



MEDICAL HONG KONG OUTREACHERS



NEWSLETTER 2013-2014



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Foreword



Over the past 5 years, Medical Outreachers Hong Kong (MO) has held an important role in the medical students' community by organizing a variety of service trips in local and regional areas. As a joint university medical organization between the medical faculties of the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the University of Hong Kong, our main goal is to nourish a group of enthusiastic future doctors through services and health advocacy projects with a focus on impact continuity.

2014 marked Medical Outreachers' fifth anniversary, a year where MO was rebooted with new and fine-tuned services. In addition to our previous local projects, we launched four new regular visit projects reaching out to patients young and old and secondary school students. Regionally, while continuing and refining our previous projects, we also explored a collaboration opportunity with the Collaborating Centre for Oxford University and CUHK for Disaster and Medical Humanitarian Response (CCOUC) to organize health education projects in remote communities in China.

It was with great anticipation that we launched our Uganda Medical Service Trip with Watoto on our fifth anniversary. Although the trip was unfortunately cancelled due to safety concerns, the preparatory workshops designed to equip participants were unfailingly inspiring. For the workshops and preparation for the Uganda service trip, special thanks must be given to Christian Doctor Network (CDN), Professor Joseph Sung, and the generous doctors who shared their experiences.

I am extremely grateful to all the students who have shown their support for MO. I would also like to thank our past executive committee members for your efforts in building MO, and the NGOs and doctors we collaborate with for your help and generosity. Last but not least, I greatly appreciate the support from CUHK Faculty of Medicine and HKU Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine.

It is with great anticipation and excitement that I look forward to MO's future years of serving the medical student body and the needy. I hope you continue to support us in the upcoming years!

With gratitude,
Phoebe Ho

CUHK MBChB Year 3
President 2013-2014



Local Services

Our local services focus on continuity, and it is our hope that through continuous services, participants and service targets will be able to learn from each other and grow to care for each other as well!

Grantham Palliative Care Service

With the help of Grantham Hospital Hospice Centre, we commenced the summer session of the Palliative Care Service at Grantham Hospital. Working closely with the center, Medical Outreachers recruited 24 participants and trained them as volunteers for hospice care. From June to August, participants visit the terminally ill patients every two weeks as well as receive training from professional social workers. To echo the main objective of continuity, we are seeking the chance to launch a Fall session on top of the current 5 visits.

Participants are impressed by the visits and have touched on emotions surrounding life and death. Together with the social workers, they made handicrafts with patients to add color to their lives. We also introduced a new element to the service – creating a life log book for patients. With the concerted effort, we hope patients may obtain psychological comfort and medical students can equip themselves to be empathetic doctors.



Hospital Visits and Services

Beyond curing patients, medicine is also about caring for those who seek health aid. Realizing the importance of quality communication and interaction with patients, Medical Outreachers launched its first ever Hospital Visit and Service series this year, hoping to offer our pre-clinical students more opportunities to learn and serve in hospital settings.

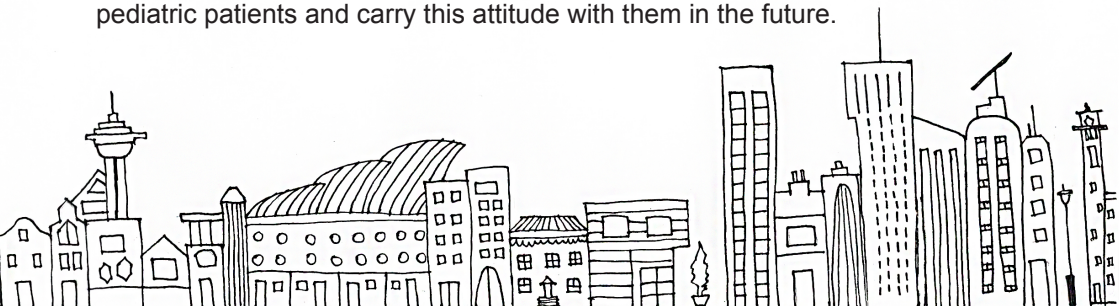
This programme emphasizes three core elements, namely, flexibility, continuity and 'patient-based' service. We infuse a high degree of flexibility into this visit-cum-service project by letting the participants decide their service content, along with guidance from our hospital partners. A service framework on a weekly basis, spanning throughout two summer months, is established in order to achieve this goal. Yet above all, this service scheme is hugely 'patient-based', meaning that the patients' needs top our priority list.

Our services to the Wong Tai Sin Hospital and Tung Wah Eastern Hospital started since early July, and positive responses have been received so far from both medical students and the patients. This has been an ideal chance for the participants to give and to learn at the same time.

Lady Pao's Children Care Project

Medical Outreachers started its first collaboration with Little Life Warrior Society in July 2014. Little Life Warrior Society is a society set up in Prince of Wales Hospital to promote and improve the services and benefits provided to childhood cancer patients and child patients with bone marrow transplant and severe blood diseases. The Society aims to connect families with child patients and provide a good network of support to them. Our participants will have the opportunity to interact with these patients who suffer from chronic disease through chatting, playing, and making handicrafts with them.

Through this interaction, we hope that the participants will gain a deeper understanding as to how cancer and severe blood diseases can affect someone's life and also how as future doctors, we should learn to empathize with the problems they face. We hope that through the Little Life Warrior Society, medical students will gain more perspective on how to interact with pediatric patients and carry this attitude with them in the future.



MKKFA Elderly Home Visits

Since 2010, Medical Outreachers has been cooperating with the organization Mong Kok Kai Fong Association (旺角街坊會) – an organization that provides a range of social services for the underprivileged in Mong Kok. Through visits to the



solitary elderly, we hope to show them that they are respected and cared for. Simple health checks are conducted during the home visits to update the elderly on their health status as well as to allow students to become familiar with the various aspects of health checks. We also hope that students will gain experience in communicating with the elderly and learn more about the situations the elderly are living in.

Different health-related topics and issues are prepared by us or by the participants to discuss with the elderly, so that both students and elderly may further understand how to prevent unwanted situations such as heat strokes and falls, and also how to know when one is beset with a stroke or other medical conditions.

Sometimes, maybe we just need to spend some time chatting with them [the elderly], listening to them and sharing with them [and] they will be happy. This kind of help is more meaningful than giving them a lot of substance - a commitment to spirit is more than requirements in substance.”

- Derek Au, CUHK MBChB 2019

“It is of paramount importance to act patiently to the elderly.”

- Ignatius Chan Shing Po,
HKU MBBS 2019

“Some of them [the elderly] have several illnesses at the same time and encounter many difficulties in daily life. This reminded me to pay extra effort on understanding patients and make them feel that I care about them.”

- Isabel Lau, CUHK MBChB 2019



Tuen Mun School Project



The Chinese name of Medical Outreachers, “醫心”, reminds us that when we become doctors in the future, we should be doctors with a caring heart. Therefore, we hope to bring our caring heart to the solitary elderly in Tuen Mun through this long-term service program. The elderly we visit are likely to neglect their potential health problems, and it is our aim to help them figure out their health hazards through basic health checks so that they may seek medical advice as soon as possible.



In this program, we cooperated with Carmel Bunnan Tong Memorial Secondary School and The Salvation Army (Centre of Tuen Mun Integrated Service for Young People). Through communicating with secondary students, important members and future pillars of the society, we believe we can raise their awareness of the importance of health so they may spread this awareness in and beyond the Tuen Mun community. The Salvation Army also played a vital role in the program as they had plenty of experience in community service in the area.

We cannot deny that the influence we brought to the Tuen Mun community is limited within this half-year service period. However, we strongly believe that the little seeds which we sow today will grow into big trees in the future.



Regional Services

Our regional services consist of short term service trips to mainland China. Many of our participants have rated these trips as inspiring and horizon-broadening.

Cataract Service Trips

Medical Outreachers' Cataract Service trips are co-organized with the Green Action Foundation, which was founded by Doctor Tse. Trips are held throughout the year, with around two trips each month. Through the 4-5 day trips, medical students are able to catch a glimpse of how a small-scaled non-governmental organization (NGO) mobilizes to provide medical services to locals in China, as well as improve the lives of people living in poverty. Students may also have the opportunity to learn about and perform ophthalmic examinations in addition to observing cataract surgeries.



Going into the Guangdong province, students may join the screening trip or surgery trip. For the screening trip, operable villagers with cataracts are selected for surgery. Following screening, eligible villagers are invited to undergo a cataract surgery on a mobile surgery coach parked near the villages. Volunteers are recruited for both trips to provide assistance to doctors and nurses in conducting ophthalmic screenings and check-ups, facilitating the

smooth running of the program, and extending care to the elderly being screened or operated on. Volunteers in the surgery trips may also have the chance to observe surgeries performed by doctors from a local eye hospital.

“醫生醫治的不應只是人的身體，而是應以心去治療和關心整個人。作為一個還未上臨床課的 ... 醫科生，能接觸病人的機會不多，所以我一直未能完全明白這句話的意思。經過這次的服務，我開始明白一點點了，希望在將來的學醫及行醫的路上，我能 ... 盡力為每位病人服務。”

- Cheuk Wai Yin Ivy, CUHK MBChB 2017

“I [had] buried myself in academics and personal interests for the past year; however this trip has revitalized my passion to serve the community and reignited my determination to become a medical professional.”

- Yip Ka Man, HKU MBBS 2019

CCOUC Health Intervention Trip

So far, three executive committee members of MO have joined the CCOUC trips. The trial trip was carried out in Hongyan Village, Sichuan, with a team consisting of medical professors and students studying medically related subjects. The project took a humanitarian approach of targeting ethnic minorities in remote districts. Main events included health interventions, home visits, and medical research assistance. The team also conducted home visits and questionnaires for research and future improvement purposes.



Through the pilot trip, MO has gained a deeper understanding on health education in remote communities in China. This project is particularly helpful to those interested in humanitarian work or organizations such as MSF. With the experience, we look forward to organising a rewarding trip for interested participants in the near future.

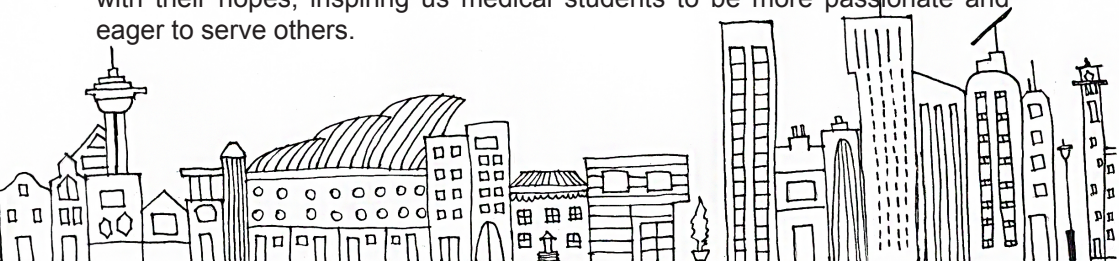
Cleft Lip and Palate Service Trips

Operation Smile, founded in 1982, is an international non-profit medical organization that aims to help children with cleft lip and palate problems reconstruct their smiles by providing medical surgery and care to them.

In the past four years, we have been continuously collaborating with Operation Smile to provide medical care and service to these children in different provinces in mainland China. Doctors and health care workers are involved in each mission, and our volunteer medical students act as translators between international medical workers and doctors and Mandarin-speaking medical professionals. Also, participants are given chances to assist during the screening process as well as to provide care to the young patients who have finished their smile-reconstructing surgeries.

These Cleft Lip and Palate Trips are really valuable chances to help and take care of children who are born underprivileged. Also, as translators, participants can know more medical terminology and communicate with international medical workers and doctors.

All in all, our volunteers feel that not only is joining Operation Smile's missions eye-opening, but priceless as the children's smiles are reconstructed along with their hopes, inspiring us medical students to be more passionate and eager to serve others.





HKMMC Leprosy Visits

In the first half of the year, Medical Outreachers, together with Hong Kong Medical Mobilization Corporation, organized two leprosy village visits respectively on 22 March and 12 April. Both attracted many medical students who were passionate to serve the elderly.

Located in Huadu, Guangdong, the leprosy village is only a three-hour drive from Hong Kong. It is one of the many remote leprosy villages set up by the Chinese government to isolate leprosy patients. Nowadays, the elderly living there have all recovered from leprosy but have been left with permanent damage to their skin and fingers, and most importantly, loneliness. They are often discriminated by the general public and even by their families, as well as by friends, due to the generally low awareness of leprosy. Since then, the leprosy village has become the only home where they can stay at.

The participants had a good chat with the villagers and listened to their unique and striking stories, sharing tears and joys. They also ate together, sang together, and smiled together. The one-day services were short, yet they were meaningful.

"It was a very old lady who was blinded, sitting on her bed alone eating a piece of Sushi that we made for her, with no fingers and toes. I could feel the pain of life in her, and how fragile life can be. Yet, she has also strived to live through all these years, which is the great side of life."

- Jensen So Tsun Ki, CUHK MBChB 2016

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 "It reminds me that sometimes, being a patient listener is as important as devising a medical treatment." - Cheung Wan Kiu, HKU MBBS 2019



Orthopedics Service Trips

As medical students, we cannot deny that we only know little, so observation and learning from experienced doctors can definitely help us prepare for the future by familiarizing ourselves with the knowledge we should possess, and most importantly, the spirit good doctors should bear in mind. Operation Concern, a charity led by Professor PC Leung from CUHK, provides us with this precious opportunity to learn from its doctors by taking part in its orthopedics trips in Fuping.



The organization, established in 1994, comprises of a team of doctors, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and social workers. They travel to rural areas of mainland China to cure patients with physical disabilities. During the trip, the participants were able to witness the procedures of surgery, ward rounds, and consultations. They could also take part in sessions in which the medical team from Hong Kong conducted trainings for the local teams on post-surgery rehabilitation. Meanwhile, participants could also catch a glimpse of the medical system of mainland China.

Lastly, we sincerely thank Operation Concern for organizing such meaningful trips and we hope to continue cooperating with them!



“每次開刀都是刀光劍影、血肉模糊的，對於首次踏進手術室的我大開眼界。此行不但看到香港一班醫療精英和內地同胞血濃於水，又顯示出薪火相傳，人間有情。”

- Simon Lo, HKU MBBS 2019

“當地有很多人都因梁教授的到訪而慕名而來...及後，當我們晚飯的時候，梁教授便告訴我們，這些病人來了，難道不理會他們嗎？我想，這是便是醫療工作者的心腸吧。縱然覺得疲累、或未必能即時治療那個病人、但仍然盡自己所能去幫助他們。這對很想吃晚飯的我也是一個提醒。”

- Joy Pang, CUHK MBChB 2019



International Service

2014 marked Medical Outreachers' fifth anniversary, and after much debate, we decided that it was time for Medical Outreachers to branch out from Hong Kong and mainland China to reach out to those in need in different areas of the world.

Uganda Medical Service Trip

As it was Medical Outreachers' fifth anniversary, we decided to expand our service opportunities to the international community this year in collaboration with Watoto Asia and Christian Doctor Network (CDN). The medical service trip was planned to take place in June 2014 in Kampala, Uganda, serving children and nannies in Watoto villages and the local community. Many of the service targets are also HIV carriers. Through serving orphaned children and vulnerable women in a place that greatly lacks medical professionals and knowledge, we hope to provide them with opportunities to receive health messages and basic medical care with the help from professors and doctors. Professor Joseph Sung and Dr. Siu Huen kindly took two weeks out of their busy schedules to come along with us on the trip.

Unfortunately in early June, we were notified that the city would be under serious threat of terrorist attacks. In light of the situation and the recommendations from both HKU and CUHK medical schools, we decided to cancel this service trip to ensure our participants' safety. Despite the cancellation, we still held a series of pre-trip workshops where 7 well-experienced doctors, including Dr. Alvin Ling, Dr. Chan Nim Chung, and Professor Joseph Sung, with contrasting backgrounds shared with our participants in early June.

We hoped that our participants have still benefited despite the cancelled trip. With the diverse backgrounds of different speakers and presented topics, students were inspired to think about the meaning of being a doctor, reflect on their attitude as medical students, and have a taste of various ways of medical practice both locally and globally. Not only can they serve in Hong Kong in the future, but they can also choose to make an impact in other parts of the world.



Final Message



Dear Reader,

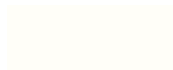
Thank you so much for looking through our 2013-2014 Newsletter! We hope you were able to gain a more comprehensive view of our service projects this past school year and found some that piqued your interest - we would love to have you join us in our outreach to the community in Hong Kong and beyond.

To the students who have supported us, the professors who have so kindly given us their advice and time, the organizations which we collaborate with, and the previous executive committee members, thank you once again. Without your support and help, we would not be where we are today.

Please like our page on Facebook “Medical Outreachers” and visit our website at www.medicaloutreachers.org for more information and regular updates!

Yours sincerely,
The Fifth Executive Committee Members
2013-2014







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