

2009 Annual Report

This year has been an incredibly successful year for H4H, starting with our second mission to the Philippines, then our sold out 'Symphony for Smiles' concert with Notes of Compassion, and culminating in our seventh surgical mission to Guatemala.

Our concert was an amazing event, not only was it sold out, but we continue to receive donations and the funds raised have far exceeded our original goal of \$50,000.00. As part of the planning for the concert and as it was 8 years since the formation of H4H, the board and invited members took part in a one day workshop that reviewed our purposes and goals. The main outcomes of this valuable session are summarized in the following mission statement:

- H4H is a volunteer run, non-profit, low overhead, non-denominational, grassroots, community based and fiscally transparent organization that provides health services, health promotion and prevention.

Following on from this the board has continued to refine our mid-term goals and has agreed that all H4H supported projects must

- Fit within the frameworks of The Determinants of Health and the Millennium Development Goals
- Be locally identified
- Be capacity building
- Be potentially sustainable

Health for Humanity was formed with the broad purpose of improving health in developing countries. In the early years the surgical missions were our focus and through these missions we established our credibility and started partnering with local non-governmental organizations (NGO). Recently we have begun supporting several of our Guatemalan NGO partners in other health and educational initiatives. The increase in revenue this year, from the concert and our other fund raising efforts, gives us the opportunity to expand our activities. We are committed to expanding the surgical program, and we intend to increase our support of local organizations that work in public health and education and target vulnerable populations.

You can see on our recently added Facebook photos the incredible need in the rural villages and the difference such simple items as water filters and efficient wood burning stoves can make. Nutrition and education of children are two important determinants in the development of healthy populations and H4H will be providing scholarships through [Vamos Adalante](#) and supporting their nutrition programs for children. Economic development is another major determinant of health, and we will be looking into microloans, particularly in the field of food security for the people living in rural villages.

The [Millennium Development Goals](#) (MDGs), particularly the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, cannot be achieved if questions of population and reproductive health are not squarely addressed. There is now consensus that advancing women's rights, in general, and reproductive rights, in particular, is a necessary precondition for halving the number of people living in poverty and underpins success in achieving all the other goals. Another MDG is to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS and this is very closely linked to advancing women's reproductive rights. With this in mind H4H is working in partnership with [Proyecto Payaso](#) to apply for a Voluntary Sector Fund (VSF) Grant from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to support the development of a diploma program for health educators in the field of HIV prevention and women's reproductive health.

As discussed above MDG 6 is to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS. In the coming year H4H will be supporting the Rwanda Project. In December of 2008, H4H member David Patrick and colleagues travelled to Rwanda. The group consulted widely with local Ministry of Health, NGOs and focus groups around HIV prevention and also provided demonstration of state of the art approaches to male circumcision (MC). MC has been shown to reduce transmission of HIV from women to men by over 50%

and represents the first one-time intervention with the potential to reduce HIV risk for the entire population over time. Following the visit, the Rwandan Ministry of Health announced its policy of integrating MC into its HIV prevention programming, focusing on neonatal circumcision. The group is now consulting with colleagues in Rwanda about the best ways to assist with training health care workers to offer relevant procedures and is working with H4H toward sustainable funding for the initiative.

This year, your donations enabled health for Humanity to achieve the following:

- A 2 day educational course for Partner for Surgery health promoters aimed at improving nutrition for cleft babies
- Continued enhancement of the public and administrative sides of our website
- Successful completion of 2009 Philippines Surgical Mission
- 170 successful surgeries completed at the Obras Sociales Hospital in Antigua, Guatemala
- Donation of 2 intravenous pumps and a patient monitor to the new step-down unit at the Hospital
- Support for a part-time coordinator for the development of a certificate course in HIV prevention education through arts based methods aimed at the indigenous and other vulnerable populations in rural Guatemala

In January 2009, our second surgical team travelled to the Baguio General Hospital in the Philippines and performed approximately 100 surgical procedures in two operating rooms. They also provided education to the local resident medical and nursing staff, and donated some much needed medical equipment and supplies to the hospital, in particular a new surgical cautery machine thanks to a donation from the BC Nurses Union. Our 2009 Philippine mission was well received by the hospital and the community, and we will be considering another mission in the future.

Our seventh Guatemala surgical team this past November included 15 physicians, 16 nurses and 5 support staff. Again thanks in part to the Tula Foundation, we had a full complement of nurses and were able to fully utilize four operating rooms. On triage day our surgeons assessed over 200 patients, and during the two week mission our team completed a record 170 surgeries, including cleft lip and palate repairs, hysterectomies, cholecystectomies, and hernia repairs. All of these surgeries have a major impact on the lives of our patients as they enable a return to full activity. Again, we worked with local professionals and there was a useful exchange of knowledge. It appears last year's optimism that improvements to healthcare in Guatemala were on the way has disappeared and our volunteer services will be needed for several years to come.

Please be assured that over 95% of your donated funds are used to pay for medical services and patient care expenses incurred in Guatemala, the Philippines and Rwanda. We emphasize that all of our physicians and support personnel travel to and stay in these countries at their own expense; all our organisers are volunteers and we have minimal administrative overhead.

Thanks again to our dedicated Board, team members, and other volunteers for their commitment and hard work, and thanks to all our donors for their support in 2009. Please consider supporting H4H in 2010.

Cindy Masaro - President, Health for Humanity. January 2010