

An ounce of prevention

HPIC supports vaccination campaign in Uganda

Over 1,000 health-care workers in Uganda have been immunized against Hepatitis B – a contagious, often fatal liver infection – thanks to a special donation of vaccines and a Canadian doctor and her team.

“As a family doctor, I’m big on prevention,” says Dr. Linda Douville, who led the two-week medical mission. “It was wonderful to be able to do something in such a short time that has a lasting impact.”

The need to vaccinate the Ugandan health-care workers was presented by Dr. Ben Khingi, a surgeon at Mulago Hospital and Dr. Douville’s local contact on the ground.

“The locals know better than us what their needs are,” says Dr. Douville. “So few health-care workers in Uganda are immunized against Hepatitis B and yet they are constantly exposed through needle-stick injuries, operations and blood. If we can keep health-care workers healthy, they can keep doing their job.”

Dr. Khingi accompanied Dr. Douville and the team for a week. In total, they vaccinated 1,150 health-care workers in six hospitals, selected by the Ministry of Health.

“Everything was recorded meticulously so the follow-up can be done by Dr. Khingi and in-country staff,” says Dr. Douville.

The second week of the trip, the medical team saw as many patients as they could at a local clinic. For that portion of the mission, they brought six Physician Travel Packs.

Dr. Douville says she is grateful for the work of HPIC in procuring needed medicines and for the generosity of Canadian health-care companies. “I’m a doctor but I would be pretty useless without the donated drugs.”

Dr. Linda Douville vaccinates a Ugandan nurse against Hepatitis B



Health Partners International of Canada (HPIC) is a Canadian charitable humanitarian organization that provides free medical aid without discrimination for the world's most needy by operating through partnership and the motivation of Christian love.

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THE HEALER

Health Partners International of Canada

WINTER 2007

Thanks to your support:

- children in Honduras have received medical attention
- emergency medical aid was delivered to earthquake victims in Peru
- exploited women in India have a better chance at a new life
- villagers in Ghana were treated with medicine
- health-care workers in Uganda are protected against Hepatitis B



Medical care makes life better for Lester

Lester, a five-year-old boy from a remote mountain village in Honduras, was having a hard time. On top of suffering from intestinal parasites, malnourishment and anemia, he broke his arm. Five weeks later, his dirty cast was coming apart and the skin underneath was covered with runny sores.

And then he met Esther.

Esther Kern, a registered nurse from the London Health Sciences Centre travelled to Honduras with two doctors and a midwife to carry out medical clinics in isolated villages earlier this year. The team carried four Physician Travel Packs from HPIC with them, containing the medicine and supplies necessary for their work.

When Kern saw Lester, she was smitten. “His sweet face and sad eyes tugged at my heart strings,” she says.

She removed the cast that was no longer needed, cleaned his skin, applied antibiotic cream and a fresh dressing. She was also able to treat Lester with Tylenol for the pain, deworming medicine for the parasites and a supply of vitamins to strengthen his system, all from the PTP.

Throughout the procedure, Lester held on tightly to his Izzy Doll, one of the hand-knit, stuffed dolls included in every box of medicine.

In one week, the medical team from Canada examined and treated more than 400 children in Honduras. Plans are underway for next year’s trip when once again, medicine and supplies from HPIC will heal wounds, treat infections, and make life better for children like Lester.

Canadian nurse Esther Kern treats 5-year-old Lester with products from the Physician Travel Pack



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Medical aid for earthquake victims in Peru Donor dollars make rapid response possible

The medicines and medical supplies that Health Partners International of Canada sent to the area devastated by the earthquake in Peru last summer were desperately needed and used quickly.

The deadly earthquake struck a wide area from the coast to the high Andes on August 15, killing more than 500 people, leaving some 1400 seriously injured and forcing thousands to leave their homes. At the magnitude of 8.0, the quake was one of the worst natural disasters to hit South America in the last century.

HPIC provided six Physician Travel Packs (PTPs) to the Red Cross in Peru through the Consul General of Peru in Montreal, to be used by doctors to treat victims in remote areas. HPIC also partnered with World Vision Canada to provide 10 PTPs and several pallets of antibiotics and anti-depressants to a community health centre, south of Lima.

"The health centres had run out of medicines," says Yadira Pacheco, communications coordinator for World Vision in Peru, adding that they were "very grateful for the medicines from HPIC."

It is not going to be easy to rebuild, but the people have hope. "We in Peru are so grateful that this help arrived so quickly," says Pacheco. "Diseases need to be treated right away."

HPIC's emergency response program includes a fund that makes rapid mobilization possible when disaster strikes.



HPIC and partners provided emergency relief to victims of the earthquake in Peru



Karen Milley (right) delivers boxes of vitamins from HPIC to Ambika Pandey for women and girls victimized by the sex trade in Calcutta

Vitamins Strength for exploited women in India

In the red light district of Calcutta, India, women and children who have been forced into the sex trade struggle to survive another night.

For almost 10 years, Deepika Social Welfare Society has offered friendship and support to these women and girls, providing physical, emotional and social care. Deepika now operates a Children's Home for high-risk girls, and a Vocational Training Centre to offer young women a way out of their situation.

Canadian Karen Milley recently visited the work of Deepika in Calcutta. She took with her a large supply of multi-vitamins from HPIC to help address the nutritional deficiencies of women and girls under Deepika's care.

Ambika Pandey, Deepika's director, says the health of women and children in their programs is a major issue. "The women are weak and troubled with diseases. They are constantly fatigued," says Pandey.

And although vitamins may seem insignificant in response to the tragedy of these women's lives, they were received with deep gratitude.

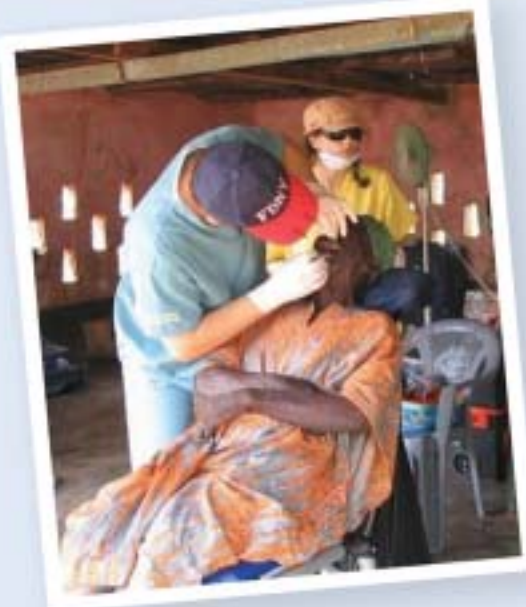
"My sincere thanks to HPIC for sending the vitamins to our Deepika ministry here in Calcutta," writes Pandey. "Thank you for sending both children and adult doses. This is going to be such a great help to some of our weak, malnourished children and ladies."

Deepika is an Indian word that means "lamp" or "light." In a truly dark corner of the world, suffering girls are seeing a ray of hope.

Canadians provide health care in African villages

Photos courtesy Dr. Lawrence Reimer and Dr. Barbara Wahn

A team of Canadian health-care professionals recently travelled to Ghana, Africa for an eight-day medical-dental mission. They carried one Dental Travel Pack and one Physician Travel Pack with them for their work.



In the first community visited by the team, the clinic is held in the "chief's palace" – a rudimentary building with no running water or electricity. The chief, who comes for a tooth extraction, is the first patient.

Even in places with local medical staff, there is a constant shortage of medicine and supplies. When the Canadians arrive with boxes of medicine, hundreds of people line up for care.



Many of the children suffer from infections, malnutrition, and from intestinal parasites due to the poor quality of the drinking water. This little baby is being treated for a fever.