



ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Hospitalito Atilán
Santiago Atitlán, Sololá,
Guatemala
+(502) 7721-7683
www.hospitalitoatitlan.org



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter from the Director.....3

What We Do.....4

Why It's Important.....5

A Year of Challenges.....6

Finding Solutions.....7

Medical Teams.....8

Volunteers 2020.....9

Education and Training.....10

Hospitalito Staff.....11

Friends of the Hospitalito.....12

Board of Directors

- President**
Gaspar Mendoza Ixbalán
- Vice President**
Nicolás Sapalú Damián
- Secretary**
Angelika Müller
- Treasurer**
Alverta Lyn Dickey
- Vocal**
Juan Tziná Sosof



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

2020 was a difficult year for all, a year that led us to know our strengths, unified our team and taught us how to overcome obstacles as a health care institution. It brought the greatest economic challenge in our 15-year history.

On March 17th, the government declared a state of emergency for the first case of COVID-19 in Guatemala and stay at home orders were strictly enforced. Public transportation was prohibited (by land and water) and municipal permits were required for anyone in order to travel outside of their town.

Fear gripped many. Neighboring towns would not allow medical workers to enter, and Hospitalito employees from other towns found lodging near the Hospitalito for several months until they were allowed to return home. On June 1st, the Ministry of Health Director of Sololá closed all healthcare facilities in Santiago Atitlán due to violence against health workers. The government is the entity responsible for COVID-19 testing and treatment.

In order to comply with safety requirements, policy was set and adaptations were made to our building. We were fortunate to receive PPE from our partners and our personnel were well protected from the virus. Still several workers lost family members to coronavirus and a few were infected and quarantined. We began to see patients by appointment.

In past years, we were proud that the community members sustained medical care provided by 65%. In 2020, that dropped to 15%. The department heads worked to create a plan to encourage families to renew their trust and seek out medical care. Our staff began promoting services and increasing access to screenings for cervical cancer, orthopedic birth defects, and specialty dental clinics.

We are very grateful to Amigos Hospitalito Atitlán, our donors and volunteers who trust in and support our mission to provide access to medical care and understand the impact we bring to our communities that are showcased in this annual report. We look forward to a more positive year in 2021.

Sincerely,

Jacinto Garcia Chipir
Executive Director
Hospitalito Atitlán



WHAT WE DO

Hospitalito Atitlán (HA) is a small, private, nonprofit hospital providing access to preventive and clinical healthcare — with an emphasis on the medical needs of women and children — to 75,000 Maya living on the southern shore of beautiful Lake Atitlán in the Guatemalan highlands. Until the pandemic began, Hospitalito had the only 24/7 emergency and surgical obstetrical care within a two-hour radius, as well as a 24-hour lab, orthopedic services, and general surgery, and anesthesia. Our dedicated staff is made up of local physicians, nurses, and administrators who work hand-in-hand with international volunteer medical professionals to bring quality care to the community. HA promotes ongoing medical education for Guatemalan and international health professionals, helping to improve the region's quality of life.

2020 BY THE NUMBERS

5,586

Outpatient Consultations

1,306

Emergencies

86

Births

275

Surgeries

1,133

Ultrasounds and X-Rays

11,252

Laboratory Tests

479

Hospitalizations

45,116

Patients Served
2005 to Date



OUTPATIENT CARE



COMMUNITY OUTREACH



PARTNERSHIPS



EDUCATION



24/7 EMERGENCY CARE



ADVOCACY

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

2020 brought a worldwide pandemic that added to the burden of disease in Guatemala, though the underlying health care needs remained. Thanks to our generous donors, Hospitalito is able to share these stories of healing in a year filled with uncertainty.

Jessica

Five-year-old Jessica was brought into the Hospitalito by her parents who told staff that the child had had a “marble” on the left side of her neck since birth, which they had treated with natural medicines. When she turned three, they noticed that it had grown in size, but they continued with the natural remedies, but Jessica cried that it hurt. Jessica’s father earns \$4 per day and her mother is a housewife, they live with his parents. The couple has four children under the age of eight. HA’s pediatrician, Dr. Ricardo Argueta contacted pediatric surgeons in Guatemala City for help and Jessica was transferred. She underwent surgery to remove the mass and spent eight days in the hospital. Thanks to our donors, Jessica’s recovery has gone well.



Jessica prior to surgery on the mass.



Jenifer after surgery.

Jenifer

Four-year-old Jenifer was hit by a car and brought into the Hospitalito emergency room by her parents. X-rays showed that the little girl had a transverse fracture of her right femur and fracture of the left collarbone. She had to spend four days in the hospital for surgery and treatment. Jenifer’s parents, a laborer and housewife, live in San Lucas Tolimán and have eight children under the age of 15. Given his limited income, the cost of treatment was exonerated by the Hospitalito social worker. After her release from hospital, Jenifer came in weekly for a check by Dr. Manuel Gonzalez, our orthopedist and medical director. Today, she can use her leg without pain.

Paula

Paula, a victim of domestic violence, is now separated from her abusive husband. She lives with her parents and two sisters in Cerro de Oro. Her trauma was magnified in September when her only son died of leukemia at the age of six — an effect of the pandemic. The boy had been receiving treatments in Guatemala City, but all transportation was shut down and he was unable to travel for cancer treatment. Thirty years old and 39 weeks pregnant, her baby was in position for birth, but she did not go into labor. Paula previously had a C-section, and this baby was also delivered via cesarean. Mother and baby are doing well!



Paula and her baby.

A YEAR OF CHALLENGES

2020 began with high hopes of providing an unprecedented number of specialty surgeries, procedures, trainings, community outreach and evening and weekend clinics.



Starting on March 10th, one-by-one, each jornada was cancelled or volunteers were called back to the US. We were deeply saddened to see our friends leave, knowing that families with greatest need would no longer receive the necessary surgeries.

On March 17th, the government took sweeping action to inhibit the spread of the virus—closing borders, suspending national public transportation, and closing all but essential services (hospitals, pharmacies, gas stations, supermarkets, etc.). As transportation and department borders were closed by the government, obstetricians and anesthesiologists were unable to arrive and women in obstetrical emergencies were transferred by ambulance to the national hospital. Outpatient medical consultations were prohibited for a period of time.

Vital signs and triage were moved outside the building. Individuals with symptoms were given a mask, and taken to an isolation room entered through a separate doorway. Hospitalito staff notified the Ministry of Health who directed testing and any transfers to COVID-19 hospitals. An isolation room with natural ventilation was fitted with ultraviolet lights that disinfected the area after the patient and their family left.

April 1, 2020 marked the 15th anniversary of Hospitalito Atitlán, a day normally celebrated with staff and the community.

The Hospitalito prepared for the virus by educating the public through television announcements in Tz'utujil explaining the pandemic, hand washing, proper use of masks and social distancing. On May 13, the first two positive COVID-19 cases in Sololá became official. A young man, unknowingly with COVID-19, had returned to Santiago Atitlán from his work in the central market in the capital to celebrate Mother's Day.

The town and eventually the entire department of Sololá became paralyzed with fear. The roads in and out of Santiago Atitlán were blocked by the government, and other towns prohibited entry of our residents. Health workers were met with fear and discrimination. With lake and bus transportation halted around and through the area, many staff members were forced to move away from their families and stay in Santiago Atitlán for months.



Health promoters received masks, gloves, and instruction in self care.

FINDING SOLUTIONS

As the pandemic progressed, many families had no access to basic food. With the financial assistance of IZUMI, Entremundos and other donors, HA secured donations of food staples and delivered them to more than 200 families, including families identified by the national program for malnourished children.

A tremendous amount of panic and fear was building within the community. In June, and due to local threats of violence, the Director of the Ministry of Health in Sololá sent nearly 1000 health workers home for their own safety. Hospitalito Atitlán closed for one week as there was no COVID-19 testing available.



Families in need receive food during the crisis.

COVID-19 hospitals built quickly in Villa Nueva and Quetzaltenango did not withstand heavy rains and physicians stood in water to treat patients, further causing doubts in rural areas.

In July obstetrical services were added two days a week. By this time, Santiago had 68 official positive COVID-19 cases and seven fatalities. This number likely far underreports the true number of positive cases.

Only 126 total tests had been done in the population of 55,000. Of these tests there was a 53% positivity rate, further indicating insufficient testing. Many positive cases in the town were thought to be hiding in their home, afraid of being tested and taken to collapsed national hospitals.

Aurora International Airport reopened on September 18 with the country entry requirement of a negative COVID-19 test within 72 hours prior to arrival. Slowly Guatemala began reopening with continuation of many protocols including temperature check and hand sanitizer at every business entrance, mandatory masks throughout the community (including outdoors), meeting size restricted to ten people, and all burials to occur within four hours of death to eliminate the traditional vigilance in the home with the deceased.



Roosevelt the largest national hospital in Guatemala City's COVID-19 treatment area.

As throughout the world—though the virus persists and the number of cases in Santiago continue to be underreported—a reopening economy, masks, hand washing, and a vaccine shine hope onto a new year in this pandemic. Despite limited funds and thanks to the incredible support of our partners, we have successfully advocated to keep the emergency room open 24/7 and provide outpatient clinic services in general medicine, pediatrics, orthopedics, OB/GYN, and dentistry. While acknowledging the loss of many from COVID-19 and its ramifications, this past year highlighted the agility, resilience, and strength of our Hospitalito Atitlán community.

MEDICAL TEAMS

The pandemic brought the cancellation of numerous surgical brigades scheduled for 2020, including endoscopy, general and hand surgery, ophthalmology, ENT, and pediatric dentistry.

Minnesota Atitlán Surgical Team



MAST's team includes surgeons, nurses, and non-medical volunteers.

HA has been fortunate to collaborate with surgeons Dr. Kevin Bjork and Dra. Dawn Stapleton to bring specialty general surgery to Lake Atitlán each January. Over the course of a week, the surgeons performed 49 hernia, gall bladder, emergency appendectomy and endoscopy procedures.

Thanks to Dr. Mark Stapleton, the MAST team also provided dental care in Cerro de Oro community clinic. Patients were scheduled by the local health promoters and by evaluations made at the public schools.

Unfortunately, dental care is low priority for most families, but with the help of volunteers we are making a difference. In March, volunteers at the clinic provided 400 children with fluoride treatments and education in oral hygiene.



Dr. Rudolph Roth with the Penn and INDERMA team.

Dermatology

In February, Dr. Rudolph Roth (front row, right) from the University of Pennsylvania coordinated with Dra. Claudia Paz from INDERMA Guatemala's dermatology residency program, to see patients in four towns around the lake. The team ended the week with a day of surgery at Hospitalito Atitlán for the patients with more serious skin problems. The teams treated 645 patients over four days.

VOLUNTEERS 2020

Volunteers are essential to our work at Hospitalito. They see patients in the hospital clinics and community outreach, lead trainings, and perform procedures hand in hand with our local staff. In 2020, dozens of volunteers had to cancel plans. 2020 left us short handed in many areas and services.

Volunteer Spotlight



Kirsten and Andy with their three children.

Kirsten Pethan, a Wisconsin Physician's Assistant ended a year as a volunteer in Santiago Atitlán in August. She and her husband Andy and their three small children enjoyed the family love that Guatemalans share with all volunteers. Andy also volunteered, with engineers to design Personal Protective Equipment which he made with a 3D printer and distributed to health workers. Kirsten's calm demeanor provided assurance to staff that we would be ready for the arrival of people sick with COVID-19.

"Santiago is a really great place for a family to live, build relationships, and serve. Our daughter had a fantastic experience at a local primary school. She quickly learned Spanish and made friends. I really enjoyed my time volunteering at Hospitalito where I could apply my medical skills and learn some new ones alongside local colleagues. The friendships we built amongst neighbors and colleagues will last a lifetime."

-Kirsten Pethan, Appleton, WI

Jornadas

Minnesota Atitlán
Surgical Team

Penn & Inderma
Dermatology

Doctors & Nurses

Randal Blankers
Zoe Gordon
Sarah Greenberg
Rebecca Joseph
Michael Paling
Kirsten Pethan
Andy Smith

Non-medical Volunteers

Jeff Lang
Diane Paling
Students UPenn
Andy Pethan

Delta Care Crew

When the borders opened in September and airlines resumed flights to Guatemala, our friends at Delta-the Delta Care Crew arranged for a donation of medical supplies from MedShare International and hand delivered them to Guatemala City.



EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Diabetes Education Essential During the Pandemic



Subcoordinator, Gerber, takes blood of club participant.

Hospitalito's diabetes program continued to equip 31 ministry of health clinics in Sololá during the pandemic. Monthly diabetes clubs were suspended until October, though upon restarting participation was less than half the pre-coronavirus levels. The program created radio spots in Spanish and three Maya languages as a reminder of the increased health risk for diabetics during the pandemic. The program is funded by the World Diabetes Foundation in Denmark.

Staff Trainings with Hospitalito Staff

Proper use of personal protective equipment during labor and delivery was the theme of a training for traditional birth attendants in August. The number of home deliveries rose dramatically during the pandemic, as many people feared that clinics and hospitals were where one became infected. All comadronas received personal protective equipment.

Hospitalito staff were also trained by the Ministry of Health in safety procedures for handling of human remains.



Dr. Manuel give training birth attendants on safety.

Reducing Malnutrition with Home Gardens



Lilian (second from right) provides hands-on cooking training.

Nutrition Education in Rural Sololá began a second two-year phase in July 2020 thanks to the IZUMI Foundation based in Boston, MA. Food shortage is something many families face daily in Guatemala. According to USAID Sololá, has a chronic malnutrition rate of 66% in children under five. The economic decline caused by the pandemic makes this new initiative more important than ever.

Program coordinator Lilian Cox Chavajay is an agronomist who has identified plants that will provide maximum nutritive value in small spaces. The families who received the gardens were chosen through collaborative work with the government nutrition program SESAN.

HOSPITALITO STAFF



President of the Board Gaspar Mendoza Ixbalán (in the truck bed) and vice-president Nicolás Sapalú Damián traveled to Quiché to deliver supplies to the rescue workers after tropical storms Eta y Iota.

Hospitalito Atitlán and the Board of Directors have built a team of medical professionals—doctors, nurses, pharmacists, lab, anesthesia technicians, administrators, and support personnel. Thanks to their dedication and hard work, the hospital is able to provide around the clock medical care. 2020 began with 63 employees, as the pandemic progressed, the number reduced to 44 dedicated professionals who weathered the worst during the early days of the pandemic.

HA meets its mission by responding to emergencies 365 days of the year, with the exception of one week in 2020 when the Ministry of Health in Sololá closed all medical services in Santiago Atitlán due to violence against healthcare workers during the pandemic.

We are very proud of our staff and grateful for their incredible work ethic and willingness to meet our mission, helping others and saving lives.

SENIOR EMPLOYEES

Executive Director

Jacinto Garcia Chipir

Medical Director

Dr. Manuel González Hi

Administrator

Jeremías Coché Tzina

Head Nurse

Concepción Damian Ixbalán

Social Worker

Vicenta Chavajay Cortéz

Volunteer Coordinator

Febe Sosof Sapalú

Director of Development

Alverta Lyn Dickey

FRIENDS OF THE HOSPITALITO

Hospitalito Atitlán is able to meet its mission thanks to the generosity of donors large and small. We would like to give a special mention to the following donors and partners:

Adelphia Foundation
Ann Clark-Whitlock
Delta Care Crew
Direct Relief International
Robert Finnegan
Veronica Finnegan
Nicole and Chris Haberman
Henry Schein Cares
Izumi Foundation
International Eye Institute
Klose Family
Mark Lepore
Masek Foundation
MedShare International
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Steven Stronge
Szekely Family Foundation
The A'lania Kailani Blue
Lotus White Star Foundation
Whatcom Community
Foundation
William Cuneo

BEAMS of Guatemala & Dr. Judith Royer 1950-2020



Lea Pellet, Cathy Druling, and Judy Royer.

Since 2005, Ohio emergency physician Judy Royer has partnered with Hospitalito Atitlán and the community. Her family, friends and church members bring much needed medical supplies and help.

In February 2020, Judy made her final trip to her beloved Santiago Atitlán. She will be remembered forever and missed by many friends here.

Dra. Maj StormoGipson Memorial Scholarship

Although the International Eye Institute was forced to cancel two surgical brigades in 2020, the Maj StormoGipson memorial scholarship program continued. Chemical biology student Pedro Mendoza completed his third year of study through online courses from his University in Xela. The pandemic has provided Pedro the opportunity to live at home again with his grandparents and volunteer at HA.



Sharing the Dream

For more than a decade *Sharing the Dream* has partnered with HA to provide medical care for seniors in their elder center and helped to professionalize our staff. Scholarships have provided training for our nurses, lab and x-ray technicians.

FINANCIAL REPORT

EXPENSES

Employee Salaries and Benefits	\$ 355,831.15
Equipment, Utilities, and Maintenance	\$ 2,138.43
Medications and Supplies	\$ 16,020.82
Other	\$ 41,265.25
Total	\$ 415,255.65

CASH DONATIONS

Donor Contributions	\$ 203,941.00
Patient Contributions	\$ 375,876.00
Total	\$ 579,817.00

OTHER DONATIONS

In-Kind Donations (medications, equipment, and supplies)	\$ 1,568,000.00
--	------------------------

FREE AND DISCOUNTED CARE

HA Social Work Department	\$ 66,896.00
Community Outreach	
- World Diabetes Foundation	\$ 42,000.00
- Other outreach programs (Adelphia, Foundation, Izumi Foundation & MASEK Foundation)	\$ 68,000.00
Total	\$176,896.00



Hospitalito Atitlán
Providing Healthcare & Hope to Maya
Families