

Health And Wellbeing Report 2022-2023

Good evening

Dr Kevin visited the mission in April last year. This was our first onsite Medical visit since the COVID epidemic, we have been reviewing the children via virtual clinics during this period. Dr Kevin completed a medical review on each of the children and documented the assessments in their individual online medical files, these were reviewed and followed up.

The mission had an outbreak of scabies in August. When the first child was identified, Asa checked all the children's skin for signs and symptoms. Thirteen children were reported to have had scabies. Asa followed the direction of the local health clinic, the infected children were isolated from those that were not infected and treated with Scabies treatment. Clothing and linen were washed with the recommended solutions to eradicate the scabies. This process was successful.

I was fortunate to visit the children, arriving on October 12th for 10 days. I was so happy to be back with the children. The smiles on their faces were heartwarming. They had just started school holidays, so it was an extra bonus to have them on site. Lenore had taken some children to the dentist on her prior visit. I triaged 19 more for dental visits, a number of these required fillings and extractions. I completed a Medical assessment of the children in the privacy of the computer room, the equipment supplied by Dr Kevin was put to good use. Overall, the children's general health was very good, however there were a few health issues identified. These conditions ranged from one child with a suspected fungal skin condition on the scalp and one with a suspected fungal infection on his fingernails, These children were treated with fungal treatment. Lenore and Jenny reviewed them again on their visit in March. Unfortunately, their skin condition had not improved during this time and another child was also identified to have a fungal condition on his body. These children have since visited the local hospital and pharmacy and commenced on long term fungal treatment that was recommended by the doctor. Asa reported last week that these childrens are improving. Their treatment is currently ongoing with Doctor appointments at the Mae suai hospital this month.

We have implemented strategies to reduce the incidence of fungal infections. These include improving the standard of mattress and bed linen care so as to potentially reduce the incidents of fungal infections and scabies infestation.

During my examination, one of the boys was found to have a suspicious dark lesion on a fingernail, this was still present on Lenore's visit so he was assessed at Maesuai hospital in April. It was confirmed that it was not an Acral melanoma but an old injury, however we will ensure to continue monitoring him.

One boy had high blood pressure and another tachycardia (a rapid pulse), they were monitored whilst I was on site. The children have been encouraged to increase their water consumption, it was observed that they were possibly not drinking enough water. Tachycardia can be the result of dehydration. Asa has received education on how to use the medical equipment to monitor the children, this will also be useful when they attend the future virtual clinics.

Another boy was assessed as having a Right Inguinal hernia. This was followed up immediately and he was assessed at Maesuai hospital. The medical staff advised Asa to take him to Chiang Rai Hospital. I took him to see the paediatrician at Chiang Rai Hospital on Wednesday, accompanied by Buzz and Aminou. In summary, he was seen by the Doctors, who spoke English. His diagnosis was a Direct Inguinal Hernia. We spent the day there attending to his pre-admission requirements. This included a Blood test, Chest X-Ray and Anaesthetic review. He was admitted on Thursday, underwent surgery on Friday and discharged Saturday morning. I was able to care for him on his discharge until my departure on Sunday. He had a follow up wound review and suture removal appointment and was also reviewed by a surgeon at Chiang Rai on the 2nd November.

Unfortunately, the same boy was diagnosed in February with a Left Inguinal Hernia. He had a planned hospital admission on the 20th April and was operated on the 21st April. He is recovering well. We will monitor his progress and he has planned hospital appointments this month.

The support from our sponsors has been extremely valuable and as a result we have been able to meet the ongoing medical issues as they arise. It is our intention to be able to continue to provide this high standard of health care.

As the young residents now range from 3 years of age to 21 years, the dynamics at the mission have changed and we are faced with new challenges and learnings. It is very satisfying to see that the children are thriving. Their dental care, health, hygiene, spiritual practice and positive attitude are a reflection of the practices we have implemented and the nurturing and care they receive. The regular medical, dental and pastoral care have provided a good foundation for the children to grow and develop into healthy, respectful individuals.

To Good Health & Wellbeing

Paola Hopkinson-Smith, May 2023

