marking a breakthrough in MO's international services. Meanwhile, new services were also launched in the regional and local areas, while other services were fine tuned.

In the regional and local level, new and fine-tuned services were also launched. In the new MediCare service trip, students are able to provide medical intervention and education in the most impoverished areas in China. Locally, we also established new services which provide help to domestic helpers, local refugees and asylum seekers.

### Extending our Reach

Apart from services, we also made breakthroughs in other areas. We are very excited to announce that a new branch of MO was established in Australia this year. Based in medical schools in Australia, Medical Outreachers Australia (MOA) shares the same visions and missions with MO. While it benefits medical students and local communities in Australia, it also marks an important milestone of MO, bringing the organization from a local to an international level. We look forward to the establishment of more branches in the coming years.



Furthermore, we launched a brand-new project called Humans of Medical Outreachers (HMO), a photoblog of moments and stories that we have gathered. We hope it reminds us of the importance and beauty of genuine care and empathy towards people, while inspiring people to reach out and take action to help those in need.

Meanwhile, we also established the Medical Student Outreach Fund (MSOF). Entirely funded by MO, we hope to provide financial assistance to medical students who have the passion and devotion to serve the community.

## Special Thanks

I would also like to express my most sincere gratitude to all parties, organizations, doctors, professors, and students who have shown their unfailing support for MO, especially Prof. Joseph Sung, Dr. Fan Ning, Dr. Albert Siu, Dr. Au Yiu Kai, Dr. Emily Chan, and many more. MO would not have achieved all of the above without your kind support and advice. Special thanks must also be given to Watoto Asia, CCOUC, and MediCare Resources Ltd for their unreserved support; we look forward to future collaborations. I also greatly

appreciate the support from CUHK Faculty of Medicine and HKU Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine. Last but not the least, I am extremely grateful to all our past and current executive members of MO and MOA. It is the passion and unflinching determination that make the impossible possible.



## Final Words

After a year serving in Medical Outreachers, I realized the importance of bringing humanity to the community. I understand it is not easy to cultivate serving hearts. And even if we have that passion, it is difficult to create real and lasting impacts to those in need. However, a river cuts through rock, not because of its power, but because of its persistence.

Reach out, create, and inspire. It is always easier said than done, but what really matters is that we keep trying and do not give up. I hereby urge you all to join us in spreading love. It is my hope that, one day, all doctors and students may join together and become Outreachers who bring humanity to the community, and even the world.

# Services

In the past year, 12 projects, spanning local, regional and international, were held. The number of services was over 40! In addition to our existing projects, new programmes were initiated in a bid to expand our service targets and regions covered. Together with our medical student volunteers, we have served the deprived in Hong Kong, the Mainland, and the world.



## Local Services

### Prince of Wales Hospital (Paediatrics)

Working alongside Life Oasis, this service allowed us to expand our target groups and reach out to children. Through bedside care and activities, volunteers not only alleviated the pain and boredom of the children, but also gained invaluable knowledge in communication skills. Through recreational arts and craft activities with the children, volunteers were able to grasp a different way of delivering care. Held monthly every Saturday, students met up with long term paediatric patients to build personal relationships with them. We would like to thank Life Oasis for giving us this eye opening experience and look forward to further workshops and expansion.

### Wong Tai Sin Hospital

Participants in the Wong Tai Sin Hospital service visited patients who were mainly recovering from orthopaedic diseases/problems and required long hospitalization for rehabilitation. To ensure that students are well-prepared for this service, participants were involved in pre-service workshops that train them on effective communication and approaching skills. Practice sessions were also held for participants to converse with slightly younger and more active elderly patients. During our ward visits, we stressed quality over quantity. Participants spent quality time with patients at their bedside as patient listeners, bringing joy and companionship for patients by chatting and understanding their circumstances. Through this opportunity, students garnered practical experience and refined their communication skills.

## Grantham Hospital (Palliative Care)

Since 2010, MO has been collaborating with Grantham Hospital's Hospice Center to provide palliative service opportunities for medical students. It is a unique opportunity to learn and practice their communication skills with terminal patients– a type of clinical exposure that preclinical medical students rarely get. This service aims to add joy and happiness to the lives of these terminally ill patients, and to accompany them in the final stages of their life journeys. Moreover, participants exercised their creativity and made handicrafts and festival gifts for patients.

## Reflections from Participants


"Now I have a more complete picture of what palliative care is. Palliative care allows terminally ill patients to live their life in dignity and also joy."

"I used to think that providing palliative care is about reducing patients' pain and addressing patients' psychological/spiritual needs...but as I did more hospital visits, I found that what most terminally ill patients need is a listener...They may not need solutions to all their problems. Sometimes, having someone to hear their life experiences can already make them feel loved."

"I visited a female patient with breast cancer. When she knew that my partner and I are Year 1 medical students, she held our hands and told us to work hard. 'The workload may be overwhelming and demanding but do keep on with your hard work - people will be relying on you guys in the future and you really need to master the skills and knowledge.' I was touched and determined to bear this notion in mind and remind myself of this whenever I feel like giving up."

"Some patients often comment that patients do not respect doctors as much as in the past; I now think that the doctors have to bear some responsibility as well. Patients can tell whether a doctor truly cares for them or not."





"They were all very attentive during the health education session. At the end of each teaching session, they kept taking photos with us to show their gratitude!"

## Domestic Helpers Health Education Service

It is commonplace for domestic helpers to be exploited and have their contracts terminated. When their contracts are terminated, their Hong Kong ID cards become invalid and they are unable to reach out for affordable medical help. And even when they are working, some are hesitant to inform their employers of their illness for fear of having their contracts terminated. Moreover, agencies and training schools seldom provide their helpers with knowledge about health and health protection.

In light of this, Domestic Helpers Service was launched this year. In cooperation with the Bethune House, MO carried out health checks and education for domestic helpers and carried out health education in each session of services. Doctors were also invited to give health talks and answer questions from the domestic helpers.

Five sessions of domestic helpers service were held this year; topics of our health education included first aid, women's health, occupational health, stress, and depression etc. In the upcoming year, more sessions of this service will be held. Health assessments will also be carried out in order to understand their needs and situations more thoroughly.

Medical students' ability to help in this service are limited; they cannot do much to improve the health of domestic helpers or to give them concrete reassurance on their health concerns. However, there are things that medical students can do - bring care and love to this neglected group by listening and understanding.

# Teddy Bear Hospital

The Teddy Bear Hospital service (TBH) was a new MO service this year, aiming to educate children about health and to reach out to two special service target groups: refugees and mentally disabled children. The TBH was carried out in two separate sessions, one for each service group. In both, medical students led children in interactive games such as a pretend “surgery” session with an anatomical teddy bear. Through these activities, we covered a range of topics from nutrition to anatomy.

The TBH service with refugee children and mothers was organized in collaboration with partner NGOs: Health in Action and Christian Action. The second TBH service with mentally disabled children was organized in collaboration with Heep Hong Society.

Through the TBH services, students were able to interact with the service targets and better understand their needs and concerns. Both service target groups find it difficult to fully integrate into mainstream society because of different communication barriers: refugees face language and cultural barriers, the mentally disabled face social and intellectual barriers. Medical students had to modify teaching materials to make them accessible to children of different mindsets and backgrounds. This allowed them to see things from new perspectives and taught them how to pay attention to the different needs of different people. Though this service did not leave medical students with exciting clinical experience or knowledge, it left them with smiles of gratitude from children and mothers - something equally valuable.



## China Coast Community

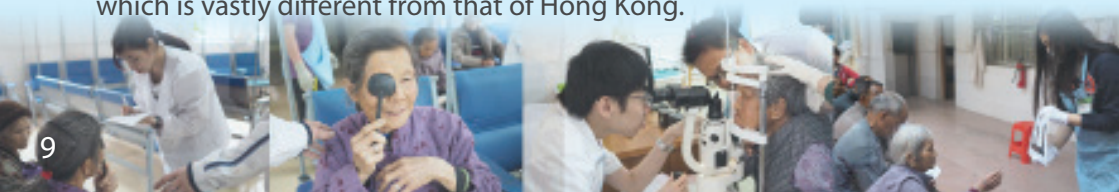
Alongside Hong Kong's ageing population, the importance of quality care for the elderly has become more prevalent. Through the new series of elderly home visits at the China Coast Community Center, MO aimed to foster medical students' knowledge, compassion, and communication skills with the elderly. During the students' visits at the CCC, they interacted with the residents and shared memories while helping the nurses, physiotherapists, and occupational therapists. As this project was a continuous service with a total of 8 visits, students were able to establish a personal and friendly relationship with the residents at the elderly home center. Furthermore, the students' interaction with the health team of the elderly home center allowed them to gain exposure to the definition of quality care, and the importance of cooperation between different professions of the health team to deliver quality care.

The series of services at CCC ended on a gratifying note with the debriefing by CCC's general manager, Ms. Vijai Singh. Unfortunately, due to CCC's prior arrangements with nursing faculty and other students, this service will not be continued. However, we would once again like to thank Ms. Singh, as well as all the staff, physiotherapist, occupational therapist, nurses, chefs, and residents at the China Coast Community Center who made this rewarding service possible!

## Regional Services

### Cataract Service Trips

Monthly screening and surgery service trips in various Guangdong provinces were organised in collaboration with Green Action Charity Foundation, in which medical students assisted the local medical team in conducting various free screening tests and examinations, even occasionally partaking in the cataract surgeries. As a service that stressed both basic medical skills and human interaction, the hands-on experience allowed the volunteers to consolidate and integrate their rudimentary knowledge and, more importantly, to understand the prerequisites of being a doctor including developing empathy and establishing good rapport with patients. It also allowed medical students a glimpse into the healthcare system of China, which is vastly different from that of Hong Kong.





As compact and short as it might seem, the 5-day screening or surgery trip left profound and lasting impacts on both the patients and the participants. From the feedback of previous participants, the highlight of their experience, was often the patients' expressions the moment the gauze was unwrapped from their eyes. It is true that, as students, our participants' concrete contributions towards the recovery of these cataract patients were negligible. Yet, we believe that it was the willingness to be part of patients' recovery processes and to give a helping hand wherever possible that truly mattered at this stage.

Hereby, we would like to thank Green Action Charity Foundation for providing medical students with such invaluable opportunities to actually take part in the screening and operation processes of cataract patients, through which participants were able to learn and grow as future medical professionals.

## Leprosy Village Visits

Considered tainted and contaminated, leprosy patients suffer discrimination and isolation, even after recovery from this misunderstood disease. Although leprosy is now a curable disease due to improvements in medical technology, the social stigma is still a noticeable problem in the status quo, especially in Mainland China, where the Chinese government in the 1950s isolated them in remote areas, known as the leprosy villages that still exist in different parts of China nowadays, preventing them from re-integrating into society.

The villagers are stigmatized and rejected by their families and society, and must therefore spend the rest of their lives in the leprosy villages. Since they are a population in need of both medical and psychological care, MO collaborates with the Hong Kong Medical Mobilization Corporation (HKMMC), a group of medical workers who aspire to help the poor with their medical skills and knowledge, and visits leprosy villages regularly.



During these one-day visits, medical students perform simple medical checks, teach simple physical exercise, play games, and interact with leprosy patients; we aim to show our acceptance and continuous concern for the long-forgotten villagers as well as to brighten them up with our care. With our compilation of the villagers' records, our understanding of their needs grows with each visit, allowing us to better plan our activities to cater to them. In spite of our limited medical knowledge, we help individuals fight against their loneliness as a patient by making use of the power of listening and understanding, hoping to provide the former sufferers with unconditional companionship. Furthermore, we hope that the visits can help clear the deep-rooted misunderstandings of the disease.

"Indeed, their physical disfigurement did impair movement and even eyesight, but they were not patients. To me, they were optimistic, cheerful and caring, as if they were my grandparents."

## CCOUC Ethnic Minority Public Health Trip

Collaborating Centre for Oxford University and CUHK for Disaster and Medical Humanitarian Response (CCOUC) is a NGO led by Prof. Emily Chan, the Director of CCOUC and the former President of Médecins Sans Frontières Hong Kong. Accompanied by a team with public health expertise, medical students are involved in health needs assessment, design, and implementation of health intervention programmes for ethnic minorities in mainland China.





## MediCare Sichuan Regional Service Trip

“With the language barrier, the villagers really could not understand most of the instructions and advice we gave. Nevertheless, they thanked us for our work and repeated some of the suggestions they comprehend. I then realised that despite the uncertainty of whether our acts would do our clients harm or good, that active step of reaching out to them and offering help should be taken.”

“「不貪大，只貪好」-- 福音醫院滿懷熱誠的醫護人員腳踏實地為當地居民，願日後的我也可以保持這樣的一份熱誠。”

MediCare has been working in the Mainland for over 20 years in various aspects, including health, education, and poverty. In this first self-planned regional service trip, 8 participants and 2 executive committee members visited Luzhou and Liangshan over 7 days.

This trip aimed to increase medical students' knowledge on the medical system in China through hospital attachment and visits, especially experiencing the differences between the community hospital operated by MediCare and the province-owned Luzhou Medical School 1st Affiliated Hospital. Ward visits in the hospitals also reminded our fellow classmates that care and love can often be expressed in simple actions regardless of language boundaries.

While in Liangshan, our team was able to carry out health check for 108 villagers in Shi Long Xiang (石龍鄉) and eye checks for 50 children aged 4-10 in Yuan Meng Primary School (圓夢小學). Highlighted service in the trip included health education on introducing drug abuse, smoking, and healthy eating habits at the primary school. After conducting needs assessment in the villages, we understood more about their lifestyles and how medical students would be able to better target the observed needs.

With the support from MediCare and friends in Sichuan, we are sincerely grateful that this project will be continued in the foreseeable future, so that we may provide holistic care to Liangshan. Stay tuned for our trip in 2016!



# International Service

## Uganda Medical Service Trip



*"For quite a few years, MO has been trying to expand its services to an international level. While "outreaching" is our primary goal, as a student-led organisation, we also hope that through the process of helping others, medical students can be inspired. We believe that by interacting with and listening to the stories, values, and beliefs of people from all walks of life and from different places, students can grow not only as a person, but also as a future medical practitioner. It is with this belief that we decided to pick up where we left off last year. "*

With the help of Watoto Asia, our collaborating NGO for this service trip, we incorporated medical intervention, health education, and a number of visits into this two-week trip. One of the highlights was the 2.5-day mobile clinic that our team ran in Amuru District. With the help of medical teams from Kampala and Gulu, which included 12 local doctors, we set up a basic clinic which consisted of a triage area, consultation rooms, a laboratory, and a pharmacy. It was gruelling but rewarding work as we treated over 1700 patients during this period. Another clinic that we operated was the 1-day clinic in Gulu's Living Hope, a center that helps local underprivileged women and their children by teaching the ladies different skills to allow their re-integration into the society, again with the help from a local medical team. The experience of working in the clinics left many of us with much to contemplate. We were shown how lucky we were, compared to some of the patients who, after leaving their diseases, ulcers, or fractured bones untreated for years due to financial inability, walked three hours just to visit the clinic. What hit us even harder was that very often, we were incompetent to help in any significant way. Our lack of resources and knowledge meant that, for many acutely or chronically ill patients, all we could do was prescribe

painkillers or antibiotics. Watching them leave with the referral letters yet knowing they could not further seek treatment due to the high expenses left us feeling helpless. Such scenarios happen every day, everywhere and the impact that each individual can have is negligible. Still, as long as we have that privilege, we should give our utmost every time there is the opportunity to help.



Our team also spent a few days in Watoto Village teaching the children various health-related topics. Yet beyond all the classes, what really left a mark were the relationships that we built with the children. From sharing their lives with each other and dreams to playing basketball together, both the Watoto children and medical students had a truly remarkable time where laughters echoed loudly and their care for one another was clear. Times like this reminds us that while we are trying to serve others, we are often the ones who benefit.

On top of that, our team paid visits to Kampala Living Hope Centre and Babies Home. Many of the ladies we met there encountered way more than their fair share of hardships - contracting AIDS due to forced sex, being abandoned by their husbands and families, or even being misled by lies from the government etc. Their stories were sad, but also inspiring and heartening as they were testimonies that with unyielding faith and grit, one could overcome adversities. At the babies home, our team assisted the nannies there to feed and interact with the babies, many of whom were abandoned by their parents. While we were delighted to see that these babies were well cared for, it also occurred to us that there were many more orphaned babies who were less fortunate, whose lives ended prematurely before they got the chance to experience the world.



In retrospect, the Uganda Medical Service Trip was meaningful, as it did create an impact. We did offer help to people in Uganda but it was apparent that, a bit not so fittingly, our medical students also benefitted equally if not more. Nonetheless, it does not make the trip unworthy. Quite the opposite, we hope that each participant will reflect upon his experience and hold onto the sights, stories and people that surprised, touched, or inspired him as he learns to become a doctor. If this trip helps shape him into a better doctor, or simply a better person, albeit how subtly, it is already more than worthy.

Here, we would like to thank Watoto Asia for its collaboration arrangement. Special thanks must also be given to Dr. Albert Siu, our team doctor, who not only contributed his medical expertise but also shared with us his experience and values of being a doctor. Our gratitude is also to Prof. Joseph Sung, Prof. Francis Chan, and Prof. Bonnie Wong for their support and advice, which made this trip possible.







# Projects

Other than organizing services, we have made use of other ways to accomplish our goals and spread the message of love and care not only to medical students and our service targets, but also the general public.

## Medical Students Outreach Fund

In order to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to participate in regional or international service trips organised by MO, Medical Students Outreach Fund (MSOF) has been launched.

The goal of MO is to stimulate more medical students to take part in voluntary services in attempts to nurture more caring and sympathetic physicians-to-be. However, some of the students may be hesitant in joining volunteering work (especially regional and international trips) because of financial burden. In view of that, MO put forward this project so as to allow more medical students to engage in experiential learning and benefit through participating in voluntary service by providing them financial support.

In the year of 2015, we have sponsored participants in both our regional and international service trips. They all gained great experiences and served wholeheartedly during the service.

This project will continue in order to benefit more students.



# Humans of Medical Outreachers

Medical Outreachers puts much emphasis on reaching out and inspiring through education and experience sharing. This year, in the hopes of bringing a more extensive and profound impact to the community, we have launched a new project - Humans of Medical Outreachers (HMO).

Inspired by the globally well-known photoblog Humans of New York, we would like to share unique stories and moments with the general public in the form of words and photographs.

Up till the end of 2015, more than one hundred stories have been shared via Facebook and Instagram. These stories came from people of the medical and healthcare sector (be them doctors, patients, or medical students), those whom we serve during our service events and trips, as well as the general public. The words about the medical endeavours of different NGOs collaborating with MO were also recorded in our photoblog.

Reaching out to more than a thousand people, HMO serves as a reminder of the importance and beauty of genuine care and empathy towards one another. HMO will keep updating in the coming years; we hope that we can aid people in realising that every single one of us, as part of the local community and part of the world, can be medical outreachers.



# Many thanks to...

The success Medical Outreachers in 2015 is not solely due to our efforts. Our honorary advisors, cooperated partners, and fellow medical students have provided us unlimited supports and help, leading us to success.

## Our Honorary Advisors (Listed in alphabetical order)

Dr. Au Yiu Kai

Consultant Surgeon, Kwong Wah Hospital

Professor Lai Bo San, Paul

Assistant Dean (General Affairs), Faculty of Medicine, CUHK

Professor Chan Ka Leung, Francis

Dean, Faculty of Medicine, CUHK

Professor Mok Chung Tong, Vincent

Assistant Dean (Clinical), Faculty of Medicine, CUHK

Professor Gabriel M Leung, GBS, JP

Dean, Faculty of Medicine, HKU

Professor Joseph Jao Yiu, SBS

Vice- Chancellor, CUHK

Dr. Ko Wing-man BBS, JP

Secretary for Food and Health of Hong Kong

Professor Wong Chi Sang, Martin

Director, Jockey Club Bowel Cancer Education Centre, CUHK

## Cooperated Partners (Listed in alphabetical order)

China Coast Community

Collaborating Centre for Oxford University and CUHK for Disaster and Medical Humanitarian Response

Christian Action

Grantham Hospital

Green Action

Heep Hong Society

Health In Action

Hong Kong Medical Mobilization Corporation

MediCare Resources Ltd.

Prince of Wales Hospital

Tung Wah Eastern Hospital

The Bethune House Migrant Women's Refuge

Wong Tai Sin Hospital

Watoto Asia



## Message from 2016 President

In 2016, Medical Outreachers Hong Kong will have worked with 7 generations of medical student volunteers and reached out to countless people along our journey. The coming year will feature adjustments in three areas of Medical Outreachers: service, organisation and promotion. We hope these changes will reflect the maturation of this student-led society.

Our aim this year is to foster continuity by building on service projects of the past. Through recurrent evaluation of service projects and continuous assessment of the needs of our targets, we are able to tailor a more effective program. This is especially true for our local and regional services, which are frequented throughout the year. On the other hand, Medical Outreachers is also experimenting with innovative service types and exploring new service targets. We are establishing a long-term base in regional and international locations in anticipation for regular and frequent return services. This will allow volunteers to create lasting impacts.

Medical Outreachers is a charitable organisation and our work spreads beyond the medical arena. Our hope this year is to enhance the operations of Medical Outreachers through several means. Our top priorities are to consult legal and financial advisors to better manage and further ensure stability in these areas.

From a public relations perspective, Medical Outreachers' exposure is largely limited to the medical student body. In the coming year, our objective is to spread Medical Outreachers' values, visions and work to the wider medical profession. We aim to further expand our network, to formally establish our pre-existing connections and to nurture a collaborative relationship with other organisations.

Medical Outreachers represents a faith in the ethos of future medical practitioners. We hope you can join us to serve the less privileged and the opportunity of self-discovery. With your support, I believe 2016 will be an immensely successful year.

Yours respectfully,  
Clarence Chan  
President  
Medical Outreachers Hong Kong 2016



## Friends of MO

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude once again to Friends of MO, including sponsors, collaborating individuals and organizations, student bodies, and other parties that have supported us in the year of 2015. Without their great support, it would not be possible for Medical Outreachers to organize volunteer services for medical students in the University of Hong Kong as well as the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

## Volunteer Doctors' Network

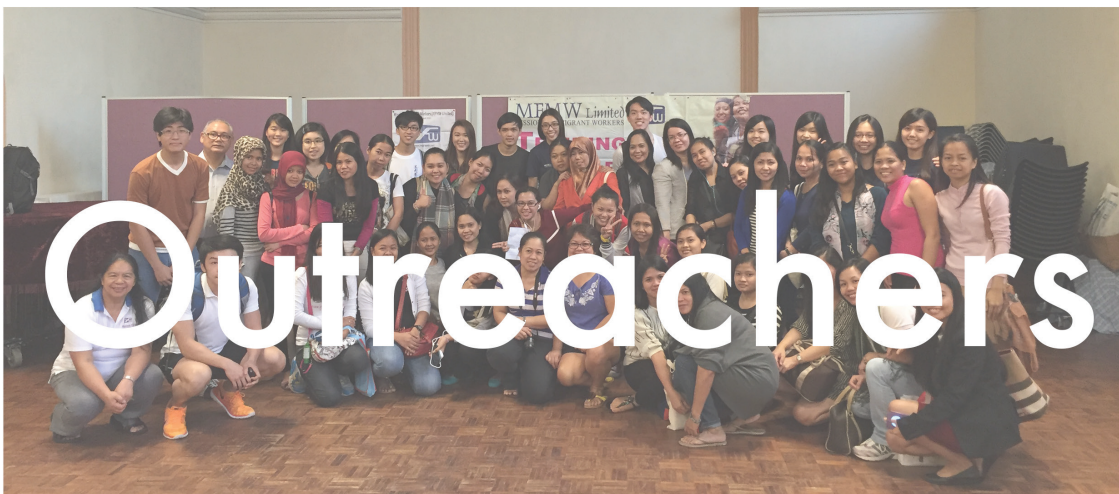
MO also has a Volunteer Doctors' Network that includes doctors who agree with MO's vision and mission and are willing to provide medical assistance on a project-by-project basis. Volunteer doctors may be invited to deliver pre-service workshops or offer medical diagnoses and consultation in mobile clinics during services and service trips.

We hope to receive continuous support from various friends of MO and volunteer doctors. We sincerely welcome different organizations to join us as Friends of MO and doctors to join us as Volunteer Doctors to allow us to continue reaching out to the needy, creating impacts around us, and inspiring MO's service targets and medical students in the future. Please feel free to fill in the form linked below. We look forward to receiving your support.





Medical



Outreachers



2015



# REACH OUT CREATE INSPIRE

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

WEBPAGE: [WWW.MEDICALOUTREACHERS.ORG](http://WWW.MEDICALOUTREACHERS.ORG) EMAIL: [INFO@MEDICALOUTREACHERS.ORG](mailto:INFO@MEDICALOUTREACHERS.ORG)

